



**University College Dublin**

**REVIEW GROUP REPORT**

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**Periodic Quality Review  
Collaborative/Transnational Provision**

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**UCD College of Business  
Business Programmes – Kaplan (Singapore and Hong Kong)**

**July 2017**

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## Key Findings of the Review Group

The Review Group has identified a number of key findings in relation to areas of good practice operating within the UCD Business programmes delivered in Singapore and Hong Kong, and areas which the Review Group would highlight as requiring improvement. The main section of this Report sets out all observations, commendations and recommendations of the Review Group in more detail. An aggregated list of all commendations and recommendations is set out in **Appendix 1**.

### **Commendations and Examples of Good Practice:**

The Review Group identified a number of commendations, in particular:

- The delivery of the BBS and MSc programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong is considered to be strategically important to the UCD College of Business and the University, contributing substantially to the achievement of UCD's objective of being Ireland's global university. The programmes are financially sound, generating good revenue for the College and the wider University for 20 years and likely to continue as such. The Review Group commends the College of Business for the lead it has taken in advancing the internationalisation agenda of the University, and it was evident to the Review Group that the professionalism and commitment of all staff involved in the programmes provide a bedrock for the future success of the partnership. The Review Group believes that the programmes are being managed proactively in both centres to meet changes in the environment.
- The Review Group saw evidence that the relationship between the UCD Centre for Distance Learning (CDL) and Kaplan staff in both sites was excellent. The staff in all locations were very engaged and professional, highly interested in the success of the operation, and paid attention to the quality of the programme and student experience. There is close coordination between CDL staff at UCD-Belfield and the staff at Kaplan in both Singapore and Hong Kong. The Review Group noted the scale and professionalism of the operation for the recruitment of students, involving separate teams with responsibility for initial consultation with students, and subsequent support for the application process, resulting in high application-to-registration conversion rates.
- The role of Programme Manager is crucial in dealing with students who may be at risk of dropping out of the programme. Students at both centres commented positively regarding the contribution of the Programme Managers.
- The physical infrastructure and facilities in Singapore and Hong Kong are excellent in many respects, centrally located, and it was noted that there is ongoing investment in facilities. A particular example of the high quality of facilities is 'The Synergy Pod' in Kaplan Singapore (see images in **Appendix 4**), developed in association with Samsung.
- The UCD College of Business has acquired an international reputation as a leading business school. The triple crown accreditation from AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB is impressive and is, in itself, a hallmark of quality for the College, and the wider University. The fact that the College has been highly successful in retaining its accreditations over a sustained period (which encompasses the programmes offered in Singapore and Hong Kong) provides independent evidence of the quality of its provision. Additionally, it is clear that the College has implemented a number of recommendations arising from the previous quality review exercise conducted in 2008.

### **Prioritised Recommendations for Improvement:**

The Review Group would suggest that the following recommendations be prioritised:

- In accordance with best practice in UCD and internationally, the Review Group recommends that the duration of all associated Memoranda of Agreement, in future, be no longer than 5 years. This is appropriate even for such long-established partnerships, and any automatic renewal period should be conditional on satisfactory completion of a periodic quality review prior to renewal of the Memoranda of Agreement.
- Advanced Standing Qualifications (ASQ) – most applicants to the undergraduate programmes in both Singapore and Hong Kong are admitted directly to Stage 2, with an ASQ for Stage 1 based on work completed previously through another education provider. Further formality should be introduced for these arrangements, in

particular with the education providers that supply the largest number of students onto the UCD/Kaplan programmes (the Review Group was informed that six institutions provide pathways for nearly 70% of students). This should take the form of articulation agreements, and this was acknowledged as a 'work-in-progress'.

