University College Dublin

Quality Improvement Plan

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UCD School of Economics

9 November 2018

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1. Introduction

We would first like to thank the Review Group – Professor Torres Sweeney (Chair), Associate Professor John Crean (Deputy Chair), Professor Philip McCann (Extern), and Professor Margaret Stevens (Extern). The review they undertook was thorough, comprehensive, and time-consuming and we gratefully acknowledge their efforts on behalf of the School of Economics (SoE). In this response, we lay out how we are addressing their recommendations.

As they acknowledge, the context in which we do so is one where the SoE continues to operate in a difficult situation regarding budgets, staffing, and available facilities. In particular, our student-staff ratio is double the average of our comparator institutions. Resolving this requires aggressive hiring. Unfortunately, that does not appear especially likely in the near future. Although the University has announced more aggressive hiring plans, the timing of these does not work well with the Economics job market, a concern the Head of School (HoS) has already raised with the College Principal and the University President. Hopefully, this will be addressed in the next round of this hiring process. In the meantime, we will do our absolute best to secure excellent candidates under the current scheme's parameters. Outside of that, in direct discussion with the College Registrar, the HoS has been told in no uncertain terms that the baseline budgeting for the SoE – widely regarded within the College as inequitable and penalizing– will not be revised. Therefore, the SoE is expected to continue to maintain a high degree of profitability relative to others in the college which leaves little room in our budget for hiring outside of the University scheme. This budget limitation also leaves us in a poor position to expand our PhD programme, provide adequate administrative support, and engage with other key areas of improvement. This had led to a culture of frustration and disengagement among significant portions of the staff.

That said, in the context of these constraints, we believe that many of these recommendations have the potential to make meaningful improvements in the way the SoE delivers its core teaching duties, undertakes innovative research, and serves as a meaningful and supportive place of work, improvements that may begin to increase engagement by all staff. In particular, we wish to highlight two things. First, there has been a major restructuring in the administrative structure of the SoE. This has included the hiring of a school manager, something that has already made a tremendous difference in reducing the burden on the HoS and improving the efficiency of the office. In addition, the introduction of a two Deputy Head structure has worked in a complementary way. Second, we have already began improvements to staff communication and information dissemination. We have started a monthly, no-agenda meeting (the No Free Lunch) that brings together staff (academic and administrative), post-docs, and PhD students to talk about what works (e.g. best practice in assessment and communication tools) and what does not (e.g. problems with the technology in classrooms). In addition, in January 2019 we will begin a monthly Full Information talk open to all staff and, as appropriate, post-docs and PhD students. These will feature speakers from Virtual Learning, Finance, Career Development, Research's Grant Support Unit, and more. To date, speakers from these units have been limited to short, compressed presentations during our normal school meetings. This new forum gives ample time for their presentations and a functional question and answer period. In addition, some of these will feature roundtables from SoE staff on, for example, how to apply for grants. Thus, this supports several of the recommendations by better disseminating information and supporting staff development as educators, researchers, and administrative contributors. Finally, on 1 November 2018 we had our first ever all-staff Away Day which, similar to the Full Information series, gave the SoE a longer time period in which to discuss our goals and strategies (including our responses to this review's recommendations).

Below, we detail how we addressed each specific recommendation. Please note that the paragraph references below refer to the relevant paragraphs in the Review Group report text with the original recommendations listed in italics.

Categories

1. Recommendations concerning academic, organisational and other matters which are entirely under the control of the unit
2. Recommendations concerning shortcomings in services, procedures and facilities which are outside the control of the unit
3. Recommendations concerning inadequate staffing, and/or facilities which require recurrent or capital funding

Timescale

A. Recommendation already implemented
B. Recommendations to be implemented within one year
C. Recommendations to be implemented within five years
D. Recommendations which will not be implemented

Report	RG Recommendation	Category (see list above)	Action Taken/Action Planned/Reason for Not Implementing	Timescale (see list above)
			ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT	
2.14	*It is imperative that the College Principal and the Head of School are aligned in terms of their approaches to both the current challenges within the School as well as planning for the future of the School. There is an urgent need for greater transparency of roles and accountability for responsibilities at the various levels of School organisation. Hence, the Review Group recommends that the incoming Head of School is allocated an advisor (a senior UCD*	1	The HoS has now been paired with an advisor (currently Prof. Kimberley Scharf, the Head of School of Economics at the University of Birmingham). This external choice was made rather than the suggested internal one for three reasons. First, there is already a support network among heads both within the College and across the University into which the HoS has already tapped. Second, by having an advisor from Economics, this advisor is in a position to offer advice specific to the subject (e.g. job market advice). Finally, this external advisor is at a Russell Group comparator institution and can offer a fresh set of ideas and eyes to guide the HoS in reaching SoE objectives.	A

	academic, external to the School and College, with institutional and Headship experience) to advise the School with regard to the development of its structures and processes.			
2.15	*The Review Group recommends that the incoming Head of School delegates specific responsibilities to each member of the School Executive Committee. The Review Group also recommends that this committee increases the frequency of meetings to, at minimum, a monthly basis to both manage the running of the School and work on the School strategic plan.*	1	This has been fully implemented. Under the current structure, the School Exec consists of the HoS, two Deputy Heads (one focusing on undergraduate programmes, currently Sarah Parlane, and one on research and post-graduate studies, currently Chris Jepsen), the School Manager (currently Helen Kenny, who oversees the administrative side of the school), and an additional senior academic (currently Prof. Liam Delaney) who acts as a sounding board for the rest. Further, we now have a listing of the duties of each major admin role, the duties of each member of the support staff, and a list of who fulfills every admin role in the SoE. This has been distributed to all staff. Finally, even prior to the receipt of the recommendations, the School Exec moved to a regular monthly meeting combined with additional meetings as needed.	A
2.16	*The School should clarify how its global engagement activities are represented in School structures and the Review Group recommends that the academic staff cohort teaching in Beijing be represented on the School Executive Committee.*	1	Within the school, there is a dedicated person overseeing the BDIC activities (currently Vincent Hogan). In addition to *ad hoc* meetings on an as needed basis, this person has a regular monthly meeting with the HoS. Issues from that meeting are then brought to the School Exec monthly meetings with that person attending if they and/or the HoS deem it needed. This is done instead of requiring that the BDIC representative be at all School Exec meetings to minimize the administrative burden on that person, particularly as this role does not come with any course relief. Added to the fact, that the role is currently filled by a junior member of staff, this minimization seems especially important.	A
2.17	*The School should consider extending the current 3-year headship term to five-*	1	While we agree that all senior staff should be expected to take on the role of HoS, we disagree strongly with the notion that the Headship should last	D

