



**University College Dublin**

## **Handbook for Internal Periodic Quality Review**

**Academic School**



**UCD Quality Office**  
**January 2025**

# Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction and Context for Quality Review .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Outline of the Periodic Review Process .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Preparation of the Self-assessment Report .....</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1. Briefing Meeting with Head of School .....	3
3.2. Establishment of the Self-assessment Co-ordinating Committee .....	3
3.3. Structure of the Self-assessment Report .....	3
3.4. Writing the Self-assessment Report .....	4
3.5. Other UCD Resources .....	5
3.6. Review Group Composition .....	6
3.7. Objectives and Function of the Review Group .....	6
<b>4. Site Visit .....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1. Planning the site visit .....	7
4.2. Timetable for the Review Group meetings .....	8
4.3. Exit Presentation .....	8
4.4. Exceptional Circumstances .....	9
<b>5. The Review Group Report .....</b>	<b>9</b>
5.1. Report Completion .....	9
5.2. Publication of Review Group Reports .....	10
<b>6. Quality Improvement Plan .....</b>	<b>10</b>
6.1. Quality Improvement Plan Process .....	10
6.2. Funding for Quality Improvement .....	11
<b>7. Progress Review .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Appendix 1: University Internal Periodic Quality Review Timeline .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Appendix 2: Template for the School Self-assessment Report .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Supplementary Self-assessment Report Data/Information .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Appendix 4: External Review Group members .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix 5: Nomination of External Reviewer for a School Quality Review .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix 6: Indicative Quality Review School Site Visit Timetable .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix 7: Institutional Oversight of School Quality Review Group Reports (RGR) and Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Appendix 8: Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Outline .....</b>	<b>35</b>

**Note:** These Guidelines will be updated annually.

## 1. Introduction and Context for Quality Review

The aim of the quality process at University College Dublin is to continue to promote an ongoing culture of quality assurance and quality enhancement throughout the University. The process reflects an embedded and dynamic process that is continuous, reflective, inclusive and enhancement focused. It reflects the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (ESG) principles for quality assurance:

- The University having primary responsibility for the quality and quality assurance of its provision
- The flexibility of Quality Assurance to respond to the diversity of provision in higher education institutions
- Quality Assurance supports the development of a quality culture
- Quality Assurance considers the needs and expectations of all students, other stakeholders, and society<sup>1</sup>

The implementation of the process enables the University to demonstrate how it discharges its legal responsibilities for assuring the quality and standards of its awards as a Designated Awarding Body, as required by the 1997 Universities Act; Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012; ESG (2015); QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), and other relevant documentation. It also provides public information on the University's capacity to assure the quality and standards of its awards, the enhancement of teaching and learning, research, the student experience, and the University's contribution to society as a global citizen reflecting the University's [Strategy to 2030 - Breaking Boundaries](#).

UCD academic school reviews are conducted on a 7-year cycle and incorporate the University strategic approach that all activity within a school is inter-related and quality assured, that all members within the school are involved in and contribute to the process, and that the primary focus of the review is on quality enhancement.

---

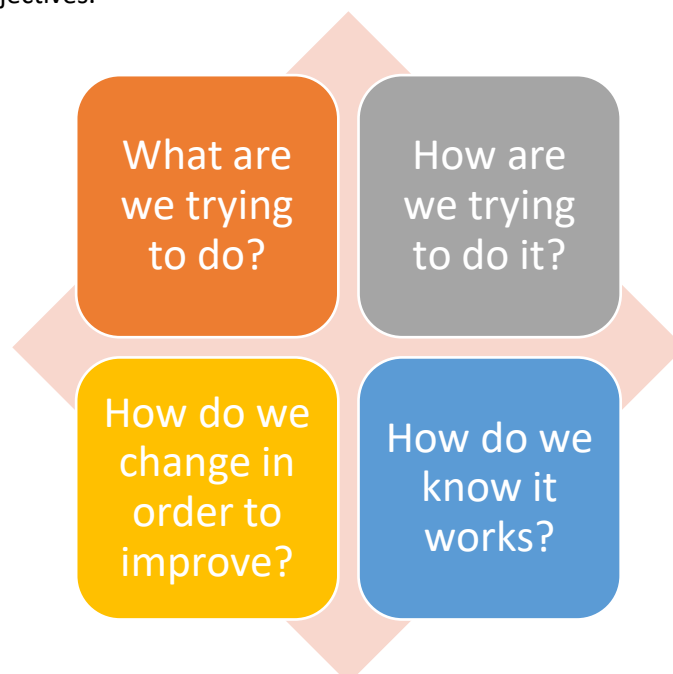
<sup>1</sup> Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), (2015). Brussels, Belgium

## 2. Outline of the Periodic Review Process

The overall aim of the review process is on-going enhancement of all activity within the school. The key stages are:



In considering the five stages the school will consider the following questions as it reflects on its activities and core objectives.



This will include a constructive and self-critical evaluation of the school's performance to deliver on the school's mission, vision and strategy/work plan. The self-assessment report will therefore act as the basis for a dialogue between the school and the review group reflecting the school's analysis of its activity.

### **3. Preparation of the Self-assessment Report**

#### **3.1. Briefing Meeting with Head of School**

The UCD Quality Office will hold a briefing meeting with the head of school at least ten months before the site visit to discuss the review process, schedule, and required documentation, and to agree deadlines for the receipt of documentation. An indicative timeline for the review process is set out in [Appendix 1](#).

#### **3.2. Establishment of the Self-assessment Co-ordinating Committee**

At the outset of the review process the school designates a group from within the school to form the co-ordinating committee which is responsible for the preparation of the self-assessment report (SAR). The committee should be representative of the key staff groupings within the school, and should normally include the head of school, who will play an active role in the self-assessment process, and at least one other senior member of staff. It should also include a student, preferably a postgraduate student who is a recent graduate of the school. Where appropriate, a member from each of the technical and professional staff should also be represented on the co-ordinating committee. The committee should be operational and not too large. A member of staff, not necessarily the head of school, will chair the co-ordinating committee and liaise with the UCD Quality Office. Typically, responsibility for the preparation of the various sections of the SAR, should, as appropriate, be distributed between the members of the Co-ordinating Committee (excluding the student representative).

Care should be taken appointing students to co-ordinating committees; they should not be expected (or allowed) to devote a large amount of time to the exercise. All faculty and staff members of the school should be kept fully informed of the self-assessment process through regular updates via school meetings or communications and should be given an opportunity to contribute their views during the report preparation and penultimate draft.

Following consultation with the school, the UCD Quality Office will provide a further briefing to the co-ordinating committee or school staff. Before making a detailed plan for the self-assessment report preparation, the co-ordinating committee should read this Handbook carefully, discuss it with their colleagues and any clarifications with the UCD Quality Office. The head of school and/or chair of the co-ordinating committee and quality office co-ordinator should then agree provisional dates of formal meetings. The quality office co-ordinator should be invited to the first meeting of the co-ordinating committee and thereafter to agreed scheduled meetings, to provide advice and guidance, to discuss progress and to review the final draft of the SAR. Regular communication and meetings between the quality office co-ordinator and the co-ordinating committee is encouraged. The best results for reviewed schools have occurred when this contact has been maintained.

The school should identify a site visit date as early as possible in consultation with the UCD Quality Office. External nominees (see [Review Group Composition](#) below) should be identified and agreed by the school and forwarded to the UCD Quality Office (see [Appendix 5](#)).

#### **3.3. Structure of the Self-assessment Report**

The input to the report is to some extent dependent on the subject area, but will always include as a key element, a self-assessment report accompanied by supporting information. A template of the report is provided in [Appendix 2](#). Some of the supporting information will be submitted with the self-

assessment report. Other documents should be made available to the Review Group for reference during the review site visit itself.

It is important to obtain the views of user groups, and these can be obtained through peer review, focus groups and/or questionnaires. Advice on appropriate mechanisms is available from the UCD Director of Institutional Research. Individual schools may have specific requirements and these should be discussed at an early stage with the Director of Institutional Research. Analysis of this feedback should inform the writing of the self-assessment report.

