



University College Dublin

Quality Improvement Plan

School of Sociology

July 2021

1. Introduction

Having been postponed due to the pandemic, the Review Group remote site visit occurred on 16-21 Oct. 2020.

The School received the Review Group's report on 11 Jan. 2021.

The members of the Quality Improvement Committee are:

Iarfhlaith Watson - Associate Professor

Deirdre Brophy - School Manager

Sara O'Sullivan - Associate Professor

Thomas Grund - Associate Professor

Aogán Mulcahy - Associate Professor

Mathew Creighton - Associate Professor

Sarah Carol - Assistant Professor

Mastoureh Fathi - Assistant Professor

The Report was shared with all staff via the School Committees, which met on 28 Jan. 2021. The Quality Improvement Plan was drafted collaboratively as a shared Google Document. The QI Committee met on 4 Feb. 2021. The draft QIP continued to be worked on collaboratively and was shared with the School in a plenary form online from 29 Feb. 2021, leading up to the School Planning Day on 8 Mar. 2021 and afterwards until 19 Mar. 2021, after which it was finalised by the QIC and submitted at the end of March. The Review Group returned some comments in late April. The Head of School shared the comments with relevant staff in the School and requested comments by early June and, following consideration of the RG's comments, the QIP was resubmitted in July.

	recommendation requires oversight from the Advisory Board and the College Principal.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School educational offerings are reviewed annually by external examiners within a tight structure developed by the School and used by external examiners over the past several periods of tenure. 	
Para. 2.9	Recommendation Some of the School's committees (e.g. Research Committee; Graduate Studies Committee) should be more proactive and ambitious, and engage more fully with relevant groups within the College and the wider University.	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p>	<p>This recommendation is unclear, but the committees have responded here as clearly as possible here and, in the Strategic Plan, with specific, measurable targets relating to the KPIs set by the University:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School's new strategic plan, as well as building on the developments of the previous plan, will focus in particular on research. In the previous period the main focus was on the development of the undergraduate curriculum and structuring taught master's programmes. The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) identified development of new graduate programmes as one of our two main priorities (alongside PhD recruitment), and charted ambitious plans for doing so through the current development of three new graduate programmes (MSc Global Solutions, MA Social and Political Thought, MSc Social Demography and Grad. Dip Social Data Analytics) and the large increase in master's student numbers this year, on top of the development of other programmes in recent years (eg, MSc Comparative Social Change, MSc Social Data Analytics, MA Race, Migration & Decolonial Studies). The Research, Impact and Innovation Committee (RIIC) will continue to engage in all relevant CoSSL and UCD activities in which participation is feasible. This includes CoSSL interdisciplinary research initiatives and encouraging active membership via a coherent dissemination of seminar details and links to Institutes (e.g. Earth, Geary, etc...) as a way of initiating meaningful networks outside the School. An increasing research focus is evident in the success of the School in winning two Health Research Board grants at the time of the Review Group site visit. In addition, European Social Survey has moved from the Geary Institute to the School of Sociology. Members of the School RIIC cooperate with members of the research committee of SPIRe with regard to research ethics and hold shared committee memberships in TMREC. 	<p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>A</p>
Para. 2.10	Recommendation The School and College Principal will need to consider succession planning for the current Head of School. A key challenge will be ensuring that the new Head of School has a strong focus on the School realising its full potential in respect of research. Failure to address this issue will be a significant lost opportunity for both the School,	<p>1/2</p> <p>1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Succession planning for the position of Head of School will happen in due course, as normal, nearing the end of the tenure of a Head of School (it is expected to be finalised in the autumn of 2021). The School's new strategy will focus on research in particular (see Para. 2.9). This will be a School-driven strategy, which, with the help (but not the sole responsibility) of the new Head of School, will facilitate the School in realising its added research potential. 	<p>B</p> <p>C</p>