	years, which would improve continuity. All senior academic staff should be expected to take their turn in the role, as well as fully engage in the operations of the School Executive Committee or equivalent.		for five years. In particular, as the tradition within the SoE has been a three-year post, forcing future heads to take on the role for five years will likely make it much more difficult to ensure participation by all senior staff. We take the latter point into account as attested to our current distribution of administration duties which involves more of the senior members of staff. This adjustment also seeks to lower the admin burden on early-career researchers, supporting Recommendations 4.11 and 6.12. This will be revisited prior to the start of the 2019-2020 academic year (and each year thereafter) to ensure that this recommendation is maintained.	
2.18	*As the School has ambitious plans in relation to future staff planning and recruitment, the integration of the relevant activities of the Head of School, the School Manager, the College HR Partner and the UCDHR Resourcing Consultant is essential. Therefore, the Review Group recommends that this group have formal, agenda driven, monthly meetings.*	1	Unfortunately, the optimism in this regard seems to have been misplaced. At the time of the review, we were under the impression that the school would be given a significant number of vacant slots to fill. Instead, the University has decided to pursue a rather different approach in which the open faculty positions are not given to particular schools but are part of an open competition. Further, given the current indications on the working of the scheme, the SoE is not hopeful that it will be functional within the context of the job market for economists which ends in late February whereas the current scheme does not intend to interview until April. Therefore, it is at best premature and at worst unnecessary for these monthly meetings. These concerns have already been raised with the College Principal and University President who have indicated that there may be a possibility of altering the scheme's timeline in future years. That said, we will endeavor to secure excellent candidates within the confines of the current plan. As an alternative, we are actively pursuing the potential for strategic hires. In particular, we are currently preparing to make a case to hire a senior academic in Behavioral (which would support the expanded offerings at every level in that field) and Environmental (which would solidify the relationship with a currently temporary staff member). These cases will be brought forward in the Spring 2019 term at the latest. In addition, we are beginning to look into the options at hiring staff in Financial Economics. These latter positions would be self-funding due to the ability to attract	A

additional international students and post-grads (both EU and non-EU). In addition, since this would make changes to the exchange programme with BDIC feasible, this would feed into Recommendations 8.12 and 9.6.

These possibilities aside, the HoS and School Manager have met repeatedly with the HR Partner and laid plans for what hiring there is to be done. Currently, we have two positions advertised, one in Behavioral and one open field BDIC position, interviewing for which will take place in January 2019. We have also jointly made a commitment that, should there be future hiring possibilities, that meetings will commence quickly and continue regularly through the process.

A final point here that must be noted is our extreme frustration with the efficiency of the HR office where their slow response time has caused considerable delays in advertising the two positions we are seeking to fill. The Economics job market is such that, to get quality candidates, interviews and offers must happen by mid-February. In our last hiring round, we waited too late and many of the candidates we wanted to bring for an interview were already gone. In response, during this current hiring round, in consultation with our HR partner (Adrian Woods) we shifted our interviews to the end of January. As urged by him, we therefore put the closing date at 11 December 2018. In order to get a good application pool, we had all of our text to HR in mid-September and at each step of the way, responded to them within 24 hours. This quick response was not reciprocated with weeks going by between our response and their next communication. This has led to a situation where, as of this writing (9 November 2018), the ads for which we are paying thousands of Euros for are still not up. This means that we will have a job listing open for a mere four weeks before it closes. Further, we have committed to sending staff to the three major job fairs, again at a cost of thousands from our school budget, yet we may have very few qualified candidates to talk to because of the failures within HR. Therefore, many of the staffing issues we face are out of our hands both because of insufficient funding and because of insufficient support from other units within UCD.

2.19	*The Review Group recommends that UCD Human Resources meet with School staff to clarify changes to UCDHR structures, roles, responsibilities, terminology and lines of communication.*	1	As noted in the introduction, the SoE has begun a regular, monthly workshop (the Full Information series) in which we invite representatives from various administrative units within UCD to attend and make presentations like this. These commence in January 2019 and will continue, with members of some units such as this one returning routinely to inform staff of changes and aid in the introduction of new hires.	B
2.20	*Formal agreements on set monthly meetings with the Head of School, College Finance Manager and the School Finance SEA would ensure that the School continues to effectively maintain this financial management activity. These meetings would support the School development of a longer-term plan to prioritise the areas of the School most in need and ensure that new revenues retained by the School are invested to greatest effect in the most transparent manner possible.*	1	We have already begun these meetings on a regular, more or less monthly basis, albeit without a specific recurring set date for them due to the schedule of the College Finance Manager. In addition to these meetings, we have asked the College Finance Manager to be one of the speakers in our Full Information series. This has been done not only to help the entire school have a better understanding of how budgets are made within the University (something particularly important for training future HoS) but also to help them understand why certain decisions are being made and to solicit new ideas for future progress.	A
2.21	*The School, with guidance from the College Principal, should implement a mentoring system for all staff. The mentor may focus on teaching or research as is required on an individual basis. Appropriate mentors should be identified from the wider University community, as appropriate.*	1	The SoE already had a mentoring programme in place for new faculty, one which is continuing. We are currently in the process of setting up mentors for pre-existing assistant professors and those at the associate level. That will be fully in place before the start of the Spring 2019 term. At that time, we will commence our engagement with the Principal to identify mentors from outside Economics for the higher ranked staff, with that process to be completed by the end of the current academic year. A final component of our efforts here is the introduction of a monthly lunch specifically without an agenda (known as the No Free Lunch, something separate from the Full	B

			Information series) during which our staff (including administrative staff, post-docs, and PhD students) have an opportunity to talk with one another. In particular, this is being encouraged as an opportunity for mentors/mentees to touch base with one another.	
2.22	*The Review Group recommends that the School put in place an external advisory board. The main objective of the board would be to help formulate and support the vision and ambition of the School and its graduates for the future. Membership of the EAB should include a senior external academic, alumni, a range of graduate employers, Masters and PhD graduates and postdoctoral fellows etc.*	1	The SoE admits concern with this particularl recommendation. As outlined here and below (under Recommendations 7.14 and 9.5) this has a strong indication that the role of this board is to outline what they want the School to teach. This fundamentally changes the education process from one of a broad-based and widely applicable learning to one of training specifically for the market place. Put simply, we do not believe that that is the purpose of a university.