The school is also advised to conduct a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis at the start of the process. A whole school approach is advised, should include all faculty and staff, and may be facilitated by the College HR Partner or People & Organisation Development or UCD non-school facilitator.

Further information is available under [Other UCD Resources](#).

### **3.4. Writing the Self-assessment Report**

The SAR is the main vehicle through which the school conveys information about itself. Equally, and perhaps more importantly, it is the starting point for critical reflection by the school about the way it is managed and handles quality with regard to its particular activities. It is an evidence-based reflection of what the school believes to be working well and what it believes to be working less well. It should be full and frank, not attempting to hide problems or challenges, but not forgetting to cover strengths; and it should be developmental, offering thoughts on how to improve provision within the school.

The school is not required to provide a detailed description of what it does. Some background information may be necessary to set the context, but the emphasis should be on the critical self-evaluation of how effective and successful it believes the various aspects of its provision to be. How it engages with the Universities Strategy, and how the School engages and applies the Universities Policies and Procedures within its activity. This exercise provides a useful opportunity to explain why the school is reassured that service provision is excellent and points to the evidence which supports this view; or where provision could be improved and provide recommendations for corrective action. Additional guidance on writing the report is available at <http://www.ucd.ie/quality/infoforstaff/>

The structure of the self-assessment report is typically:

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction and Context
3. Organisation, Management and Staffing of the School
4. Quality of Programmes and Student Learning Experience
5. Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity
6. Management of Quality and Enhancement
7. Support Services
8. External Relations
9. Summary of SWOT Analysis and Recommendations for Improvement

Appendices

A template for the Self-assessment Report is provided in [Appendix 2](#) and is available from the UCD Quality Office. The template should be used to structure the SAR; however, there is some scope to tailor the structure of the SAR to address specific school needs, and advice on any aspect should be discussed with the UCD Quality Office. The areas to be addressed are designed to aid evaluation and to guide thinking about the content of the SAR. Please highlight strengths and areas of good practice but also highlight those areas that the school is working to improve: state the issue and the actions that are being taken to resolve or improve the situation. Examples should be provided within the text and reference made to documentary evidence to support statements made in the self-assessment document. Detailed information available in another existing document need not be reproduced in the SAR; instead, append the relevant document or refer to it, and make it available for the site visit.

The SAR should not be a lengthy document, and it is recommended that it typically should be no longer than 45 pages, with additional appendices. Keep it succinct and remember that the SAR acts as a basis for a dialogue between the school and the review group. Schools are advised to conduct a SWOT analysis as part of their SAR preparation. Staff should also have an opportunity to comment on the self-assessment report prior to its finalisation. A copy of the penultimate draft should also be provided to the UCD Quality Office for comment and feedback.

Examples of additional supporting documentation that may be included with the SAR and/or made available in the Review Group meeting room during the site visit are set out in [Appendix 3](#).

### **3.5. Other UCD Resources**

In addition to the InfoHub reports available to schools, a number of UCD professional units provide support for schools preparing for quality review and these include:

- UCD Human Resources
- UCD Library
- UCD Research and Innovation
- UCD Teaching & Learning
- UCD Institutional Research
- UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- UCD Access and Lifelong Learning
- UCD Sustainability

Further information on the supports available can be accessed at <http://www.ucd.ie/quality/ucdqualityframework/ucdsupportsresourcesforqualityreview/>

Six bound copies of the SAR, with appendices, plus one unbound copy and one electronic copy, should be delivered to the UCD Quality Office, at least six weeks in advance of the site visit.

A copy of the SAR should be circulated by the Co-ordinating Committee to all staff members of the school and the relevant college principal prior to the site visit.

### 3.6. Review Group Composition

A review group is appointed by the University to review the self-assessment report and to meet with the school representatives, its students and other stakeholders.

A typical review group for an academic school will include:

- Two senior UCD academic staff, one of whom acts as chair, the other as deputy chair.
- Two<sup>2</sup> external experts in the discipline, chosen from a list of at least eight candidates supplied to the Director of Quality, by the Co-ordinating Committee. Normally, the external experts proposed should have leadership experience within a leading international research-intensive institution. Current and recent external examiners are not considered eligible for this role and the school must declare any relationship it has or had with a proposed external reviewer. Please see [Appendix 4](#) for the selection criteria. Nomination forms are set out in [Appendix 5](#) and are available electronically from the UCD Quality Office.

A short-list of proposed external reviewers will be submitted by the school under review by an agreed deadline. The list of proposed reviewers will be considered by the UCD Quality Office, in consultation with the college principal and ACQEC. External nominees may be removed from the list or additional externs may be added to the list of nominees. If the school under review does not provide nominees to be considered for the review group by the agreed deadline, the UCDQO, in consultation with the college principal and/or ACQEC, will agree the composition of the review group.

As necessary, in order to adapt to changing circumstances e.g. a prospective reviewer being unavailable or a reviewer withdrawing at short notice, the procedures for the establishment of review groups will remain flexible.

The final selection of the review group will be independent of the school under review, and will be reported to the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee.

### 3.7. Objectives and Function of the Review Group

#### 3.7.1. Objectives

The review group will evaluate the quality of provision of the school under review and make recommendations for enhancement that will include:

- Review of the school's strategic alignment with the University Strategy
- An assessment of the programme(s) or module(s) to a programme delivered by the School that covers the programme coherency, curriculum content and its suitability for achieving the intended learning outcomes
- The assessment processes designed for the pathways and whether they are suitable to assess the intended learning outcomes
- The overall standards of pathways and effectiveness of the procedures used for their monitoring and enhancement
- Overall student experience and achievement, including progression to employment;

---

<sup>2</sup> Note: In exceptional circumstances, this number may vary as appropriate, having regard to the principle that the number of internal UCD members shall not exceed the number of external members



the contributions made to student achievement by the quality of teaching; opportunities for learning; the academic support provision; and learning resources and their deployment (including staffing arrangements)

- The teaching delivered by staff and how it contributes to learning by students and achievement of intended learning outcomes
- The admission, induction and progression of students in the pathways and the academic support provided
- The available learning resources and their use in supporting the pathways and the achievement of the intended learning outcomes
- The management of research, quality of the research activity and its outputs.
- The procedures used for the maintenance and enhancement of standards and quality by the school as informed by the University's governance, policies and procedures.

### **3.7.2. Function**

The Review Group will:

- Study the SAR, supporting documentation and other evidence
- Visit the school over three days
- Clarify and verify details in the self-assessment report in meetings with the School and other Stakeholders.
- Review the activities of the school in light of the self-assessment report
- Prepare a draft review group report and present the main findings in an exit presentation to the school
- Write the Review Group Report

## **4. Site Visit**

### **4.1. Planning the site visit**

The review group visits the school typically over a three-day period. This site visit is central to the review process and must be carefully planned. Close liaison is required between the school's co-ordinating committee and the UCD Quality Office with final approval by the review group. The UCD Quality Office will also engage the chair of the review group at appropriate points.

The structure of and template for the site visit is informed by the School's SAR and provided by the UCD Quality Office, in consultation with the review group chair. This has important implications for the timing of all other activities. In particular, in order to give everyone involved an opportunity to clear their diaries, the membership of the review group is arranged as early as possible and the dates for the site visit identified and fixed by the school. All members of the school are expected to be available for the duration of the site visit. Arranging the site visit meetings are the responsibility of the school under review following discussion with the UCD Quality Office. It is also important that the Review Group meets with undergraduate and postgraduate students, so the site visit should take place in term time. Prior to (and subsequent to) the site visit all contact with the internal and external reviewers regarding the review, including arrangements for travel and accommodation, is carried out by the UCD Quality Office.

## **4.2. Timetable for the Review Group meetings**

A suitable room must be provided by the school for the use of the review group during the course of the visit. Documents such as management reports, sample exam papers/scripts, or any other relevant material should be made available to the review group in the meeting room. Further information on supporting documentation is available from the UCD Quality Office. Catering for the review group site visit will be organised by the school, and again, advice is available from the UCD Quality Office. As previously indicated, most site visits will typically take place over 3 days. An outline timetable for the site visit may be found at [Appendix 6](#). No meetings should be arranged by the school until the site visit structure is agreed with the UCD Quality Office.