- The Review Group recommends that teaching staff arrangements and the mode of delivery of the programmes (through short, 1-week visits) should be evaluated in further detail, and that the approach to this should be informed by international best practice, benchmarked against other comparable institutions and programmes, compared with other similar collaborative and transnational provision which UCD is engaged with, and undertaken in consultation with the UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement, with a view to considering a wide range of models for delivery of the programme content by UCD-Belfield academic staff. Closer interaction and alignment with the UCD Global Engagement framework is recommended by the Review Group in order to exploit opportunities which may be of mutual benefit, particularly in relation to engagement with alumni and regional employers of graduates.
- Localisation of the programme content is undertaken by lecturing staff based in Singapore and Hong Kong. The intention is that modules are delivered by locally based, suitably qualified lecturers in partnership with UCD faculty. Following the last quality review exercise in 2008, UCD-based faculty have provided increased input into the delivery of modules. This is considered to have significantly enhanced the quality of the provision. The Review Group recommends that the College of Business ensures that UCD faculty provide, at a minimum, 50% input to the teaching of all modules in Singapore and Hong Kong. A two year project to ensure this level of UCD input into modules commenced in September 2015. Most modules in BBS Stage 2 and Stage 3 are already delivered locally, with standardised resources provided by UCD. In 2017-18 this will be extended to postgraduate modules. The importance of UCD direct input relates to the quality of the provision, but it also helps to justify for the students the high fee, and establishes the key unique selling point for the UCD programmes. The Review Group further recommends that the College of Business considers whether UCD's Belfield faculty would deliver their course material during single two-week periods rather than more intensive one-week periods. This would significantly enhance the quality of students' learning experience and would provide further opportunity to strengthen the collaborative research activities between UCD's Belfield faculty and both staff and industry in the Singapore and Hong Kong regions.
- An important element in the student learning process is the provision of feedback to students on their academic performance. Although general feedback to students on modules is provided, the Review Group found no evidence of a systematic approach for providing individual feedback to students on their coursework. The absence of any formalised mechanism for providing feedback to students on coursework prior to examinations is considered by the Review Group to be a significant shortcoming of the provision, and the Review Group recommends that this be addressed. Furthermore, and more generally, the effectiveness of the formal mechanisms for collecting student feedback on the way each of the programmes are managed and delivered should be further enhanced. The Student Forum provides a useful mechanism for receiving student feedback, but there is scope to further enhance this so that it might more closely resemble the formal Staff-Student Committees which exist in UCD-Belfield.
- The mode of delivery of the Summer School in UCD-Belfield should be evaluated closely, and discussed at the relevant programme board in the College of Business to ensure the quality of the student experience for those who undertake the Summer School. The Review Group also recommends that the College of Business considers offering the opportunity for Dublin based students to participate in summer modules, and that opportunities are provided for international participants to meet Dublin based students.
- The Review Group recommends that to support its quality assurance processes, the University is asked to give consideration to the provision of IT systems for data analytics and reporting mechanisms that support the required forensic interrogation of data by the CDL and the College of Business. The specific requirements in this respect are set-out in **Appendix 6**.
- The Review Group recommends that the College revisits the relationship between the workload, timeframe and mode of delivery for programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong. The Review Group also recommends that the CDL provides a detailed representation (e.g. a Gant chart) of the timeframe for delivery of the programmes, from the point of admission, including module delivery, assessment dates, block teaching by UCD-Belfield academic staff, examinations and the grade approvals process, including final approval of grades. This indicative timeline could be included in the response to this report to be provided by the CDL and the College of Business.
- The Review Group was informed that provisional examination results are approved within sixty days from examination, but formal approval may take 6 months from the date of examination. This is excessively long, and

can also impact on the timeframes for the application of the University's examination appeals process for students on the programmes. The Review Group recommends that the CDL and the College of Business, in consultation with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, evaluates this matter further and identifies the reasons why the process can take this long, with a view to improving alignment with the Grade Approval Process as it applies to programmes delivered at UCD-Belfield.

## 1. Introduction, Background and Review Methodology

1.1 UCD Collaborative and Transnational Taught provision is normally subject to quality review on a 7 year cycle, in accordance with the [UCD Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Policy](#) and the [UCD Guidelines for the Review of Collaborative and Transnational Taught Programmes](#). The undergraduate and graduate taught programmes offered by the UCD College of Business in partnership with Kaplan Higher Education in Singapore and Hong Kong were last reviewed in March 2008. Each review is divided into four distinct phases:

- **Self-reflection and analysis** – Programme Team produces a confidential Self-Assessment Report (SAR);
- **External review** – a site-visit to the partner/transnational location is undertaken by a Review Group (RG) to meet UCD/Partner staff and students. The RG issues a report;
- **Planning for Quality Improvement** – the Programme Team is given an opportunity to respond to any factual errors in the draft report and a final RG report is issued; the Programme Team then develops a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in response to the RG Report recommendations;
- A **Memorandum of Agreement** is prepared and signed by the appropriate officers of the partner institutions, if the arrangement is to continue.

1.2 The composition of the Review Group for the Business Programmes in Kaplan (Singapore and Hong Kong) was as follows:

- Professor Michael Gilchrist (Head, UCD School of Mechanical & Materials Engineering, Panel Chair)
- Professor Marie McHugh (Ulster University, former Dean of Ulster Business School)
- Professor John Beck (Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore)
- Dr Roy Ferguson, UCD Director of Quality
- Mr Michael Kennedy (Senior Policy Officer, UCD Quality Office, Panel Rapporteur)

1.3 The partnership between the UCD College of Business and Kaplan Higher Education in Singapore and Hong Kong has been in existence for 20 years. The Centre for Distance Learning (CDL, which is part of the UCD College of Business) was established in 2002 and is responsible for the general oversight and management of the programmes. The governance arrangements, programme delivery and programme management support are broadly similar across both sites. The programmes under review are:

- Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) – full-time and part-time, September and April starts, Singapore<sup>1</sup>
- Master of Science (MSc) – full-time and part-time, September and April starts, Singapore
- Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) – full-time and part-time, September, and April (part-time only) starts, Hong Kong
- Master of Science (MSc) – part-time only, April start only, Hong Kong

1.4 These programmes are fully accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) since 2001 and the European Foundation for Management Development (through EQUIS) since 2000.