	College and the wider University.			
STAFF AND FACILITIES				
Para. 3.6	Recommendation Given the recent increase in the number of new staff members in the School, and the particular need for the School to further develop its research strategy, the Review Group recommendation that a concerted effort is undertaken to mentor newer faculty in respect of their opportunities to undertake, build and lead world-class research activities in the area of sociology at UCD.	1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the first Culture and Engagement Survey the College established a Newly Appointed Faculty Programme. Newly appointed Faculty in the School have engaged with this programme since the outset in spring 2018. The RIIC will further support new faculty to engage with the CoSSL mentoring programme, which has worked well for some. Faculty who do not want to participate in the CoSSL programme will continue to be offered the opportunity to select a mentor within the School (or from another School if preferable). The Head of School had appointed mentors for individual faculty, but as this did not always work well faculty are now encouraged and guided to find a suitable mentor. In future a clear list of mentors and mentees will be held by the RIIC as a way of coordinating the dissemination of resources, particularly in cases where the mentor is outside the School. In addition, consideration will be given to mentor supports to avoid additional workload and the associated disincentive to mentor if participation requires an additional, uncompensated burden. 	C
Para. 3.7	Recommendation Where appropriate, staff should be encouraged to avail of opportunities to pursue formal training in University Teaching and Learning.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In regular updates on Teaching and Learning matters the School's Director of Teaching and Learning informs staff and encourages colleagues to take part in training opportunities. 	A/C
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The P4G Reviewers will, via P4G and Ad Astra review meetings, continue to encourage staff members to avail of formal training opportunities as part of their career development. 	A/C
Para. 3.8	Recommendation The Review Group encourages the School to apply for Athena SWAN at the earliest opportunity.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school welcomes this recommendation. Informed by research evidence on the gendered impact of the COVID19 pandemic (see for example Risman and Mooi-Reci 2021), and on who does the academic housework in universities (Macfarlane and Burg 2019), the School plans to apply for Athena SWAN in November 2023. In the meantime a priority action is a second and stronger application to the SALI scheme in 2021. 	C

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

<p>Para. 4.17</p>	<p>The School needs to work towards a consistently high quality of undergraduate tutorial teaching. Key to this will be a clearly articulated strategy of tutor recruitment and training. Tutors should be trained in pedagogy and have regular meetings with Module Co-ordinators to facilitate and coordinate their teaching.</p>		<p>We acknowledge the importance of the tutorials within the School teaching and learning strategies. The School has a long tradition of working with tutors, who are primarily recruited from the School’s pool of PhD students, including recipients of School PhD Scholarships and others.</p> <p>The School currently offers 8 graduate full fee remission scholarships and a small stipend which comes with a teaching requirement of approximately 50 hours in the first year and 80 hours p.a. in subsequent years. Other tutors avail of tutorial payments and a 50% fee remission when completing a similar teaching workload. This workload for scholarship/remission recipients is considerably under the stated university guidelines, and the School has moved to this lower teaching requirement over recent years specifically to minimise the workload of tutors. Some other current/former PhD students contribute to our undergraduate tutorial/seminar requirements on an ad hoc basis.</p> <p>School scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis, based on assessments of their academic track record, the quality of their proposal, and other factors, including whether they have any relevant teaching experience.</p>	
		2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UCD Teaching and Learning holds tutor induction workshops each September and January. The tutor coordinator will inform new tutors that they should attend this workshop and also remind tutors that UCD T&L also runs a 5-credit module for tutors. 	A
		2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the College-level, a project was initiated by the Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning to develop a structured tutor training. This project had been temporarily put on hold due to Covid-19, but is expected to begin soon. 	B
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the current academic year, the School scheduled regular training sessions including general training sessions for the tutors (organised at the University-level), and in-school training sessions on using technologies for online teaching. We will continue with such in-school training sessions organized by our tutor coordinator. 	A
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of TL, Head of School, Tutor Coordinator etc have been encouraging the Module Coordinators to maintain consistent coordination with their tutors. We will continue to do so. 	A
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tutor Coordinator collected anonymous feedback from the tutors at the end of the first trimester and we are glad to report there was no point of dissatisfaction brought up in the feedback. We will conduct such reviews regularly. 	A