Individuals and groups who will meet with the review group are nominated by the co-ordinating committee and should be representative of the school. Participants will be confirmed following consultation with the UCD Quality Office and chair of the review group. The timetable should be finalised, populated with those attending, and forwarded to the UCD Quality Office no later than 2 weeks prior to the visit. The timetable is then made available to all relevant staff and students by the school. Students, employers and other school stakeholders who meet with the review group, are nominated by the co-ordinating committee and confirmed following consultation with the UCD Quality Office and the review group chair. The school will also be responsible for identifying and arranging for staff/students and other stakeholders to meet the review group at the appropriate time - further advice and an information sheet for meeting attendees is available from the UCD Quality Office.

The order of meetings can be moved within the timetable to reflect the availability of staff/students/employers and other stakeholders on a particular day, with the exception of the final day, which is reserved for the preparation of the first draft of the review group report and the presentation by the review group to the school. The review group, following receipt of the SAR, may request changes to the overall timetable. They may also request additional meetings during the site visit.

In summary, the review group should typically (as time allows):

- (i) meet with the college principal, the co-ordinating committee, the school head, a representative group of staff not on the co-ordinating committee, representative groups of school staff (academic, professional and technical), current students, including undergraduate and postgraduate students (and former students if possible), newly appointed staff, postdocs, employers and other relevant stakeholders
- (ii) visit classrooms, workrooms, laboratories, offices and such other facilities which support the activities of the school
- (iii) complete the first draft of their report and present the provisional key findings and recommendations to the school in a brief exit meeting (see below).
- (iv) When the site visit is over, no member of the school should be in contact with the review group on matters relating to the self-assessment report, the site visit or the review group report. If contact must be made it should be through the UCD Quality Office. In instances during the site visit where matters are raised with the review group that are outside the quality process, it will be referred by the review group chair to the Director of Quality who will liaise with the UCD Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President and/or relevant person(s).

## **4.3. Exit Presentation**

Normally one or both of the external review group members will make the exit presentation to the school. This will be a presentation of the key preliminary findings (for example, bullet point headlines on points of commendation and areas for enhancement) of the Review Group and will not involve discussion with the School as these initial findings may be modified in the light of subsequent reflection and discussion by the Review Group.

#### **4.4. Exceptional Circumstances**

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for a site visit to take place online. A process is in place to facilitate an online site visit and these will be discussed by the UCD Quality Office co-ordinator with the school.

### **5. The Review Group Report**

The review group report is drafted and prepared by the review group. The report will be published on the University Quality Office website following consideration by UMT and upon acceptance by the University Governing Authority.

In keeping with the formative nature of the process, where possible, review groups are requested to express their recommendations in a positive and constructive manner, providing context and encouraging quality enhancement.

The structure of the review group report will broadly reflect that of the school's self-assessment report (see [Appendix 2](#)). Commentary by review group members should primarily be analytical rather than descriptive and refer to either source documentation, oral evidence and/or direct observations. Recommendations should have a reference point in the report narrative.

#### **5.1. Report Completion**

At the end of the site visit, the review group chair should ensure that the review group has prepared a reasonably advanced first draft. An agreed timeline for finalisation of the report and sign-off by the review group should be agreed with the UCD Quality Office before the completion of the site visit. Typically, a final report should be made available no later than 6 weeks after the site visit, and should be sent to the UCD Quality Office, with confirmation from all review group members that this is the agreed report – see flowchart at [Appendix 7](#).

It is also important that the review group should not contact the school with regard to any matter relating to the review or finalisation of the report. Any request or clarifications should be communicated through the UCD Quality Office.

The UCD Quality Office will circulate the report to the school's co-ordinating committee, for correction of factual error. In addition, the school should also submit a brief response (not to exceed two pages) relating to the report recommendations and should be forwarded to the UCD Quality Office two weeks after receiving the review group report. Please note that this is not an opportunity to open up further dialogue on matters covered during the review group site visit. Any subsequent communication between the UCD Quality Office and the school under review, about any aspect of the review, shall be via the head of school and/or the chair of the school's co-ordinating committee.

The review group report will be prepared by the review group as peer reviewers. The UCD Quality Office will, however, retain editorial responsibility for the final report subject to discussion with the review group chair. If a school does not agree with the content and/or recommendations in the report, these matters should be addressed in the school quality improvement plan.

The UCD Quality Office finalises the review group report by correcting any factual errors and appending the school response as an appendix to the report. No other amendments are made to the report by the Quality Office. The report is now final.

The UCD Quality Office sends copies of the final review group report to the President, Registrar, any relevant University Officer(s), the review group members and any other persons authorised by the Registrar/President. The President and Registrar will also receive a copy of the SAR, the UCD Quality Office also sends a soft copy of the final report to the head of school for circulation to all members of the school.

## **5.2. Publication of Review Group Reports**

The review group report will be considered by the University Management Team – see flowchart at [Appendix 7](#). The review group chair will meet with the University Management Team when the review group report is considered. The review group report and UMT commentary will then be considered by the UCD Governing Authority and the report published on the UCD Quality Office website (<http://www.ucd.ie/quality/>).

## **6. Quality Improvement Plan**

Follow-up is an integral part of the review process. The decisions on improvement, which are made in the follow-up to self-assessment and review, provide a framework within which each school can continue to work toward the goal of developing and fostering a quality enhancement culture within the University. With the support of the college principal, each school is also required to implement each of the recommendations of the report, unless it would be unreasonable or impractical to do so.

### **6.1. Quality Improvement Plan Process**

The head of the school, on receipt of the review group report and following a meeting with the UCD Quality Office, will establish a Quality Improvement Committee which is representative of staff from the school. The Quality Improvement Committee will arrange to have a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) drafted within twelve weeks, based on the review group report findings. Guidance for the completion of a Quality Improvement Plan is available from the UCD Quality Office and an outline is provided in [Appendix 8](#). The QIP should be developed in consultation with the college principal who must approve the final draft. The QIP should usually take the form of short summaries of the action taken/planned that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound. Or if actions are not being taken, an explanation should be provided. The recommendations, with the associated actions taken or planned, may be structured as follows:

- (i) Teaching and learning, research, organisational, administrative and other matters which are completely under the control of the school
- (ii) Shortcomings in services, facilities or procedures which are outside the control of the school
- (iii) Inadequate staff levels, facilities and other resources which require capital or recurrent funding. Realistic estimates of the capital and recurrent costs to implement recommendations/ planned actions should be included.

It is the school's responsibility to compile a full response. This means that it must obtain responses to those recommendations relating to other areas of the University, to which actions arising from the report were addressed. For instance, if the report recommended that a lecture theatre needed to be refurbished, it is the school's responsibility to find out from the Head of Estate Services what action has, or will/will not be taken, in response to this recommendation. A realistic assessment of available resources (both at school and institutional level) should be borne in mind when formulating plans and should be discussed with the relevant College Principal. Implementation of the recommendations should be included in the School's annual five year planning process.

It is important that all recommendations in the review group report be addressed. Some recommendations for enhancement may appear in the text of the review group report narrative. Please ensure these are included for consideration. Some recommendations may not be explicitly stated but are implied as consequences of a concern, for example, "the school has no mechanism to feedback action taken, in response to issues raised by students".

The Quality Improvement Plan should address all recommendations (and implied and/or other suggestions) in the review group report including:

- a) recommendations already implemented.
- b) a list of goals which can be realistically achieved in the following year.
- c) a list of longer-term goals to be achieved, for example, over five years.
- d) recommendations which the quality improvement committee consider to be unreasonable or impractical: in such instances, the committee should give reasons for such a conclusion, and should, if possible, suggest alternative strategies for quality enhancement.