With this in mind, while we are formulating such a board, we wish to emphasize the advisory nature of their role. That said, there are certainly things to be gained from such a board in addition to their advice. First, it provides us with additional avenues to pursue internships for our MSc students. Further supporting our efforts to bridge the gap between their education at UCD and job market possibilities, we have introduced "exit interviews" to learn from students and their hosts what skills were most useful during the internship and which they felt needed more preparation in. Second, it provides a springboard for external funding for a possible data analytics lab (see Recommendation 3.17b and 5.5). Third, the SoE already has deep collaborations with government, private sector, and non-governmental institutions. In conjunction with Recommendation 6.12 we are recommitting ourselves to the value of this work and, in line with Recommendation 6.13, we are actively working to bring in early-career researchers on these joint projects. We will formulate a working group in February 2019 to begin identifying and contacting potential board members. This will be complete by June 2019, allowing us to schedule our first advisory board meeting in autumn 2019. Given the schedules of the caliber of members we are aiming for, we expect that the actual meetings will be annual with bi-annual email updates provided by the HoS. | C |

2.23	*The roles of the administrative staff need to be clearly defined. This should be undertaken prior to any future administrative appointments with clearly articulated reporting lines, responsibilities and job specifications. This should also include clarification of relationships with staff in UCD Support Units*	1	As noted under Recommendation 2.15, at the beginning of term (and prior to the receipt of the full review), we compiled a list of our administrative staff and their respective duties. This was distributed to all staff and is maintained by the School Manager in a shared Google drive. In addition, we undertook a comparable exercise for the major admin roles filled by academics. This too was distributed and is maintained on the Google drive. Both of these documents will be kept up to date and revised and redistributed as changes occur (including the hiring of additional administrative staff).	A
2.24	*The School should ensure that it is fully compliant with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), May 2018 and additional requirements around the protection of personal data.*	1	We are currently fully compliant and have been in contact with staff to update them on the regulations (e.g. how student grades can be distributed, ensuring that sensitive information is not freely available in the office, etc.). These reminders are also regularly repeated (e.g. in early November when midterm results are becoming available). In addition, we are currently working on securing a speaker on GDPR for the Full Information series.	A
	STAFF AND FACILITIES			
3.13	*UCDHR should provide appropriate support, training and mentoring for all incoming Heads of School to enable an effective transition of headship and support during their tenure.*	2	UCD provides several types of support, training, and mentoring to incoming Heads. When the current HoS took over in September 2018, there was a two-day induction at the university level, a separate college induction, a meeting with HR to discuss the available supports, and numerous one-on-one meetings with representatives from every facet of UCD to explain their role and interactions with the HoS. While some of those interactions will only become clear during the process of actually being Head, all of those individuals have made themselves repeatedly available to answer questions, re-cover old topics, and address new ones as they arise. In addition, the outgoing HoS (Karl Whelan) prepared a	A

| | | | document outlining many of the duties of Headship that has proven very valuable. This is maintained on the SoE Google drive. We would also like to note that even though his term is finished, Karl has made himself available when needed and we gratefully thank him for that. Finally, we also wish to specifically thank the College Principal who has made himself particularly available to the new HoS for one-on-ones to discuss both the issues surrounding the SoE and methods of addressing the added stresses that comes with the role. It is our belief that these efforts will continue at every level. | |
| 3.14 | *The School should consider a more flexible approach regarding the provision of individual staff rewards and incentives for innovations in teaching, organization, and research.* | 3 | To date, when a staff member has requested additional funding such as for conference travel, this has been handed out on essentially a first-come, first-served basis. Currently, the School Exec is working to devise an alternative system that rewards research (building from the OBRSS system), teaching success, grant applications (separately from actual success), and significant administrative roles. This, however, is limited by the available budget. Therefore, we are limited in our ability to reward success in this fashion. Further, we are aware that these funds are often an input into success. As such, depriving staff of them may further the inequalities in research output across them. We will announce this scheme in Spring 2019 and commence it beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year. Outside of research funding, the SoE is exploring ways to reward research success with lower teaching responsibilities. This, however is obviously hampered by our staff numbers and, comparable to research funding, is linked to the issue of inputs/outputs. Therefore, doing so would require raising baseline teaching loads to five courses per year. Given that it was already increased to four in the 2018-2019 academic year, there is concerns about what such a move would do to morale. We will revisit this possibility when there is a significant change in staffing numbers. Beyond this, at the recent Away Day, there was a discussion on whether research | B |

			sabbaticals are a right or a reward, something that will feed into future discussions on sabbatical requests. Nevertheless, the reality of the situation is that we work for a public sector body. We cannot reward staff with salary, are restricted in our ability to incentivize them via research support or teaching buyouts and have no real sticks to motivate non-performers. Therefore, this is a perennial issue that we will re-visit in the future to examine additional possible reward schemes.	
3.15	*The School should introduce an induction programme for all new staff to enhance their understanding of School and University systems, to ensure clarity about their roles, awareness of their rights and responsibilities and opportunities for development.*	2	This is now provided at a College and University level and the SoE has ensured that all new staff are aware of these opportunities. This is being further reinforced via the Full Information series via speakers covering career development, the promotion process, etc. that begins in January 2019.	A
3.16	*The School should consider how the new P4G scheme may be better integrated with the School's ambitions, vision and mission. Staff should also be supported and encouraged by the School to participate on courses offered by the University or through their engagement in Communities of Practice as part of their personal CPD, upskilling and learning through the sharing of good practice.*	2	As of this response, there is still relatively little indication of what precisely P4G will be. That said, two changes are currently underway that will feed into this process, whatever its form. First, beginning with the Away Day, we have begun to articulate our expectations regarding research, teaching, and administration contributions. This day was the first of its type in the School and provided an extended forum to discuss these issues. In addition, it was prefaced by an extensive survey of all staff covering over numerous aspects of the SoE. Moderated by Michael Sinnott (UCD-Agile), Away Day combined a morning of team-building exercises with an afternoon's discussion on four key areas: undergraduate programmes, post-graduate programmes, research and grants, and administration and workload. Since P4G seems designed to encourage self-reflection, this group discussion gave a better idea to staff of the standards that they should be using in doing their self-reflection. Note that the articulation of SoE goals also plays a major role in the revision of the	B

			School Strategic Plan which starting in January 2019. Second, beginning with the current academic year, the SoE is developing a new, more transparent workload model (such as that used by the School of Law and the School of Social Policy, Social Work, and Justice). This will be done with support of the College Principal. By observing the level at which others in the school are performing, this will again aid in self-reflection. Finally, as to the last point in this recommendation, we are currently using the No Free Lunches to share good practice. Specifically, the HoS has used these to encourage small group discussion on the T&L training that some school members are currently taking. In addition, we will use the Full Information series to bring in someone in Career Development to speak with staff (which will also give them a better idea of the opportunities offered elsewhere in UCD) although, given the priority of other topics, e.g. Recommendations 4.12 and 8.9, this will likely wait until the 2019-2020 academic year.	
3.17a	*The School should actively engage with both the College and UCD Estate Services on two projects:* a) *to ensure the coordinated modernisation of their space within the Newman Building in 2018;*	3	The SoE recently contributed €322,558 to the refurbishment of the D200/G200 areas of Newman Building. This modernized the majority of offices used by Economics (and four currently in use by English). It also constructed a much-needed kitchen space. Finally, it produced D201, a new classroom/meeting room that is much improved over the prior G214 space we had been using. This has improved staff morale. It should be noted, however, that there are currently plans to pull D201 into the central teaching allocation system, leaving the School without a dedicated meeting room. While the College Principal has offered reassurances that the tide seems to be changing on this issue, it is still a concern. If this plan is carried out, it will reverse the morale gains and hinder our ability to create the "ecosystem" encouraged in, for example, Recommendations 3.19 and 4.20. Further, it should be noted that there is some staff resentment over the fact that Economics paid for four offices that were then given to English while our own staff are forced to be located	A