Para. 4.18	Newly recruited faculty need to be made aware of teacher training opportunities within the School, College and University, and the Review Group recommends that all teaching faculty should strive to continuously update their teaching skills by participating in courses offered by the College or University. Furthermore, the School should maintain a consolidated, running record of all such training undertaken by its faculty members.	2 1 2 2 1 1/2	<p>We acknowledge the importance of continuously updating teaching skills. The School prides itself on a very high uptake in teaching courses offered by the College or the University, but also by the organisation of School-level training events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information about training opportunities is already distributed widely to all staff members by the university. ● At the School-level, we also regularly inform all staff members about training opportunities. We will continue to do so. ● Training opportunities are part of the P4G meetings that all staff members have with P4G Reviewers. ● Training opportunities are part of the University's staff induction course. ● With respect to new incoming staff members we will make training opportunities a standing item in the welcome conversations that new staff members have with the Head of School. ● The annual School profile records details of faculty who have completed UCD University Teaching & Learning Professional Programmes (N=1 per annum 2017 onwards). Teacher-training data is available to each individual faculty member in their Development Workspace. Heads of School recommended at College Executive that, in addition to the UCD T&L courses, other teacher training courses be recorded (or recordable) in the Development Workspace. The Head of School will request a regular report of this data. 	A A A A C D
Para. 4.19	The School should review their assessment strategies to ensure that all modules provide students with timely feedback on a piece of assessment, in accordance with University guidelines and the Academic Regulations.	1 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The School has long held a local policy that feedback is provided within 20 working days of an assessment. (Submission, Grading, Retention Policy). This has now been enshrined in Academic Regulations and all modules are reviewed on a trimester by trimester basis. ● We will use information on Infohub to monitor if adequate feedback strategies are provided by module coordinators. 	A B
Para. 4.20	The School is encouraged to improve communication channels with undergraduate students, for example by having regular meetings with class representatives and/or active staff-student committees, and including feedback on implementation of decisions and	1 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We reinstated staff-student meetings in the academic year 2019/2020. Two meetings are scheduled in each of the autumn and spring trimesters. ● The School now also extended the membership of the School's Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) to include an undergraduate student representative. 	A B

	recommendations.			
Para. 4.21	The School should consider ways to facilitate the establishment of a Sociology Society for students.	2 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School would be very happy to see the establishment of a Sociology Students Society, but also acknowledges that the foundation of a society has to be a student-led initiative, which must then also be approved by the Students' Union. This was on the agenda of the February 2021 staff student meeting and we plan to continue to investigate together with students how we can be supportive in the foundation of such a society. 	C B
Para. 4.22	The Review Group recommends that all teaching faculty should strive to continuously update their teaching skills by participating in courses offered by the College or University.	1/2 1 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We acknowledge the importance of continuously updating teaching skills. The School prides itself with a very high uptake in teaching courses offered by the College or the University, but also by the organisation of School-level training events. Information about training opportunities is already distributed widely to all staff members by the university. The School regularly informs all staff members about training opportunities. We will continue to do so. Training opportunities are part of the P4G meetings that all staff members have with their P4G Reviewer. These are entered into the P4G system, collated by the University and any new training courses added. 	A A B

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Para. 5.11	The Review Group suggests that the School should undertake a strategic review, with appropriate input and support from elsewhere in the College, to identify the most significant opportunities for new graduate taught programmes. This review should identify and prioritise synergies that are likely to exist specifically with the Schools of Philosophy, Geography, and Politics & International Relations, and more broadly with other areas.	1/2	<p>The School follows University protocols with regard to PDARFs and works in line with University Strategy. The culture of the School is open, collaborative and consultative, within the School as well as with other Schools and with the College, as is evident below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of suitable taught masters programmes is a key priority for the GSC. Although the Covid pandemic caused some disruption to our plans, a number of new programmes are scheduled to be launched in 2022: a new MA in Social and Political Thought (run jointly with Philosophy and History), and an MSc Global Solutions, drawing in particular on the expertise of new members of staff (which is included in the College Strategy). In addition, an MSc in Spatial Demography (run jointly with Geography) which formerly was housed at College level, will now be run from the School of Sociology (with scope for the role of programme director to alternate between Sociology and Geography). The School will also add a Graduate Diploma in Social Data Analytics as a partner with our already successful MSc in 	A/B
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		1/2	<p>Social Data Analytics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School members represent the School at different College-level fora, we engage regularly with College staff and with colleagues from other Schools, and we will continue to do so with a view to identifying opportunities for developing suitable programmes. However, we do not see any likely benefit in formally involving the College in our discussions on these issues. On the basis of past experience, we firmly believe that organic/bottom-up initiatives are more likely to be successful on the basis that they have buy-in from the staff members driving the initiative, as well as from the wider School, and thus we will continue to prioritise that broad approach. 	C
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSC will also conduct another survey of our final-year students (a previous survey yielded inconclusive results) in order to gauge student interest in potential new programmes. <p><i>See also 9.5 below.</i></p>	B
Para. 5.12	The School should consider, in consultation with the College and University, strategies to increase the response rate to the student survey to make it a more valid instrument for course review.	1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We acknowledge the importance of student surveys and the TLC will recommend that module coordinators make further use of class time to encourage students to complete the survey at the end of a term. An experiment by one faculty member in autumn 2020 yielded a response rate of 80%. We will build on this success. 	B
Para. 5.13	The School needs to adjust their offering of postgraduate modules that persistently have student numbers below what is considered viable in many other institutions.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In such circumstances modules have been cancelled and module coordinators encouraged to consider ways of increasing enrollment. 	A
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSC will clarify School policy and review our postgraduate curriculum to identify modules that persistently have few students registered to them. 	B
RESEARCH ACTIVITY				
Para.				
Para. 6.18	The School should pursue a more explicit and proactive programme for research rather than simply relying on it to emerge as an outcome of general scholarship and teaching. It should set itself measurable targets such that, for example, by the time of the next Periodic Quality Review it will have	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School developed a draft Strategic Plan at the same time as finalising the QIP. A summary of this Plan was submitted as part of the planning process in May/June 2021. The full Strategic Plan will be finalised at the School Staff Meeting in autumn 2021. The Strategic Plan includes specific targets for the relevant University Key Performance Indicators. The Plan included a focused effort to increase the volume of quality publications, facilitate applications for external and internal research 	B