The QIP should be sent to the UCD Quality Office by the agreed submission deadline. Upon receipt of the QIP, the UCD Quality Office will arrange to have it considered by the chair of the review group. Other staff may be co-opted as required. If reasonable progress is not made to address the review group report recommendations within the agreed timeframe, the matter will be referred to the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee to determine what further action should be taken.

The review group chair, in consultation with the UCDQO, will consider the QIP and may seek further clarification and/or additional information, prior to its submission to the University Management Team (UMT) for consideration. UMT Secretariat will invite the head of school to the relevant meeting of UMT to discuss the QIP (see flowchart at [Appendix 7](#)). Following the UMT meeting, UMT Secretariat will confirm with the UCD Quality Office that the QIP may be published, or advise what action UMT has requested, pending publication of the QIP.

A report on QIPs published, that have had extensions of time, and those that remain outstanding in a stated period, will be submitted to ACQEC.

## **6.2. Funding for Quality Improvement**

Recommendations that require additional funding should be considered in the light of University policy and priorities, having regard to the resources available to the University, college or school, at the time. They may also act as a driver for a school or college in prioritising and (re-) allocating available resources within their annual and five-year planning process.

## 7. Progress Review

Approximately twelve months after the QIP has been accepted, each school will be asked to prepare a progress report on the implementation of the QIP actions. The progress report should be developed in consultation with the relevant college principal and information on the process is available from the UCD Quality Office. The school's progress report must be signed off by the college principal prior to its submission to the UCD Quality office.

Upon receipt of the progress report, the UCD Quality office will convene a progress review meeting. The report forms the basis of the dialogue at the progress review meeting.

The progress review meeting will normally be chaired by the Registrar and Deputy President and will typically include a representative from the Quality Office, the relevant college principal, the UCD group chair, and normally a maximum of four representatives from the school reviewed (one of whom will include the head of school).

The meeting will consider the actions taken by the school, and where appropriate, other University schools, to address the review group report recommendations. In addition, the progress review meeting may agree further follow-up meetings as required. The aim of the meeting is to confirm that all recommendations for improvement arising from the review process, have been or will be, dealt with appropriately, formally bringing to conclusion the review process. However, it is expected that the school will continue implementation of the recommendations as part of the school's planning process.

If it is deemed that insufficient progress has been made against the review group report's recommendations for improvement, the following actions may be considered:

- a) A revised QIP progress report will be required within a stated deadline, to reflect a modified action plan recommended at the progress review meeting – the UCD Quality Office will sign-off the revised report, as appropriate
- b) A revised QIP progress report will be required and a further progress review meeting held
- c) A report of the lack of progress made to implement the review group report recommendations will be made to the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC) and University Management Team, with recommendations for further action.

It should be noted that the progress report and meeting is the last formal step in the quality process, but it is not the last step for the school in progressing the review group report recommendations. The progress report will act as a starting point for the next quality review.

The outcome of the progress review meeting for schools will be reported to ACQEC. An Annual Quality Report is also made to the UCD Governing Authority, University Management Team and UCD Academic Council.

## Appendix 1: University Internal Periodic Quality Review Timeline

The following process and timeline have been agreed by the University to conduct a quality review of a school. A representative from the UCD Quality Office will engage with the school undergoing review.

Stage 1: Self-Assessment Report (SAR)	
Dates	Actions/Tasks
-10 months (min)	UCD Quality Office initiates the formal process of quality review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal notification of the review from the Registrar and Vice-President for Academic Affairs sent to the school.</li> <li>Initial briefing on quality assurance process provided by the Quality Office to the head of school.</li> </ul>
-10 to 9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School establishes a SAR co-ordinating committee and forwards details to UCDQO</li> <li>Briefing by Quality Office representative to SAR committee and school</li> <li>Check-in meetings of SAR committee and Quality Office representative are agreed.</li> <li>School identifies a site visit date (week) and extern nominees</li> <li>External nominees template completed by the school for all external nominees and forwarded to the UCD Quality Office</li> </ul>
-10 to 9 months	RG selected by UCD Quality Office (following consultation with appropriate college principal and ACQEC as required).
-8 to 2 months	School prepares self-assessment report (SAR) including collection of data, surveys etc.
-6 weeks	SAR sent to review group (RG).
Stage 2: Site Visit	
Actions/Tasks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The date of the site visit will be agreed by the UCD Quality Office and the school. It must be organised in the academic term so that students are available to attend meetings</li> <li>The UCD Quality office representative will provide the timetable to the school. An indicative site visit timetable is provided in <a href="#">Appendix 6</a></li> <li>The school is responsible for providing a list of meeting attendees</li> </ul>	
Stage 3: The Review Group Report	
Date	Actions/Tasks
+ 6 weeks	RG report received by UCD Quality office and forwarded to school for comment on any factual error and response.
+2 to 3 months	RG report finalised by UCD Quality office. RG report submitted to UMT and UCD Governing Authority. School prepares a quality improvement plan (QIP) with specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timetabled actions
+3 months	School's QIP <sup>3</sup> sent to UCD Quality Office and considered by review group chair and UMT. QIP is published
+6 months	Review group report considered by UMT and the UCD Governing Authority. Publication of the review group report on the University website.
+12 months	Progress review meeting convened to consider school's progress on the implementation of the QIP.

<sup>3</sup> The QIP should inform the strategic planning process of the school and other University-wide processes.

## **Appendix 2: Template for the School Self-assessment Report**



**University College Dublin**

**UCD School of**

**Periodic Quality Review: Self-assessment Report**

**Month 20XX**



This document provides a format for the School's Self-assessment Report and is available from the UCD Quality Office by email at [qualityoffice@ucd.ie](mailto:qualityoffice@ucd.ie) or at <http://www.ucd.ie/quality/>.

Each section details the reflection and analysis required by the school when preparing their Self-assessment Report. Some of these areas to be covered may not be applicable to your school and should be discussed in the first instance with the UCD Quality Officer. Similarly, the school should include any relevant information and analysis that may be specific to the school.

Please note that prior to or during the site visit the review group may request additional information from the school. Schools should make available to the review group, copies of relevant reports compiled in the previous five years as well as the current school summary budget. The review group may also request changes to the timetable following their reading of the self-assessment report.

## **Section Headings of the Self-Assessment Report**

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction and Context
3. Organisation, Management and Staffing of the School
4. Quality of Programmes and Student Learning Experience
5. Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity
6. Management of Quality and Enhancement
7. Support Services
8. External Relations
9. Summary of SWOT Analysis and Recommendations for Improvement

Appendices

## 1. Executive Summary

This section should provide the following information in no more than one page:

- A brief highlight of the key findings/issues that were identified by the school during the self-assessment process.
- A brief highlight of the key areas for enhancement and/or areas of discussion with the Review Group.

## 2. Introduction and Context

This section should provide sufficient information about the school that gives a context and overview on the school and its activity and should be no more than three pages. It should also include information on the preparation of the self-assessment report and engagement by the school.

- A brief methodology on the self-assessment report preparation by the school that includes the SAR committee, number of meetings held, how the SAR was compiled, the engagement by all staff during the process and their contribution to the final draft (1/2 page maximum)
- Provide a short profile of the school and its activity with links to appendices, reports etc.
- Progress made by the school since its last quality review. This should include a reflection on implementation of the recommendations through the Quality Improvement Plan and Progress report
- Provide an assessment of the school's strategy/workplan, its relationship with the University strategic plan. How does the school reflect the mission, vision and values of the University? How does the school monitor the implementation of its strategy/strategic plan? What key performance indicators are used?
- Having conducted a SWOT analysis of the school and its activity, what are the key factors that have contributed to the success of the school? What factors have impeded progress within the school?
- How does the school identify or manage risk?
- What benchmarking is used by the school to compare its processes and performance against good practice or benchmarks in similar universities?