			elsewhere in Newman (see Recommendation 3.18 below).	
3.17b	*The School should actively engage with both the College and UCD Estate Services on two projects:* b) *with additional support from UCD IT Services, to develop a dedicated data analytics suite.*	3	We have been told in conversations with the College Principal that there are plans to construct a new T&L building on campus and that this is our best hope for securing such a suite. We are actively engaged with the College Principal to make our desire for such a space known and to ensure that we can obtain it. Once we have those assurances and an indication of the completion timeline, the School will seek out external funding to outfit the data lab (akin to what has been done in Quinn School's Data Analytics Lab, something that feeds off of the external advisory board in Recommendation 2.22). As of this writing, it is premature to approach potential funders since we need firm details on the space we will have available (as that directly impacts the funding we will require). Once those issues become more settled, we will begin those negotiations immediately.	C
3.18	*Efforts must be made to secure additional and appropriate office space for new recruitment in the School of Economics.*	2	Unfortunately, this is largely out of our control. Even after the School paid for the refurbishment of four offices in the D200 block of the Newman Building, these were given to staff from English rather than our own staff. We have been given assurances by the College Principal that these will eventually be re-assigned to Economics which will provide at least some ability to follow this recommendation. Furthermore, indications from the College Principal are that when the new T&L building is constructed, that this will permit the transformation of current classroom space in Newman into offices, providing more relief. That said, in the short term, we have relocated some members of staff to other locations so as to bring the most recent hires into the main block of Economics offices, supporting the early-career recommendations such as 4.11 and 6.12.	C
3.19	*The School should liaise with the College to investigate ways to bring more PhD students 'in house' in the immediate*	2	As with staff offices, this is out of our control. Currently, we have made progress in three ways. First, we have made the open space in the A block portion of Newman allocated to Economics a hot desk area for graduate	C

	vicinity of the teaching staff. Co-location would enhance both the student experience and the faculty research environment.		students. That puts them directly adjacent to senior economists. Second, we have actively worked with Geary to get (in some cases hot) desks for our PhD students. This is in close contact with those members of staff who are also using Geary office space. While neither of these are ideal, they offer some immediate movement in the right direction. The third way we are working to make progress is to include our PhD students in the monthly No Free Lunches. This gives them an opportunity to informally discuss their work with staff, hopefully integrating them in spirit if not in space. They are also invited to the relevant Full Information meetings. In the longer term, in discussions with the College Principal, the HoS has been told that there are plans to convert space in the Newman Building (where the Coffee Dock is) into post-graduate space. This is not adjacent but will further expand our options. Beyond that, the proposed renovations in Newman following the construction of the T&L building will hopefully allow us to make more significant progress on this issue as well as those in Recommendations 3.17 and 3.18. Thus, we recognize it as a challenge, have done what is in our power in the short run, and will continue to work to secure better solutions in the future.	
3.20	*The School should engage with the Athena SWAN Award process and should plan to apply for the Bronze level Athena SWAN Award as soon as possible.*	1	The School has already begun this. We have established the bulk of our committee and aim to have it fully fleshed out by the end of 2018. The committee, headed by co-chairs Prof. Ron Davies and Assoc. Prof. Orla Doyle, have met with both the UCD Athena SWAN representative and those involved with the University of London – Birbeck application which including their Economics group. We also have a meeting scheduled with the UCD School of Archaeology who are currently going through the process. We have begun data analytics an aim to completion in January 2019f. This will permit us to carry out surveys and focus groups before the end of this academic year, putting us on track for a November 2019 submission.	A

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

4.11	*The School should introduce a mentoring system for new and early-career faculty to include support for their development as a University teacher. This should include increasing awareness of opportunities to obtain a University Qualification in Teaching and Learning.*	1	We have made active steps in this direction in three ways. First, we have reinforced teaching support as a key element of our pre-existing mentoring scheme. A part of this is that, commencing with January 2019 term, we will have a peer review of lectures in which the mentor (or other suitable senior faculty) will observe lectures and provide feedback. This will be extended to all staff as we extend our mentoring programme. Second, we have reinforced our encouragement to all staff, and early-career ones in particular, to take part in T&L's training courses. Currently, we have two members of staff taking T&L training courses and asked them to comment on the experience at Away Day. Upon completion, we will use their experience (as well as those of prior trainees) as a springboard for further encouragement. In particular, part of these efforts has been to make staff aware of the benefits that such qualifications bring when looking to promotion or when on the job market (i.e. for our BDIC staff). Third, we are looking to have a member of the T&L team come to the Full Information series to inform all staff of the opportunities available and potentially run a short workshop to give them a flavour of what can be achieved. This will most likely occur in Autumn 2019.	B
4.12	*The School, with guidance from UCD Teaching & Learning (UCD T&L), should develop a programme for new recruits covering aspects of Teaching and Learning including, for example, the use of the Virtual Learning Environment, grading and standards, examination*	1	Our Deputy Head for Undergraduate Programmes developed a document covering many of these topics. This was distributed to all staff at the beginning of September 2018 and will be revised and redistributed at the beginning of each term. In particular, the January 2019 version will highlight GDPR issues more so than the first one did (following up on Recommendation 2.24). Beyond this, we have contacted the virtual learning environment (VLE) team to obtain someone to come and present	A

			during our Full Information series so that all staff, not just the new recruits, are up to date with the opportunities that provides. This will then buttress the Brightspace training provided by the University that we have urged all staff to undertake and that many have scheduled over the rest of 2018.	
4.13	*The School should consider, with guidance from UCD T&L, introducing peer review of teaching for all faculty.*	1	As noted under Recommendation 4.11, we have already begun this process by having it integrated into our mentoring scheme. This will commence during the Spring 2019 academic term.	B
4.14	*The School should, with advice from UCD T&L, provide consistent training and support for tutors (most of whom will have no teaching experience), and establish the role of module coordinators in this. This will be increasingly important when the small group teaching system is no longer new.*	1	We have established a training programme for tutors that takes place in the first week of each term. This is put on by the Deputy Head of Undergraduate Programmes in conjunction with the T&L committee, experienced tutors, and the relevant module coordinators. This is then reinforced with a follow-up meeting during that week between the tutors and their specific module coordinators where we are actively reminding module coordinators of their duties to assist in training the tutors. Finally, as part of the Full Information series, when relevant (including when UCD T&L comes to present), we will specifically include tutors. This training is doubly important because of the PhD teaching discussed under Recommendation 4.15.	A
4.15	*The School should ensure that small group teaching is firmly embedded and sustainable for the future, focusing on a secure supply of graduate students and post-docs, and effective administration.*	3	Improving small group teaching has been a success of ours in the past several years and we are actively working to build on that success. To do so, beginning with the 2019/2020 academic year, we will have a select group of advanced PhD students (at a minimum, they must have passed their transfer seminar) teach independent courses (note that they will be paid as hourly lecturers). This is a large benefit to the PhD students because it gives them critical experience that will help them on the job market (see Recommendation 5.9). It also frees up school resources to	B