	<p>hosted two ERCs, and at least one major EU collaborative venture every three years.</p>	<p>1/2</p> <p>1</p>	<p>awards, collaborate within the School (e.g. research clusters) and with other schools/institutions/disciplines, and communicate the relevance of field-weighted citation index.</p> <p><i>Please see Para. 2.8</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RIIC, with support from the School Office, following a redesign of the four administrative positions, will offer a curated list of funding options developed with UCD research to provide relevant information to faculty on available options for external funding. The RIIC will draft and implement a clear relationship and workloads for the development stage of grant writing. This will include a link between the acquisition of seed funding (e.g., Enterprise Ireland) and support (e.g., workloads, research assistants, etc). The unique position of Ad Astra faculty as determined by the University (i.e., beginning with lower teaching and higher research workloads), which includes the requirement of rapid development and submission of research proposals, will be reflected as a priority in the School’s strategy. The strategic plan is in the draft phase. Given the current working conditions and public health environment, the school plan will be finalised in autumn 2021. This timeline has been agreed to in collaboration with the College Principal and will result in a feasible, inclusive and safe process of deliberation. The Ad Astra are new faculty without exception. Their unique position (determined by the University: 5-year contract, research expectations, initially reduced teaching workload) means that they require specific supports and on-boarding into the research environment, distinct from faculty with a longer period of adjustment, who have had the benefit of in-person orientation and on-site working conditions. In that sense, Ad Astra faculty confront an intrinsically distinct set of circumstances. • The aspirations of the School in terms of the number and target of submitted proposals will reflect the research interest and needs of the faculty. 	<p>C</p> <p>C</p>
<p>Para. 6.19</p>	<p>The School should, as a matter of urgency, set in place research groupings with a view to having an explicit and clear research strategy with achievable research outcomes.</p>	<p>1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RIIC in collaboration with staff will develop at least 2 research groupings based on faculty-led interests and stated willingness to participate. Suggested options, based on existing faculty overlap are the following: Migration, Social Theory, Social Networks, Computational Social Science, Peace and War, Religion, Social Inequality, Crime, Violence and Nationalism. Research groupings that overlap with existing international initiatives will be encouraged to develop meaningful collaboration. These groupings will be used to curate and communicate available funding streams with UCD Research. • The initiation of research groupings will result in a platform for collaboration. The 	<p>C</p>