## 3. Organisation, Management and Staffing of the School

Information should be provided on committee structures within the school; mechanisms for budget allocation, workload measurement and assignment; means of communication with staff and students; relations with college and programme offices and other professional support units or academic schools in the University. The section should look at how effectively the school manages its resources, such as human, physical, financial, and engages with the college. It should include a commentary on faculty and professional administrative and technical staff, a description and analysis of staff composition and status, including gender balance and age profile; workloads, financial resources and physical facilities available to the School. This section should provide the following information in no more than seven pages:

## Governance and Management

- What governance and management structures are in place within the school? Could the organisation of the school be enhanced to deliver on its core activities? Are synergies realised by the school in delivering on its mission?
- Are key staff roles and office functions clearly understood and transparent to all faculty and staff within the school? Is there an effective staffing and financial plan, workload model, safety statement, a Gender Equality Action Plan, Risk Register etc. in place?
- How effective are the school's committees? How does the school measure and evaluate the effectiveness of its committees and procedures and delegated authority?
- How effective is the school's committee interactions with University, college and governing board
- (s) structures to deliver on the school's strategy/workplan?
- Comment on the level of engagement by the school with relevant University policies, such as academic governance, Finance, widening participation, equality, diversity & inclusion, sustainability and sustainable development goals, health and safety, GDPR, human resources, performance management, promotion, FOI and data protection. How does the school socialise University Policies within the School's activity?
- How effective is the school budgetary process? How are financial resources prioritised to meet the needs of the school?

## Staffing and Facilities

- How effective are the current staff planning and recruitment processes within the school? How effective are the supports provided by the University?
- How are professional development needs of faculty, professional and technical staff systematically identified and supported, particularly in relation to both the individual and the skill needs of the school? Is there a school plan to ensure that all faculty, professional and technical staff keep abreast of the latest thinking in their subject, educational technology, pedagogy and supports? How effective is the P4G process within the school in supporting individual career development?
- How are new faculty and professional and technical staff supported by the school? Is there an induction process in place for new staff within the school?
- Are there mentoring supports in place for all faculty, professional and technical staff, including early career and staff career progression?
- How does the school ensure that all faculty and staff adhere to and are supported by University policies and procedures such as Athena SWAN, Equality Diversity & Inclusion (EDI), mentoring, promotion, induction for new staff, Health & Safety, GDPR and management of personal data?
- To what extent is teaching, learning and research constrained by the availability of resources and support provided at institutional level?
- Are the physical facilities, technology and equipment sufficient to support the school's research, and teaching and learning activities?
- How does the school meet the University's ambition of embedding the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) across its activity?
- How does the School ensure that if programme design meets the legislative requirements of the International Qualification mark for its international learners? [QQI Policy: Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Higher Education to International Learners](#)

## 4. Quality of Programmes and Student Learning Experience

This section should provide information in no more than 10 pages.

Critical reflection and analysis are at the heart of the quality assurance and enhancement process. This reflective process allows the school under review to self-assess its existing taught provision in terms of the student learning experience and the quality of its programmes and to ground this analysis in evidence for the purposes of identifying future enhancement activities.

A variety of evidence should be used including feedback from students, staff, external examiners, stakeholders (e.g., industry, employers, clinical partners, other partners), accrediting/regulatory bodies (where applicable), and QA data provided by UCD Institutional Research.

The school is encouraged to engage in holistic analysis of its taught programmes based on good practices in approaches to programme and module design. Key aspects of programme and module design (often described as 'curriculum') are summarised in the diagram below. The overall approach to this analysis should seek to evaluate and showcase the school's strengths and also identify areas for further development or enhancement.

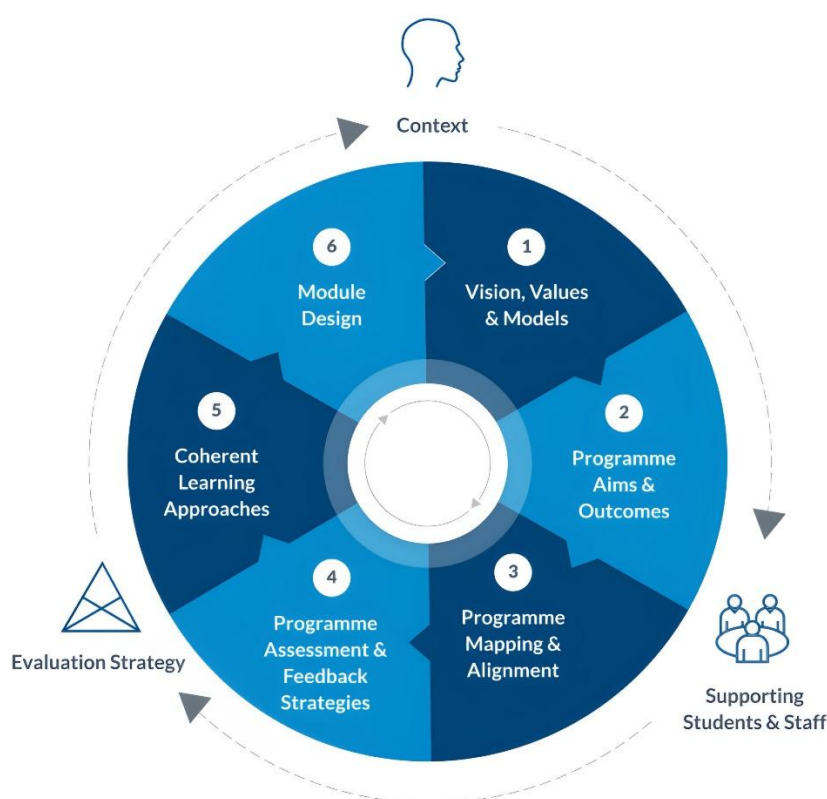


Figure 1: See UCD T&L webpage for more details on programme design<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>UCD T&L Designing Programme webpage;  
<https://www.ucd.ie/teaching/resources/moduleandprogrammedesign/designingprogrammes/>

## **Context - School's Education and Student Profile**

The purpose of this contextual statement is to briefly describe the school's education and student profile (maximum of 2 pages). The following prompts may be useful:

- Does the school have a Teaching and Learning Strategy/Policy? If so, how effective is it in establishing a framework for teaching and learning within the school?
- Provide details of taught programmes being delivered, including the number and profile of students on each programme. Where relevant, include details of programmes delivered through collaborative partnership with other institutions or transnational provision. What key findings emerge from analysing programme data over the past five years?
- Student recruitment – what patterns/trends have emerged over the past five years? What progress has been made towards the achievement of the school's recruitment targets including widening participation and internationalisation targets?
- Student retention and progression – how do retention and progression data compare to college norms? What factors might impact retention and progression (positive and negative)?
- Graduate destination - how do graduate employment data and postgraduate studies data compare to college/University norms? What patterns have emerged over the past five years and what actions have been taken by the school to prepare students for graduate employment and or advance studies?
- International Learners – how does the School support its international learners?

## **Programme Review & Evaluation**

What policies and processes are used by the school to support quality assurance and quality enhancement of its programmes and the student learning experience? Use examples, where appropriate, to illustrate these policies and processes in action. The following prompts may be useful to support critical reflection and analysis:

- What opportunities are available to key stakeholders (e.g., students, recent graduates, employers) to provide feedback on programmes and what mechanisms are in place for 'closing the feedback loop'?
- What quality assurance processes are in place to address feedback from external examiners and professional regulatory/accreditation bodies (where applicable)? Comment on any specific example(s) of curriculum enhancements arising from external feedback.
- What processes are used to benchmark the school's programmes against leading programmes elsewhere (nationally and or internationally)?
- Where the school has collaborative educational links, such as partnerships with other institutions<sup>2</sup>, how is this provision managed and monitored, including arrangements for quality assuring academic standards and enhancing the student learning experience?
- What are the unique strengths/features of the school's curriculum and what evidence is there to support this?

## **Programme Design**

What processes are used by the school in the design and development of its programmes? Identify a recent significant programme (re)design initiative by way of an example of these processes in action. The following prompts may be useful to support critical reflection and analysis:

- How does the school engage key stakeholders (e.g., employers, alumni, prospective students, professional bodies) in the programme design process? This may include identification of the strategic need and or the development and articulation of the programmes' vision, values and learning outcomes
- How does the school ensure that programmes integrate with changing work contexts, support authentic learning experiences and students' holistic development? Consider areas, such as, the development of employability skills, professional attributes and transferable skills; opportunities for study abroad and internationalisation; opportunities for learning and personal growth outside of the classroom; and engagement with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- How is students' personal development and well-being addressed through the programme?
- How is the school's research agenda integrated into taught programmes and what opportunities exist for students to engage with research being undertaken in the school and to conduct research?