			offer more small group courses at every level, including in the expanded third/fourth year undergraduate offerings. This will be further reinforced should the school numbers expand via the President's plan to hire new academics. In addition, as we expand our PhD cohorts (see Recommendation 5.9), this will ensure numbers to make further roll-out feasible.	
4.16	*The School should, in discussion with student representatives, identify and address student non-attendance at tutorials.*	1	We had meetings on 8 November 2019 between the HoS, Deputy Head of Undergraduate Programmes, T&L committee members, and student representatives to discuss this and other topics. The primary reason that came from students is that the perception is that since tutorials are typically not part of the assessment, that they are not important. When tutorials do take attendance and/or have in-class assessments, attendance is better. With this, we will consider adding assessment components to the tutorials starting alongside the training in Recommendation 4.14 commencing January 2019. We will then revise our tutor training and course development to further build on what we learn from that process, with those changes taking place starting in the 2019-2020 academic year where we will be able to further revise the assessment coming out of tutorials.	A
			Note that as part of this effort, we changed the format of our meetings with student representatives. Instead of gathering all staff and few student representatives, we are shifting the balance to fewer staff (who will then pass on the relevant information to their colleagues) and more students. The intent was to give more students the opportunity to voice their issues and, based on our experience, this worked.	
4.17	*The School should explore possibilities for the use of innovative teaching methods, especially those that increase interactivity and student engagement*	1	We agree that this is a good avenue to pursue. We are currently looking within UCD for a speaker who could discuss such possibilities in the Full Information series. Failing that, we will assign a member of staff to investigate some possibilities and present what they find at the same.	B

	during teaching sessions; increase awareness amongst staff of innovations being introduced elsewhere in the University, and in other economics departments worldwide, that take advantage of virtual learning environments and online learning resources. The Economics Network and the Biennial Developments in Economics Education Conference are both excellent sources of ideas.		Given relative priorities, this will be done during the 2019-2020 academic year. Following that, we will be in a more informed decision to decide which alternatives best suit our School. Although we are generally aware of interactive technologies including real-time polls and games during lecture, having someone work on the specific options will help increase their use in classes. Realistically, in particular if this entails equipment costs, this might be in place for some courses beginning in 2020. One particularly exciting opportunity for such methods would be as part of the data analytics lab (Recommendation 3.17b). Finally, this will be in conjunction with the rollout of BrightSpace and any options along this road this new platform enables (see Recommendation 4.12).	
4.18	*The School should facilitate staff discussion on the development of effective assessment methods, so that they can learn from each other's experience.*	1	This is one of the goals of the above mentioned No Free Lunch is that gives staff an opportunity to meet and talk with one another about this and other issues. In addition, as noted under Recommendation 3.16, undergraduate teaching was one of the four key areas of discussion at Away Day. Together, this encourages exchange of best practice within the school. Finally, we are seeking someone from UCD T&L or elsewhere for the Full Information series who can cover these topics. As a secondary approach, a meeting of the Full Information series during the 2019/2020 academic year may feature a roundtable of staff discussing assessment methods.	B
4.19	*The School should review assessment methods for Masters' courses, and consider the potential for more continuous assessment, which would test a wider range of skills.*	1	Post-graduate teaching was one of the four discussion areas at Away Day. Beginning in January 2019, the Deputy Head for Teaching and Post-Graduate Programmes and the Head of the Masters' Programmes will co-chair a committee to examine the potential for increased continuous assessment. In particular, we are looking to support two sets of skills. First, along the lines of Recommendation 5.5, we are seeking to improve data skills. Second, we would like to include more public speaking as part of the assessment. As this latter is relatively time intensive, this will be	B

			more feasible in the smaller, topic driven field courses taught in the second term of the academic year. In the first term, we are coping with this via the MSc tutorials. Note that the delivery of these courses coincides with the January start date for this process. Finally, recognize that this includes the meetings described under Recommendation 4.20. This should then give time for a review before module descriptions must be finalized for the 2019-2020 academic year.	
4.20	*The School should consider how to facilitate social interaction and cohort-building amongst Masters students and extend these interactions to PhD students.*	1	In February 2019, the HoS, along with the relevant Deputy Head and programme heads, will have two meetings, one with Masters students and one with PhD students. This discussion will include this topic, issues discussed under Recommendations 4.19, 5.8, and 5.9. and others, and will build on the *ad hoc* conversations between these staff members and students already taking place. The response to this discussion will be implemented, at latest, in the 2019-2020 academic year.	B
		CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW		
5.5	*The School should consider how undergraduates can develop their quantitative data handing skills, with an emphasis on direct experience of data handling. Employers of this cohort, during the site visit, emphasised the importance of data handling and were generally pleased with this at the graduate level.*	1	With the new four-year degree structure, all students are expected to have a research component in the undergraduate experience. As we prepare for this stage (the first cohort of which will be at this phase in 2021/2022) we are currently developing the curriculum with precisely this in mind. Again, the focus here is on a "hands-on" approach to working with data using both Excel and more sophisticated empirical packages. The specific details of this will in large part be in place by the end of the 2018/2019 academic year and planning is already underway in the SoE T&L committee. In the longer run, if we can secure space and funding for a data lab (Recommendation 3.17b), this will give us the physical capability to expand on the plans put into place. We will review ways to do so at least 18 months before that room is complete so as to appropriate modify	C