		1	research groupings will be supported in the pursuit of collaborative proposals for external funding, which will be decided among the participants. Ambitious targets, in line with the targets set in the School Strategic Plan, and with an external focus, will be set. This will engage with the broader mission of increasing the number of externally funded, collaborative projects. Potential options include, but are not limited to the Wellcome Trust, National Institute of Health, National Science Foundation, European Research Council. National funding opportunities via the Science Foundation of Ireland and the Irish Research Council as well as School/College seed funding schemes are also seen as pathways toward successful collaboration.	C
Para. 6.20	Explicit efforts should be made to pursue research funding notably from EU sources and, in the process, build better external and sustained collaborative links.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With the addition of new faculty the School's student:faculty ratio (which had been at around 35:1 for decades) has improved dramatically (currently at about 25:1). This has allowed more time for research, including research applications. Just to give two examples: 1. at the time of the Review Group site visit the School was awarded two Health Research Board grants (over €0.3M) and 2. two faculty have submitted applications to ERC (about €5M). The increased pursuit of research funding is facilitated by existing links, which will, in turn, allow the School to formalise, deepen, broaden and multiply its collaborative links. <p><i>Please see Para. 6.18 and 6.19</i></p>	C
Para. 6.21	The School should institute a major revision of its collective publications strategy such as targeting top-tier English-language journals in Sociology, and publishing impactful books in the discipline with leading publishing houses.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School is aware of the University move away from reliance on journal impact factors. The RIIC will fully adopt UCD's Statement on the Responsible Use of Metrics, taking into account the many different dimensions of research, and also the variation across the discipline. The School will acknowledge the value of all relevant research outputs (such as datasets, software and creative works as well as publications) and other types of contributions, such as training early-career researchers and influencing policy and practice, and that metrics are not a surrogate measure of the quality of research. 	B
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research metrics will be used in the QIP and the School Strategy to support, but not supplant, qualitative expert assessment. School has, in its Strategic Plan, set itself targets based on the University KPIs and the University Output-Based Research Support Scheme. 	B
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a discipline Sociology is very open (and interdisciplinary). To reflect the changing discipline, the School will target first quartile journals, defined by SCImago, in the following subject areas: Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities and Multidisciplinary. This approach captures the traditional English-language outlets in social science and the humanities. Moreover, it reflects innovation in the school as 	C

		1	<p>these areas include contemporary social theory and history, which overlaps substantially in the humanities, and computational approaches to social science, which is inherently interdisciplinary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A coherent training will be offered by the RIIC to underline the role of publication in grant acquisition. This will highlight the key metrics used in evaluating aspiring PIs. <p><i>Please see Para. 6.18.</i></p>	C
Para. 6.22	It is imperative that younger staff and more recent appointments are properly mentored and advised with regard both to research applications and publication plans.		<i>See Para 3.6</i>	
Para. 6.23	Better research links should be built within UCD with cognate Schools such as Politics & International Relations, and Geography, and via institutes such as the Geary Institute.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RIIC will contact our equivalents in Geography, SPiRE, SPSWSJ and other Schools as appropriate to reinforce existing links and develop future collaborative initiatives. Educational collaborations (e.g., MSc Spatial Demography) will be used as a forum to solidify research relationships. 	C
Para. 6.24	The School should clarify the flow of research money, notably overheads, such that these are allocated fairly, especially where more than one School or Institute is involved. The College should ensure transparency in relation to appropriate allocations to different units.	1/2 1	<p>UCD Research has been undertaking a plan in which an increasing percentage of overheads are provided to Schools. The School is only now beginning to receive overheads in the tens of thousands of Euro. This will reach a maximum of 40% of the overheads going to Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RIIC will clarify the situation with UCD Research in relation to the flow of overheads to schools and the equitable division of such between researchers from different schools working on the same project. • As part of the School Strategy the RIIC will develop a financial plan for overheads. 	B B
Para. 6.25	The School should ensure that research leave is documented in accordance with the UCD School of Sociology Research Leave Document (SAR Appendix 6.5) and that systems of report-back are in place so that outputs can be linked to leave.	1 1 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School research leave is already in operation. • On completion of a period of leave the faculty member submits a report to the Head of School. These reports will be deposited in a folder and shared with the Director of Research. • The RIIC will investigate the best method to link research leave reports with outputs. 	A B C