### **Assessment and Feedback**

What policies, processes and procedures are in place in the school to support quality assurance and enhancement of assessment and feedback practices? Highlight any recent significant developments in assessment and feedback practices. The following prompts may be useful to support critical reflection and analysis:

- What are the school's key approaches to assessment and feedback? Do they align with the programme outcomes? What does school data indicate about the effectiveness of these approaches?
- Comment on the effectiveness of current policies/protocols in ensuring the reliability, consistency and fairness in assessment and feedback practices.
- In relation to a programmatic approach to assessment and feedback<sup>3</sup>, to what extent has the school engaged with the UCD Framework for Programme Assessment and Feedback Strategies? Is there:
  - A variety of assessment and feedback methods used across the programme, in particular, authentic, inclusive, empowering and engaging approaches?
  - Integrated and coherent assessment and feedback approaches designed vertically and horizontally into the programme?
  - Consideration given to the time and space for assessment and feedback approaches, including faculty and student assessment load, timely feed-forward and space for more complex learning?

### **Approaches to Teaching and Learning; Support for Students and Staff**

Comment on the effectiveness of key teaching and learning approaches adopted by the school and highlight any recent examples where significant changes were made to improve student engagement, empowerment, and success. The following prompts may be useful to support critical reflection and analysis:

- How does the school ensure that their programmes' teaching and learning approaches align with the learning outcomes and build coherently across stages?
- How does the school ensure that its approaches to teaching and learning are inclusive and support all students to engage and reach their full potential?

- What evidence is there that the school considers international best practice to inform pedagogic approaches relevant to the discipline?
- Does the school have a technology enhanced learning strategy and how are staff and students being supported to enhance their digital skills?
- How are faculty/staff supported and encouraged to develop their teaching practice? What enhancements to practice have resulted from staff development activity?
- To what extent are faculty engaged in pedagogic research, contributing to symposia/conferences, and or showcases in teaching and learning?
- How is teaching excellence recognised, acknowledged and supported by the school?
- Comment on the availability and effectiveness of academic support and advisory services for students as they journey through their studies.
- How the School upholds academic integrity through the application of University Policies and Procedures, its alignment with the [UCD Academic Integrity Policy](#) including defining acceptable and unacceptable uses of artificial intelligence (AI) in academic work.

## 5. Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity

This section should provide information in no more than 10 pages.

The purpose of this section is to provide a reflective analysis of the school's existing research programme provision, existing supports and areas for future development or enhancement. It should also provide an analysis of the school's existing research activity using evidence of research activity for the previous three- five years including any research institutes. The school should provide a commentary on its research strategic plan or priorities and/or the research sections of the previous 3- 5 years of annual school plans, all its research publications, research grants obtained, research degrees awarded (at Masters' and PhD level) and details of significant research outcomes and impacts. It should highlight in its analysis its most significant publications, grants and awards, outcomes and impacts, and also identify areas for further enhancement.

### Postgraduate Research Education and the Student Experience

The aim of this section is to briefly describe and provide a commentary on the profile of postgraduate research programmes offered by the school and comparison with college norms:

- Provide details of postgraduate research programmes (Masters by research and/or PhD) over the past five years, including through joint collaborations within or external to the University. An overall analysis of these trends should be provided for each programme.
- Outline the recruitment plans and markets for each programme, including aligning with the University's strategy for widening participation sustainability and international student recruitment. In analysing the 5-year data what patterns/challenges/successes are emerging for the school? What is the School's retention rate?
- What supports are provided by the school for its research students or postdocs on induction, mentoring, academic supports, financial support, graduate employment? Are there areas for enhancement?
- How does the school evaluate and quality assure its research programmes and the student learning experience? How is feedback managed?
- How does the School ensure that its programme or module design meets the legislative



requirements of the International Qualification mark for its international learners?

- How does the School support its international learners.

### **Postgraduate Research Activity**

The purpose of this section is to provide both a context and a reflection on the research culture of the school, its research strategy, its supports for staff (including early career) and students, how it benchmarks with both college and external comparator institutions, research collaborations, impacts etc. This should include:

- Assessing the research culture of the school and how the school manages its research activity, the links between research and teaching activity. What KPIs are in place by the school to manage the delivery of its research strategic plan or priorities?
- Assessing the quantity of research output given the size of the school and its research activity. What are the strengths and challenges for the school on research output?
- Assessing the quality of the research produced with respect to excellent international comparator schools.
- Assessing the level of international research collaboration, and international dissemination.
- Assessing the school's performance in attracting and supporting high performing researchers.
- Assessing the diversity of research funding, and the level of 'excellence based' grants, and international grants.
- Assessing the impact of the school through measures such as impact case studies, consultancy work, and innovation activity. Does the school engage in commercialisation and knowledge transfer activity where that is applicable?
- Assessing the research supports available via the school, the college, and the central research and innovation office. What are the supports available for research staff including early career or new researchers? Comment on the level of take-up of sabbatical leave in the school.

In addressing the above prompts the School should include a brief summary of its research priorities and evidence of research activity for the previous five years. Brief outlines of the research interests and summarised outputs of each staff member should be provided as an appendix. Data provided should include information on all publications, research grants obtained, research degrees awarded, Masters and PhDs, and the school research strategic plan.

*Information provided, where relevant, should be included as an appendix with a reflection and analysis within this section:*

### **Research Strategy and Plans**

The goals, actions and performance indicators selected by the school and their implication; analysis of stakeholder requirements; benchmarking partners selected and criteria for comparison; etc.

### **Publications**

Number and rate of publications within the school including external benchmarking; the ratio of publications versus staff complement; the quality of publication outlets (e.g. journal impact factors, etc.); number of citations for staff within the school; action plans for change; etc. Does the publication

rate reflect the extent of research activity of faculty? Are publications submitted to the full rigours of peer review in internationally recognised peer reviewed journals?

#### PhDs and Research Masters' students

Comment on the school's overall plan for graduate recruitment? What provision and supports are given to research students? Comment on the number of PhD and research Masters' students within the school; the ratio of research students to staff complement; PhD completion rates; number of post-docs within the School, research seminars etc. What is the level of interaction between staff and postgraduate students to discuss research? Does the School regularly monitor the effectiveness of research student supervision and the outcome of research degree examinations, and with what result? Is this consistent with University and external guidance such as the [QQI Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Research Degree Programmes, 2017](#)?

#### Research Income

Annual research budgets of the school; research projects currently ongoing; research proposals in progress; the sources of income (e.g. EU vs. National); etc.

#### Staff Engagement

Appropriate engagement of academic staff in research; individual research work plans as appropriate; workload balance between research and teaching; research informed teaching; etc.

#### Impact and Related Activities

Public impact of research including conferences, events, patents, license agreements, company spin-offs, exhibitions, documentaries, industry interaction, etc. Contribution to the disciplines of the school or institute e.g. membership of research councils, grant awarding bodies, positions of esteem, editorship (or board member) of prestigious journals, external examiner for research degrees, membership of professional association committees, other prizes and awards.

#### Research Institutes (RIs) (if relevant)

The school should provide a commentary on its relationship with relevant RI's (if any) covering a) the consistency of mission and strategic direction, b) shared perspective and ability to leverage each other's strengths to deliver goals, and c) effectiveness of current University structures and support arrangements for RI's, from a school perspective.

#### Commercialisation and Knowledge Transfer Activity

Outline and comment on the level of activity by the school and the opportunities/challenges to engaging in this activity.

## **6. Management of Quality and Enhancement**

This section should provide information in no more than 3 pages.