			existing course descriptions and, if feasible, add additional courses specifically emphasizing hands-on data training.	
5.6	*The School should harness the enthusiasm of the current undergraduates to market the Single Honours programme to prospective students, with the objective of attracting high quality students for whom Economics is the first preference.*	1	In the promotional video currently on the school webpage, (https://www.ucd.ie/economics/study/undergraduate/bscineconomics/) we include testimonials by our current students with precisely this idea in mind. Given that this video is new, we do not expect to update it until the 2020/2021 academic year. At that time, not only will we want to redo the video so that it stays fresh and appealing to students, but also to have student testimonials covering new opportunities on offer at the later stages of the new degree. In addition to this, we are currently working on finding volunteers for the upcoming Open Day/Evenings, including some in November 2018. Finally, we are taking steps to encourage more of our students to participate in the UCD Student Ambassador Programme, again increasing their opportunities to talk directly to prospective students. As an example of this process, this possibility was encouraged during the November 2018 meetings discussed in Recommendation 4.16.	A
5.7	*The School should undertake further work on setting appropriate Math requirements to ensure there is an aptitude for higher level courses in addition to providing options for students with an aptitude/interest in more mathematical/technical work. This should be kept under review during the forthcoming programme changes in the BSc in Social Sciences.*	1	The Maths requirement was increased for our current intake of single honors students, with all of them now required to higher level maths. This communicates a clear message to all students undertaking economics. Turning to the joint honors student, a level 0 course has been set in place for those who do not meet the entry requirement. Thus, either sufficient performance on the Leaving Certificate of this course (which is then followed by the regular quants course) is required of all students taking Economics. Finally, with the new programmes, we have introduced a pathway "Economics, Mathematics, and Statistics" with precisely these more technical students in mind. This, along with all our programmes, will be reviewed as it progresses.	A

| 5.8 | *The School should consider the range of options available to Single Honours students, whose choices currently become more limited as they progress, because they have taken more modules at earlier stages.* | 3 | We are aware that this is an issue and are working on expanding the number of smaller, more specialized advanced courses (such as the new advanced econometrics course we are offering). While we hope that recruitment will make this more feasible in the medium term, starting in the 2019-2020 academic year we will be hiring occasional lecturers to free up permanent staff to teach these new, hopefully smaller courses. In particular, we will be looking to our advanced PhD students for these positions, something that gives the added benefit of providing our PhD students will proper training and experience that will improve their job market opportunities. This process will focus on identifying strong, advanced PhD students, training them in teaching (beyond the T&L courses we will encourage them to engage with; see Recommendation 4.14), and providing course materials (e.g. slides and notes) to ensure continuity across years. Finally, this will support our research goals in that it will allow staff to teach their specific strengths to students. For example, for our more data-oriented staff, this can include hands-on use of data, feeding into Recommendation 5.5. These plans are already underway. Currently we are identifying appropriate PhD students for the next academic year and setting up the necessary training (which will occur in conjunction with the steps taken under Recommendation 4.18). | C |
| 5.9 | *The School should clarify its strategy for the PhD programmes for staff, covering areas such as: attracting students to the programme, funding, what is expected of supervisors, teaching loads and training for PhD students, and how the School will help students towards successful placement. The School should also explore potential for further cooperation* | 3 | The PhD programme was the second of the four main areas covered at the Away Day. During the day, two options forward were discussed, one focusing on continuing to strive to produce graduates prepared for an academic career and one that concentrates on those looking towards government and business post-graduation. In agreement between the Deputy Head for Post-Graduate Studies, the PhD programme coordinator, the HoS, and the School Exec, we have decided to put our efforts towards the first. To achieve this requires two things: more students and a shift in the delivery of the first-year courses. | C |

with the TCD Department of Economics.

Beginning with the first, as the programme currently stands, it does not have the critical mass to achieve our goals. Therefore, we aim to increase intake and particularly intake of full-time students (as opposed to past reliance on those concurrently working at, e.g. the Central Bank). A key part of this is an expectation that all staff will actively exploit their contacts to seek out potential PhD students (incentives for which are being explored under Recommendation 3.14). This is in contrast of the "serve the customers who come to the window" approach used by the bulk of the SoE to this point. In the current financial climate, if this is successful, this will put significant strain on SoE budgets. Thus, this goes hand-in-hand with the increased expectations that staff will apply for grants (as addressed in Recommendations 3.14 and 6.13-6.16). One additional benefit to the SoE from increased numbers is that, as discussed in Recommendation 5.8, that PhD students will be teaching courses freeing up regular staff for other classes. We believe that this is a critical component of their training that has been missing up to this point.

Second, to move in this direction we will move to a "US-styled" programme that has a full core sequence of classes in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics in the first year, followed by qualifying exams. The feasibility of this has already been discussed with Margaret Brindley, the College's Graduate School Manager who has greenlighted the development of a more concrete plan. We aim to have that in place by the end of this academic year so that we can advertise it in the 2019-2020 year and implement it for the 2020-2021 intake. That said, in the interim two other major changes have already taken place. First, we have expanded our PhD course offerings (including courses shared with TCD students and a macroeconomics course taught by TCD staff). Second, we have introduced an annual requirement that all students

			present their research. This increases their training in public speaking, helps them to continue to maintain forward progress (since they must present every year), and increases a sense of cohesion across students (see Recommendation 4.20). A final introduction this year has been a "job market training session" that explains and helps to prepare students for interviews and the academic job market in particular. Finally, the Away Day conversation also included talk on what is expected from supervisors. It was decided, however, that for the moment to push additional discussion on that to the No Free Lunches with information on the changes under the new Academic Regulations on this distributed beforehand. We will revisit that issue in autumn 2019 and decide whether there is a need for a specific roundtable in the Full Information series on supervision. One item that was agreed on, however, is that we need to make students aware that, should it support their education agenda, they can switch supervisors. Thus, beginning with the 2019-2020 intake, we are making it clear to students that while they are admitted under the tutelage of a supervisor, that this person should be viewed as a mentor rather than the ultimate supervisor of the thesis should the student find a better fit during the first year.	
		RESEARCH ACTIVITY		
6.12	*The School needs to develop and clearly articulate its research ambitions, vision and mission.*	1	Research was the third of the four topics covered at the Away Day. This began a conversation that will continue through the rest of the academic year and touches on a number of points raised in this review (including grants, mentoring, PhD supervision, and P4G). As we revise the School Strategic Plan during the Spring 2019 term, this will form a major area of focus. In particular, we aim to lay out guidelines for what is considered a	B

			reasonable level of research productivity that recognizes, among other factors, the tradeoff between quality and quantity. This will be especially important in the context of P4G and promotion cases. Given the perceived success of the Away Day, we are looking to repeat it during the 2019/2020 academic year. One concrete plan of action already under way is that the SoE has started planning the production of an undergraduate handbook. This volume will be edited by three members of staff and has three sections. The first section provides an overview of the topics taught in our first year undergraduate programme and the second section focuses on a sample of the upper level courses. Both of these will link the topics covered in courses to the research of staff. The third section specifically third focuses on research topics currently being worked on by staff. This volume has five major purposes. First, it helps to introduce first year students to the courses on offer at higher levels. Second, the third section will spark ideas that students can use in the final year research projects. Third, it gives staff a way to promote their research. Fourth, as some chapters will be jointly written, it will support our mentoring (Recommendations 4.11 and 6.13). Finally, this can be used to market our programme (Recommendation 9.17). McGraw-Hill has already expressed interest and we are working so that the first volume will be out for the start of the 2019-2020 academic year.	
6.13	*The School should introduce a research mentoring scheme for faculty, in particular early-career scholars paying specific attention to the construction of research grant applications.*	1	As noted under Recommendation 2.21, we are in the process of establishing a mentoring scheme for all staff, with early-career researcher mentors to be in place by the start of the Spring 2019 term. This is then being reinforced in three ways. First, as part of our long-standing internal brown-bag seminar series, from the start of the current academic year we have specifically asked early-career researchers to present, giving them priority for available slots over senior academics. Second, we are making	B