Para. 6.26	In its undergraduate programme, the School should take steps to inculcate in students an understanding of research design - how to 'get at' and formulate research questions - rather than simply an understanding of research methods and techniques with regard to data collection and analysis.	1	This is already in place from level 1 onwards. In SOC10070 Sociological Analysis and Research Design there is a lecture dedicated to how to 'get at' and formulate research questions and there are four weeks of material that is not just simply an understanding of research methods and techniques. There are also two research methods modules at level 2. In SOC20060 Quantitative Social Research, additional lectures are dedicated to formulating research questions and hypotheses. Within an assignment, students derive their own hypotheses and test them using secondary data. With the first cohort of fourth years in 2021/22, a new Stage 4 research methods module offering students the opportunity to work with faculty on research projects will be piloted.	A
MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT				
Para. 7.11	The Review Group would encourage faculty to embrace the opportunities that UCD and other organisations offer to enhance the quality of their teaching to the benefit of students.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty in the School already regularly review individual modules and the School encourages faculty to participate in Teaching and Learning related training sessions as well as providing training sessions within the School. Moreover, the high student evaluations of modules are an indication of the quality students perceive in our modules (e.g., Sociology modules averaged a score of over 4 out of 5 in the most recent student evaluations of modules in both the autumn and spring trimesters, 2020/21). <p><i>Please see Para. 4.22.</i></p>	A
Para. 7.12	The School must improve on and further develop structured interactions at Programme level with undergraduate Sociology students.	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Associate Dean for DN750 started Programme-level meetings with students in which our School is represented. <p><i>Please see Para. 4.20.</i></p>	A
Para. 7.13	Opportunities should be identified for undergraduate and graduate taught students to engage directly in the curriculum enhancement process. One option would be by establishing student representation on School committees. University policy and guidelines in this area should be consulted to determine appropriate actions.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSC will consult with masters programme directors in order to consider how best to draw on module evaluation surveys and other student feedback with a view to feeding this into the curriculum enhancement process. <p><i>Please see Para. 4.20.</i></p>	B
Para. 7.14	The School should better utilise resources within the UCD Careers Network to identify alumni career outcomes beyond the nine-month "Graduate Outcomes" survey. School self-evaluation for quality enhancement should reflect	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TLC and GSC will consult with the UCD Careers Network to identify resources that may help establish longer-term graduate outcomes, and draw on these in our marketing/promotional activities where appropriate. 	B

	on feedback from alumni, placement supervisors and employers.			
Para. 7.15	Assessment strategies should be designed to ensure that students are given appropriate and timely feedback from the earliest years of the Programme. This would enable students to develop, grow and achieve University-level graduate outcomes.	2 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The University implemented changes that now require all module coordinators to outline feedback strategies for their modules in the module descriptor forms.. All modules in Sociology have such a feedback strategy. <p><i>Please see Para. 4.19.</i></p>	A A
SUPPORT SERVICES				
Para. 8.12	The Review Group noted that there are good support units for students outside of the School, such as the UCD Writing Centre, UCD Access and Lifelong Learning and UCD Teaching and Learning. However, the School does not appear to take full advantage of these. The Review Group recommend that the School investigate opportunities for their students and staff to link up with these units.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TLC and GSC will investigate opportunities for our students and staff to intensify use of support units. We acknowledge that staff members and students already take advantage of support units. 	B
Para. 8.13	As mental health and finances were noted as the most significant Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) issues for Sociology students, the Review Group encourages the School and College to actively seek further supports for their most vulnerable and disadvantaged students.	1/2 1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School has been active in this area and thanks the Review Group for that recommendation. We will continue to seek such further support. In particular the School will work closely with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, as well as with UCD Access and Lifelong Learning. The Head of School has also consulted with the Students' Union Welfare Officer on this matter this year, having already had a similar consultation with the Students' Union Education Officer last year. 	B A
Para. 8.14	The UCD Careers Network, and the College Career and Skills Consultant should be utilised to a greater extent to forge links with employers and alumni.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TLC and GSC will consult with the UCD Careers Network and the College Career and Skills Consultant to consider ways of making greater use of these resources in developing stronger links with employers and alumni. <p><i>See also Para. 7.14.</i></p>	B
Para. 8.15	The Review Group was unable to meet with a representative from UCD Access and Lifelong Learning during the course of the review, and recommends that such a meeting is prioritised for the next review.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At its next Quality Review the School will invite a representative from UCD Access and Lifelong Learning to contribute to the Self-Assessment Report and to attend a meeting with the Review Group during its visit. UCD Access and Lifelong Learning was undergoing a Quality Review at the same time as the School of Sociology, which made it difficult for a representative to be available during the Sociology site 	C+