The purpose of this section is to provide assurance to the University and stakeholders about the quality of the educational provision and standards of academic awards and its research. It should outline the current mechanisms used by the school to improve the quality of school activities, the ongoing monitoring processes used as well as enhancement activity.

It should include an analysis of the school's quality processes, for example, programme or module development, external examiner reports, module evaluations, staff/student consultative committees, StudentSurvey.ie feedback, feedback from professional, statutory or regulatory body accreditation, employer or student feedback, workload model, committees etc. The school should also reflect on how good practice is identified and disseminated within the school.

## **7. Support Services**

This section should provide information in no more than 1 page.

The purpose of this section is to provide the views of the school on the effectiveness of the support services within the University, such as the college, Library, IT support, teaching supports, research supports, human resources and training, Registry, Careers Network, Estates, Finance or any other support services.

It should include an assessment of the service provision provided and its effectiveness, with particular reference to supporting curriculum needs and the teaching and research strategies. A commentary on the effectiveness of central support services in supporting the overall student experience should be provided and should reference the induction process for students, exchange programmes and placements as well as widening participation.

## **8. External Relations**

This section should provide information in no more than 2 pages.

The school should describe its relations with the wider community, with other educational institutions in Ireland and internationally, private organisations, public agencies and professional and statutory bodies and employers. Evidence of the views of relevant external stakeholders should be provided, including employer input to curriculum development.

## **9. Summary of SWOT and Recommendations for Improvement**

This section should provide information in no more than 2 pages.

The purpose of the section is to provide a reflection and overall analysis of the school's activities. The school should conduct an all-school SWOT analysis exercise as part of the self-assessment preparation which should be provided as an appendix to this report. A summary narrative of the school's analysis of its SWOT discussions, key outputs and recommendations for improvement should be provided. Strengths should be emphasised, school responses to concerns identified, opportunities considered and challenges discussed. The reflection by the school on the exercise should enable it to identify and formulate strategies for improvement and identify areas or proposed areas for enhancement by the school.

## Appendices

As the self-assessment report provides a reflection and analysis by the school on its activities additional information should be provided to support these reflections and analyses. This documentation should be provided in a separate document to the self-assessment report. These can include:

UCD Organisational Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organogram of the UCD Management Structure</li> <li>• Organogram of the UCD Committee Structure</li> <li>• Organogram of the College and School structures</li> </ul>
School Planning Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Strategic or Five-year plan</li> <li>• School Education strategy/plan</li> <li>• School Global strategy/plan</li> <li>• School Research strategy/plan</li> <li>• Key Performance Indicators</li> <li>• Workload Model</li> </ul>
Survey Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistical Summaries</li> <li>• StudentSurvey.ie outputs</li> <li>• Module outputs</li> <li>• External examiners reports</li> </ul>
Financial Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School budget and expenditure</li> </ul>
Other School reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extern Examiners reports and the school's response</li> <li>• New programme developments and/or new module developments</li> <li>• Recommendations from Professional or Statutory Accreditation and the school's response</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3: Supplementary Self-assessment Report Data/Information

The following should be made available to the review group during the site visit and are complementary to the self-assessment report. They can include:

Questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Copies or samples of questionnaires completed by students, faculty, professional and support staff, and the analysis of results of such surveys conducted should be included with the Report, but, alternatively, these may be made available to the Review Group for consultation during the visit.</li></ul>
Programme information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sample programme specifications for programmes within the scope of the review</li><li>• Module descriptors</li><li>• Prospectus</li><li>• Sample Programme/Student handbooks</li></ul>
External Accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Previous professional and statutory body reports plus responses (where relevant)</li></ul>
Quality Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Previous Quality Review Documentation such as Review Group Report, Quality Improvement Plan, Progress Plan</li><li>• Any Annual Review Report to Governing Boards</li><li>• External Examiner reports</li><li>• School Committee Terms of reference and meeting minutes</li><li>• International Student Barometer (ISB)</li></ul>
Student Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Statistics on student achievement</li><li>• Degree classifications</li><li>• Entry qualifications</li><li>• Progression and completion rates</li><li>• First employment destinations</li></ul>

Note: A number of reports are available to the head of school on InfoHub. Assistance is also available to schools from the Director of Institutional Research ([maura.mcginn@ucd.ie](mailto:maura.mcginn@ucd.ie)) in compiling questionnaires and statistical data as part of the review process.

## **Appendix 4: External Review Group members**

### **Criteria to be considered when selecting external Review Group members**

- Depth of reviewer expertise and seniority within the subject area
- Representation of the breadth of knowledge 'strands' within the subject area
- Affiliation with world-class schools and institution(s)
- Extent of management experience in comparable schools and/or at institutional level
- External profile within the subject area - experience representing the discipline on groups or within agencies at national or international levels
- Gender representation
- Comfort in speaking and report-writing in the English language

### **Exclusions**

- Recent role as Subject External Examiner within UCD (within the past 5 years)
- Conflict of interest regarding any relationship (personal or professional) with any school staff member or associated staff
- Current partner in research collaborations with the school or associated staff
- Previous school Review Group externs or nominees made by the school

### **Additionally**

- Any relationship the school or a member of the school has or had with a potential nominee must be declared by the head of school prior to selection of Review Group

## Appendix 5: Nomination of External Reviewer for a School Quality Review

Please note that a form must be completed for each extern nominee. A copy is available electronically from the UCD Quality Office.

<b>Name of School to be reviewed:</b>	UCD School of	
<b>Title, Name and Position of Proposed External Reviewer:</b>		
<b>Contact Details:</b>	<b>Address</b>	
	<b>Email</b>	
	<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Administrative Contact Details i.e. PA, School or School Office</b>	<b>Email</b>	
	<b>Telephone</b>	

**Brief details of relevant professional experience (please provide sufficient details to enable an informed decision to be made)**

**Please outline any formal links/relationship the school or individual staff members in the school have had with the proposed reviewer**

To the best of my knowledge, I confirm that the nominee has had no formal links with the school during the last five years.

**Signed:**

(Head/Director of School)

**Date**

Please attach any relevant supporting documents (website information/research profile/professional profile) and submit to the UCD Quality Office, Email: [qualityoffice@ucd.ie](mailto:qualityoffice@ucd.ie)

## Appendix 6: Indicative Quality Review School Site Visit Timetable



### Indicative Quality Review School Site Visit Timetable<sup>5</sup>

**[Name of School – Date of visit]**

Please note:

- (i) The date of the site visit will be agreed by the UCD Quality Office and the school. It must be scheduled within the academic term so that students are available to attend meetings.
- (ii) Organisation of attendees is the responsibility of the school under review and should be done in consultation with the UCD Quality Office.
- (iii) There should be a break of at least 10-15 minutes between each meeting to facilitate ingress/egress of staff and to allow the reviewers time to prepare for the next meeting.
- (iv) The meeting room is organised by the school and may be located within the school or outside the school.
- (v) The school is also responsible for organising catering for the Review Group.
- (vi) The timetable may be amended to reflect the activities of the school under review and/or requests by the Review Group.
- (vii) The final site visit timetable will be confirmed by the UCD Quality Office in consultation with the Review Group Chair.

---

<sup>5</sup> Schools should note that this site visit timetable is a draft copy and provided for information purposes only. The timetable provided to the school is produced by the UCD Quality Office in consultation with the Review Group (RG) and is informed by the SAR and review group requirements. No arrangements should be made by the school prior to discussion with the UCD Quality Office. As the timetable is incorporated into the RG report a word version of the timetable should be provided by the school.