| | | | use of the Full Information series. Here, specifically with regards to research, we are seeking speakers on grants and research dissemination. The HoS has already met with the College's Research Office representative and the College's Vice-President for Research to explore additional methods of encouraging and supporting grant applications. Third, as part of the same series, we are scheduling a round table of successful applicants from within the School. We anticipate that this can cement the type of mentoring this recommendation calls for.

It must be noted, however, that our College overall is inadequately supported from the Research office. This has led to insufficient staff in that unit to assist in grant preparation, caused delays in reviews, and in at least one case, resulted in mistakes in that unit which caused the rejection of a major, cross-institution grant application of the type that Recommendation 6.16 urges us to participate in. Therefore, while we are implementing schemes such as this, it is critical to note that without better support from UCD our efforts in improving grant capture are hamstrung as discussed further under Recommendation 6.16. | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 6.14 | *The School should consider how more senior colleagues with little experience of research grant capture can also be helped to develop major grant proposals – especially targeted at the ERC Major Grants programme.* | 1 | Beginning in February 2019 (following the return of the Deputy Head for Research and Post-Graduate Programmes who is currently on sabbatical), the School will form a grant committee to do a better job of disseminating research opportunities, examine ways of encouraging research at all levels, and develop a within-school knowledge base of the process of applying for, running, and concluding grants. This will lead to a set of initiatives that will commence in Autumn 2019. While we will certainly keep an eye on ERC and other major grants, we believe that in the early phases, it is just as important for non-applying senior staff to begin the process by applying for smaller, more bite-sized grants in order to be more successful for these more competitive opportunities. As expressed during Away Day, however, there is little appetite among some staff for grants, with some | B |

			senior members believing that grants are not important for their own research, do not contribute to the school, and are not considered important in promotion cases. Thus, there are biases this committee must recognize and address. It should be noted that this was a point of contention between grant-obtaining staff and others, with the first group feeling that this attitude overlooks and belittles the contributions that their grants make to the school. This airing of conflicting opinions points to the importance of the efforts we are currently making to improve SoE communication. As a final point, note that this committee also supports the efforts described under Recommendation 6.13.	
6.15	*The School should promote frequent engagement between faculty and UCD Research for advice and support on different types of research calls and applications processes.*	1	As noted under Recommendation 6.13, the HoS has already had meetings with UCD Research, including our College representative (Justin Sinnott). Unfortunately, it has become clear that the support that can be expected from the Research Office will be unlikely to meet what is required to make a significant difference in grant success. In the past year, this has caused problems including the rejection of an application of the sort urged under Recommendation 6.16. This realization is part of the impetus for developing in-house knowledge as described under Recommendation 6.14. As another possibility, budget permitting, we will explore the potential for a shared Research Support admin staff member between the SoE and other schools in our College. Discussion on this are tabled until late spring 2019.	B
6.16	*It would benefit the School to investigate possibilities for participation in H2020 bids – linking with researchers in other EU countries.*	1	This will be included in the discussions of the committee described under Recommendation 6.14.	B
6.17	*The School needs to explore ways to identify and measure the societal*	1	As part of the overhauled workload model under development (see Recommendation 3.16), we will be asking for staff to include information	B

	engagement and impacts of the School's research activities.		on engagement including non-academic presentations, press interviews, and non-academic publications (e.g. Irish Times, VoxEU, Conversation UK). After this first year of the new workload model, the School Exec will review the types of engagements identified and report on this to the School at a No Free Lunch in Autumn 2019. This will then be used to spark a discussion on what other types of engagement can be identified, how else we can engage with the general discussion, and how to measure these. On this latter point, possibilities include views of media posts (for example, VoxEU reads of works by staff members), tracking retweets of school member and school accounts, and so forth. On this recommendation, it must be noted that for the past year, the SoE working paper series has not been capture by RePEc (www.repec.org), which is the primary portal for the dissemination of Economics research. This is due to, according to the library, "a major upgrade of the DSpace system". Since this was noticed in early 2018, we have repeatedly asked for this to be fixed and, as of this writing (9 November 2018), have only been told in an email from 31 October 2018 that the issue is slated to be addressed by the vendor.	
	MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT		
7.10	*The School should continue to roll out small group teaching across all stages of the programme.*	3	As noted under Recommendations 4.14 and 4.15, plans are in place to do precisely this. Again, it must be noted that our ability to follow through will depend on hiring.	C
7.11	*The School should conduct a periodic review of assessment strategies reflecting student feedback and current practices in*	1	The T&L committee will be conducting an annual review and provide the School Exec with a report during the second term of each academic year, commencing in 2019. In addition, the discussions mentioned under	B

			Recommendation 4.16 and 7.12 will include discussion on this topic.	
7.12	*The School should introduce a wider forum for student programme feedback at the end of Stages 3 and/or 4, moderated by a member of University staff from outside the School.*	1	We will introduce such a forum at the end of the 2018/2019 academic year and continuing annually after that. Note that this is separate from our practice of meeting with student representatives every term and from the specific discussions highlighted under Recommendation 4.16.	B
7.13	*The School should increase efforts to facilitate meetings between the Programme External Examiner and students.*	2	Although unusual within UCD, we have discussed this possibility in the School Exec. Implementing this is potentially challenging given that many students will have departed prior to the arrival of the Programme External Examiner. Nevertheless, we will solicit volunteers at the end of term who would be willing and available to meet during the relevant time. This will commence this academic year.	B
7.14	*The School should develop a closer, formalised involvement with external stakeholders that will inform future curriculum developments.*	1	As discussed under Recommendation 2.22 we believe that this runs counter to our educational mandate since it moves the SoE away from education and towards job training. That said, as discussed under that Recommendation, in Spring 2019 we will begin setting up a board that can provide advice on this and other matters.	C
	SUPPORT SERVICES			
8.9	*The School should liaise with IT Services during the roll out of the new Virtual Learning Environment to ensure that targeted communications utilities that allow staff to communicate with specific class groupings/subsections are*	1	UCD is putting on its own BrightSpace workshops and we have already been informing and encouraging staff to attend these with many already scheduled to do so. In addition, we are working to obtain someone to present at one of our Full Information meetings on the different VLE tools available (see also Recommendation 4.12). Given the importance of this issue, we intend to have this be one of our earlier presentations in the	B