			visit..	
COLLABORATIVE PROVISION				
Para. 9.5	The Review Group encourages the School to consider further fruitful synergies with, in particular, the Schools of Philosophy, Geography, and Politics & International Relations, and with other areas in the University, for developing postgraduate programmes.	1/2	The School has good relationships with all the other Schools in the College (and wider), including the Schools of Philosophy, Geography, and Politics & International Relations, and has worked with these schools on numerous projects. For example,	
		1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the School, along with the Schools mentioned by the Review Group, developed the BSc Computational Social Science and the Sustainable Societies Structured Elective. 	A
		1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and has been developing plans relating to the Politics and Society Leaving Certificate subject. 	C
		1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans for a number of postgraduate programmes are already in train, including a new MA in Social and Political Thought (run jointly with Philosophy, and History, starting in September 2022), and an MSc in Spatial Demography (run jointly with Geography, and housed in Sociology in the first instance). 	B/C
		1/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to seek further synergies with these and other Schools with a view to developing suitable programmes drawing on expertise within the School. 	C
Para. 9.6	The Review Group encourages the School to fully exploit the opportunities offered by the UCD/NUin and other Junior Year Abroad (JYA) programmes, as well as to explore other possible collaborations, for example through UCD Global.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School has included NUin students in our level 1 Introduction to Sociology module for several years. 	A
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School has always made its modules available to and welcomed JYA students. 	A
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School developed a bespoke module on contemporary Ireland for JYA students (this was a module based on lectures from authors of chapters of the book Contemporary Ireland, which is in the process of being rewritten and published by UCD Press and the TLC can examine the possibility of it being the basis of a revived module for JYA students). 	C
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We offer some core modules in the JYA programmes and extended this recently. We are now also promoting Introduction to Computational Social Science (stage 1) in these programmes. 	A
		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TLC will consult again with the International Programme Manager in UCD Global to investigate further possibilities.. 	B

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Para. 10.10	The School acknowledges that it has to raise its profile in international research networks that are central to making successful bids for research funds. It must do this as a matter of urgency.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of the recently improved student:faculty ratio (from 35:1 for decades to 25:1 this year) the School is in a better position to leverage its research networks. With more faculty, and many new faculty, the RIIC will update the list of existing formal roles that faculty hold in international associations within Sociology and cognate disciplines to facilitate faculty in leveraging each other's research networks for successful research bids. <p><i>Please see Para. 6.18 and 6.19.</i></p>	B
Para. 10.11	There is potential for making better use of the Graduate Outcomes Survey with a view to documenting the post graduate future employment patterns of its students.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The TLC and GSC will review the Graduate Outcomes Survey in relation to employment patterns of our graduates, and seek to incorporate this into our promotional material and advertising strategies. <p><i>Please see Para. 7.14.</i></p>	B
Para. 10.12	The Leaving Certificate subject 'Politics and Society' has potential for raising the profile of the School in conjunction with the School of Politics and International Relations.	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School initiated discussions and the TLC will continue this work with other Schools (Education, Law and Politics & Int Relations) to consider the provision of a training programme for 2nd level teachers involved in the delivery of 'Politics and Society'. In this context the Heads of Sociology and Education consulted on ways in which the Schools can work together in three areas: 1. the provision (along with Law and Politics & International Relations) of a CPD course for current teachers of Politics and Society (the Head of Sociology also consulted with the President of the Sociological Association of Ireland about ways of broadening such a course across the country); 2. the inclusion of sociological content in the Politics and Society aspect of the graduate teacher training degree; 3. the inclusion of Sociology in the future teacher training undergraduate degree. These plans were put on hold due to the disruption associated with Covid. 	C
Para. 10.13	Passing the Irish Journal of Sociology on to its editorial successor at Queens University Belfast,	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty as well as postdocs and doctoral students will be encouraged to participate – both as members and participants – in the Sociological Association of Ireland 	A

	<p>given the School's success in improving the journal's standing and visibility, is an opportunity to forge stronger links with that university and other similar institutions on the island of Ireland.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>(SAI). This is the institutional home of the Irish Journal of Sociology and is a coherent bond across institutions on the Island of Ireland. Some faculty continue serving on the editorial board of the IJS and other faculty on the Executive Committee of the SAI.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff will continue to build on the already strong links that exist with colleagues in different institutions, including serving as subject external examiners and PhD examiners, contributing to interinstitutional teaching programmes, and collaborating on research projects. 	<p>A/C</p>
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3. Prioritised Resource Requirements

This section should only contain a list, prioritised by the Quality Improvement Committee, of recommendations outlined in the Review Group Report, which require additional resources. The planned action to address each recommendation with an estimate of the cost involved should also be included: *there appear to be no priorities identified by the review group that would enable to school to seek further resources*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Note: The Quality Improvement Plan should be used to inform Unit and College level academic, support service and resource planning activities.