Pre-Visit Briefing Prior to Site Visit	
17:00-19:00	Review Group (RG) meet to review preliminary issues and to confirm work schedule and assignment of tasks for the site visit – RG and UCDQO only Include list of RG members and UCDQO Lead names.
19:30	Dinner hosted for the RG by the Registrar/Deputy President/Vice President for Academic Affairs or nominee – RG, Registrar/Deputy President/Vice President, Director of Quality, and UCDQO Lead only

Day 1: Date		
Venue: Room/Building		
09:00 - 09:30	Private meeting of Review Group (RG)	
09:30 - 10:15	RG meet with College Principal	
10:15 - 10:30	Break	
10:30 - 11:15	RG meet with Head of School	
11:15 - 11:30	Tea/coffee break	
11:30 - 12:30	RG meet with the School Research Committee	
	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Role</u>
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
12:30 – 13:00	Break – RG review key observations and prepare for lunch time meeting	
13:00 - 14:00	Working lunch (buffet) – meeting with employers (and/or other external stakeholders)	
	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Role</u>
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
14:00 - 14:30	RG review key observations	
14:30 - 15:45	RG meet with representative group of faculty staff – primary focus on Teaching and Learning, Curriculum and learner experience	
	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Role</u>
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
15:45 - 16:00	RG tea/coffee break	

Day 1: Date		
Venue: Room/Building		
16:00 - 16:30	RG meet with UCD Programme Dean(s)	
16:30 - 16:40	Break	
16:40 - 17:10	RG meet with professional support staff representatives	
	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Role</u>
	•	•
	•	•
17:10 - 17:40	RG meet with technical staff representatives	
	Tour of facilities	
17:40 - 18:30	RG depart	

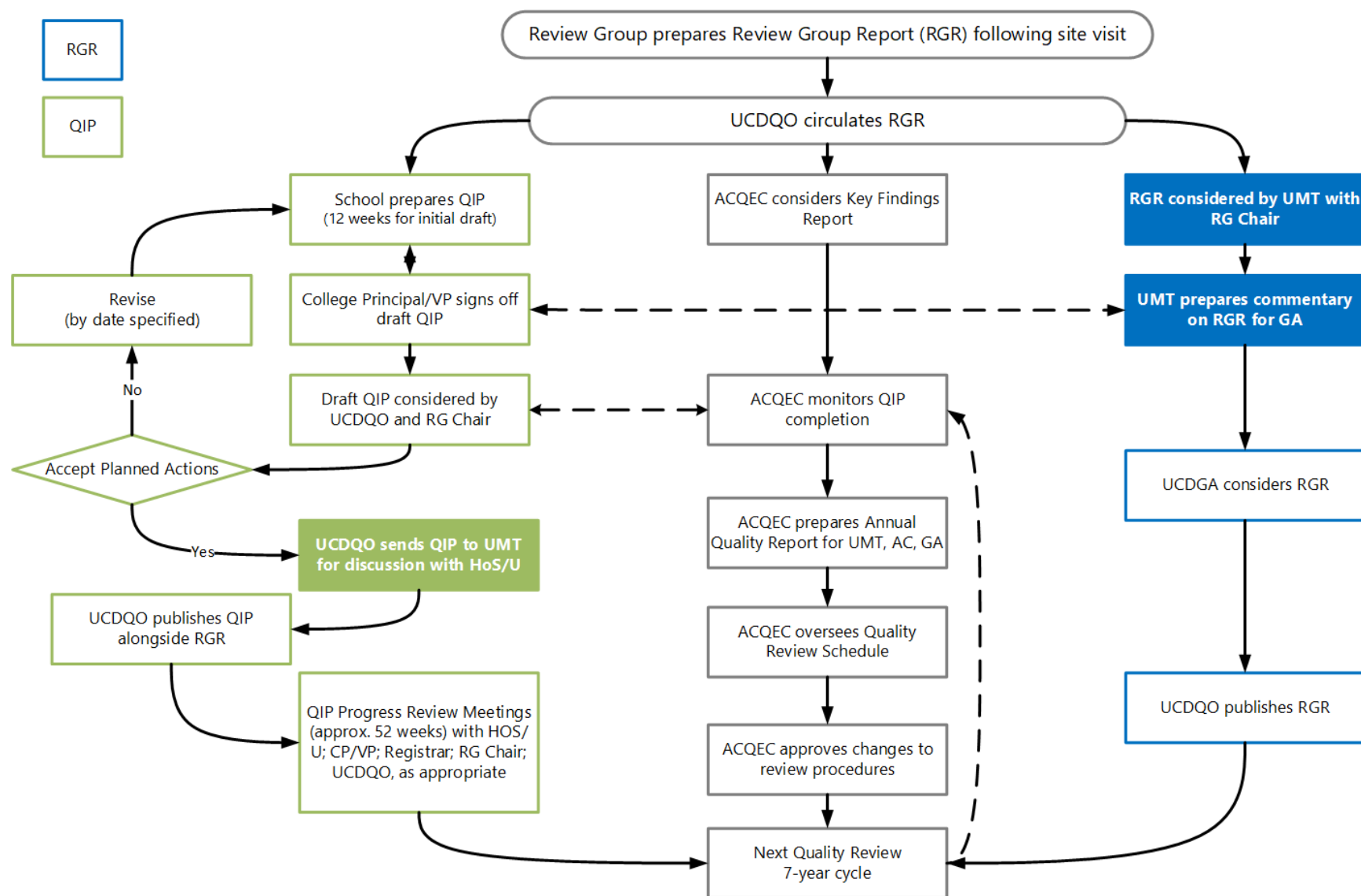
Day 2: Date		
Venue: Room/Building		
08:45 - 09:15	Private meeting of the RG	
09:15 - 10:15	RG meet with a representative group of postgraduate students (taught and research) and recent graduates (PG and UG) – These may be organised as joint or separate meetings.	
	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Role</u>
	•	•
	•	•
10:15 - 10:30	Break	
	RG meet with representative group of undergraduate students	
10:30 – 11:30	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Role</u>
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
11:30 - 11:45	RG tea/coffee break	
11:45 - 12:30	RG meet with College Finance Manager and Head of School to outline school's financial	
12:30 - 13:00	Break - RG review key observations	
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch – Review Group only	

Day 2: Date		
Venue: Room/Building		
	RG meet with recently appointed (in last 3 years) members of staff	
	<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Position/Role</u></b>
14:00 - 14:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
14:45 - 15:00	Break	
15:00 - 16:00	RG meet relevant support service representatives, for example but not limited to UCD Registry, UCD Library, UCD Estate Services, UCD Finance Office, UCD Global, UCD Access & Lifelong Learning, UCD Research, UCD Teaching and Learning, UCD IT Services, College Director or Programme representatives (representatives attending will reflect the SAR content).	
16:00 - 16:15	RG private meeting – review key observations/findings	
16:15 – 17:00	RG meet with representative group of Postdocs	
17:00 - 17:30	RG reflect and draft key conclusions/considerations in relation to their section(s) of the report	
17:30	RG depart	

Day 3: Date	
Venue: Room/Building	
09:00 - 09:30	Private meeting of RG
09:30 - 10:30	(Optional) RG meet with Head of School and/or specified University staff to clarify any outstanding issues or continue preparing draft RG Report
10:30 - 10:45	Break
10:45 - 12:30	RG continue preparing draft RG Report
12:30 - 13:15	Lunch
13:15 - 15:15	RG finalise first draft of RG Report and feedback commendations/recommendations
15:15 - 15:30	RG meet with College Principal to feedback an initial outline of their commendations and recommendations <sup>1</sup>
15:30 - 15:45	Break
15:45 - 16:00	RG meet with Head of School to feedback an initial outline of their commendations and recommendations <sup>1</sup>
16:00 - 16:15	Break
16:15	Exit presentation to all available staff of the school – usually made by an extern member of the Review Group (or other member of the Group, as agreed) summarising the principal commendations/recommendations of the Review Group <sup>6</sup>
16:45	Review Group depart

<sup>6</sup> Director of Quality will also attend the meeting

## Appendix 7: Institutional Oversight of School Quality Review Group Reports (RGR) and Quality Improvement Plans (QIP)



## Appendix 8: Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Outline

### Quality Improvement Plan Outline

#### Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. School Response: Executive Summary**
- 3. Recommendations for Improvements – Follow-Up Action Taken and/or Planned**

This section will outline the school's response to each of the recommendations and the timeline for implementation

- 4. Prioritised Resource Requirements**

The school will also identify and prioritise any resourcing requirements in implementing the recommendations

A QIP template will be provided by the UCD Quality Office along with guidance for its completion.