	appropriate for their needs.		series.	
8.10	*The School should meet with IT Services to ensure effective financial planning by the School for software license requirements moving into the future.*	1	The HoS will do so during the Spring 2019 term. In addition, there is a discussion currently taking place in the T&L Committee about the feasibility moving towards open source software (e.g. R rather than EViews or Stata) due to its lower cost. A challenge to doing this is that the packages are unfamiliar to the bulk of staff, meaning that they may lack the training and familiarity to adequately teach with these packages. Obviously, upskilling of staff is one method of solving that issue. Such training, however, carries its own financial burden. Thus, although the open nature of such software is attractive, the cost to adequately train staff may more than offset those gains. The committee is tasked with making a recommendation to the School Exec by the end of March 2019.	C
8.11	*In conjunction with UCD International and Student Recruitment, the School should establish sustainable targets for growth in non-EU students, particularly at postgraduate level.*	1	The HoS will meet with this group in early 2019 to begin this process. We then aim to have targets and an action plan in place to roll out in the 2019/2020 academic year with the initial successes being observed during the following academic year.	C
8.12	*The School and UCD International should work together to facilitate recruitment of postgraduate students from BDIC.*	3	Currently, BDIC students can only feasibly spend their fourth year at UCD. This is due to courses taught in Beijing for which there is no parallel in Dublin. To date, this has meant small numbers because students strongly prefer to be in Beijing during their final year (for job market reasons in particular). To make the third year in Dublin feasible requires Economics to hire at least one person who can teach Financial Economics (this is a specific field and should not to be confused with Finance or the Economics and Finance undergraduate programme). We are currently exploring the possibility of doing so under the University's strategic hiring programme (see Recommendation 2.18). If this can be achieved, then this	C

			would give us the ability to attract greater numbers for a year abroad which will then feed into achieving this recommendation. In addition, this should help us further expand our general post-grad numbers and increase upper-level offerings (Recommendation 5.8). Given the timing of the job market, it is not feasible to implement the BDIC change next year. Therefore, we are hoping to make the shift starting two autumns following any successful hire in this area (i.e. if we find success in Spring 2019, that would allow us to begin a third year in Dublin programme in the 2020/2021 academic year). It is worth noting that the School has already had discussions along these lines with the main BDIC coordinators who are in agreement with the desirability of such a change.	
8.13	*The School should host information briefings from all relevant Support Services for all staff, specifically with relation to recruitment procedures (UCD HR) and the role and supports offered by UCD Research and UCD Teaching and Learning.*	1	As noted in several places in our response, the Full Information series has been designed for precisely this type of briefing. We are contacting HR and numerous other units in order to begin the programme in January 2018. One of the key reasons for doing so is to increase participation in administration duties and recruitment in particular given the burden the new University hiring scheme looks likely to generate. Further, this lays the foundations for those who will take on major administrative roles in the future (see Recommendation 2.17). Finally, note that these sessions will also include non-academic administrative staff when it makes sense to do so.	B
			EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
9.5	*As discussed in section 2, the SOE should consider setting up an external advisory board to help the School make informed strategic decisions in terms of curriculum*	1	As noted under Recommendation 2.22, this process commences in Spring 2019.	C

	development, research activities and additional revenue opportunities.			
9.6	*With a view to facilitating staff and PhD level exchanges and collaboration, the Review Group encourages the School to consolidate existing relationships and to explore the creation of new relationships with universities across and outside Europe.*	2	There are two challenges to having student exchanges. First, we have been told by the Graduate School Manager for the College that visiting students must be registered with UCD even if they are not taking courses. This creates funding issues and we are currently exploring whether the school can create a waiver of some sort to eliminate this (akin to the fellowships for our own students). Second, we do not have adequate space for our own students; adding visitors compounds the problem. In the short run, if we can work around the fees for official students, it might be possible to house the students in the same locations as our own students, e.g. the Geary Institute, subject to available space. Thus, we are working to see if it is possible to make this happen and, if so, hope to host our first visitors in Autumn 2019. As to the final point, we have already been in contact with Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, staff members of which will be coming in May 2019 to discuss post-graduate programmes. Further, we have lined up a professor from Université Paris Est Créteil as the external person on an upcoming hiring committee (which will convene in late January 2019). In part, she was chosen to discuss and encourage possible exchanges between us. Finally, as part of our push for PhD recruitment under Recommendation 5.9, we are simultaneously encouraging staff to think about how we can build more robust linkages with those schools/colleagues they are contacting about potential students.	B
9.7	*To improve visibility, the School's should liaise with the College marketing supports to develop a communications plan to more effectively highlight its activities and its national and*	2	The HoS and relevant SEA (currently Joanna Gumularz) have been in contact with the marketing person in preparation for the upcoming student recruitment season. In addition, the school is currently working on revising its online presence to better communicate with potential applicants (e.g. by adding subtitles to video and increasing our use of	B

	international standing.		social media). Finally, we intend to begin a serious overhaul of the school's marketing approach in May 2019 in conjunction with the College supports. This timing has been chosen for four reasons. First, College resources are dedicated elsewhere prior to that point. Second, after the end of the academic term staff time is less in demand enabling participation from more staff. Third, this will be after the "exit interviews" recommended in 7.12. Finally, beginning at this point will permit us to make meaningful changes in our marketing strategy starting with the 2019/2020 recruitment push. As a last item, we intend to use the handbook described under Recommendation 6.12 in our promotion (including having a redacted version available on the SoE website).	

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:

1. 5.19 (recruit more staff). Estimated cost €100,000/annum per staff member with associated support costs of €10,000 per person/year. This would require an additional administrative support person. Eight new assistant professors then comes to €800,000/year, €80,000/year associated support costs, and €60,000/year for new admin position. The total is then €940,000.

2. 5.9 (PhD programme). Estimated cost €25,000/annum per student. Increase intake by 10 students per year for a steady-state of 40 additional students across all years of the four year programme, coming to €1,000,000.

3. 3.18 (staff office space) Estimated need for 10 new offices (given above and current planned recruitment) at €25,000/office coming to €250,000 as a one off cost (plus the cost of new building construction if needed).

Conclusion:

In summary, we have taken all of the recommendations seriously. Some are well underway (e.g. changes in management structure), others have a timeline for their commencement and conclusion (e.g. plans for the undergraduate programme), and others will depend on developments outside of our control (e.g. hiring and development of a dedicated data lab). Together, we believe that these can help the School of Economics to improve the quality of our teaching, the impact of our research, and the effectiveness of our administrative efforts.

We once again wish to thank the external review committee for their efforts and advice. Finally, we also thank you for taking the time to read this long response.

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