1.5 The 2017 review consisted of a preliminary meeting at UCD (Belfield, Dublin) on 27 February, followed by site visits in Singapore (2-3 March) and Hong Kong (6-7 March). The site visits in Singapore and Hong Kong included meetings with key staff members from Kaplan, the UCD College of Business and the CDL, and students, alumni, local faculty members, programme office staff and employers. The detailed schedule for the Review Site Visit is available in **Appendix 3** with images of the Kaplan campus and facilities in **Appendix 4**.

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<sup>1</sup> The undergraduate programme in Singapore had previously been offered as a Bachelor of Science (BSc), however, the degree award was changed to the Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) via an amendment to the Collaborative Agreement dated 1 January 2011, so that students entering the programme from September 2014 onwards would be registered to the Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS), consistent with the same degree award offered in Hong Kong.

1.6 A 'Quality Assurance Committee' was established within the UCD College of Business in January 2016, to prepare for the quality assurance review for the Hong Kong and Singapore programmes in February/March 2017. This committee met on three occasions between January 2016 and October 2016 in order to prepare the SAR, which was compiled in close conjunction with the partners in each location and included a SWOT analysis. The team at the CDL at UCD-Belfield supported the preparation of the Report, and together with the Kaplan staff in both Singapore and Hong Kong, provided comprehensive and well organised information and documentation in the Base Rooms in both locations (see **Appendix 5**).

1.7 A snapshot of the programmes and associated student numbers for both Singapore and Hong Kong is as follows:



## 2. Collaborative Partnership Arrangements / Memoranda of Agreement

2.1 The UCD College of Business has offered various undergraduate and graduate taught programmes in collaboration with Kaplan Higher Education Institute Pte Ltd and Kaplan Higher Education Academy Pte Ltd (Singapore), and Kaplan Higher Education (HK) Limited (Hong Kong) since 1991. Since 2002, the CDL within the UCD College of Business has been responsible for the oversight and management of these partnerships/programmes. Within the UCD College of Business, the College Management Team (CMT) and the College Executive Committee both include the **Associate Dean – International**, who is responsible for the strategic oversight of these partnership programmes and who is supported by the CDL. Within the UCD College

of Business there are Subject Area Co-ordinators for each of the six subjects in the College: Accountancy, Banking & Finance, Human Resource Management & Employee Relations, Management, Management Information Systems, and Marketing. The SAHs approve the teaching allocations on all programmes, including those delivered through Kaplan in Hong Kong and Singapore. Academic oversight – which includes design, development, regulation and quality – of all taught programmes in the College of Business is the responsibility of the **Business Undergraduate Programme Board** and the **Graduate School of Business Taught Programmes Board**, which are both sub-committees of the **University Programmes Board (UPB)**.

- 2.2 The governance and management arrangements relating to the partnerships are articulated in a set of **Memoranda of Agreement** – there are four in total (for the BSc/BBS (Singapore), MSc (Singapore), BBS (Hong Kong) and MSc (Hong Kong)). The Memoranda of Agreement cover the arrangements in place for student recruitment, admissions and retention, programme oversight and academic governance (including roles and responsibilities of all parties). While responsibility for programme provision rests with UCD, the external partners provide a range of services, including IT support, academic and pastoral support, and student recruitment and marketing of programmes.
- 2.3 Changes to the Memoranda of Agreement are by an amendment to the existing contract – for example, in Singapore the undergraduate programme was originally a BSc award, but in January 2011 this was changed to a BBS award via such an amendment. It is also noted in each Agreement that “the administrative arrangements for this Agreement shall be reviewed annually by the UCD Programme Board” (ie the Business Undergraduate Programme Board and/or the Graduate School of Business Taught Programmes Board).
- 2.4 The Review Group noted that the existing Memoranda of Agreement – the most recent versions of which were signed in January 2011 – had a duration of 10 years, with provision for automatic renewal for a further 10 years. The programme team indicated that the Memoranda of Agreement operational timeframe was to facilitate planning and was reflective of the maturity of the partnership. The Review Group heard from key staff that this would enable, for example, investment in facilities and further enhancement/promotion of the UCD-Kaplan brand and relationship. However, international best practice would dictate that any such Memoranda of Agreement should have a duration of 5-7 years. It was the unanimous view of the Review Group that Memoranda of Agreement for these programme should have a duration of no more than 5 years; the 2008 Review Group also made this recommendation. Given that the periodic review cycle is normally 7 years, it would be appropriate for the duration of any formal agreement to be no longer than this, to make it possible for any outputs of such reviews to be reflected in an updated Memoranda of Agreement. The Review Group would therefore recommend that the UCD College of Business take cognisance of this when the Memoranda of Agreement approach renewal.

#### **Recommendations:**

- In accordance with best practice in UCD and internationally, the Review Group recommends that the duration of all associated Memoranda of Agreement be no longer than 5 years. This is appropriate even for such long-established partnerships, and any automatic renewal period should be conditional on satisfactory completion of a periodic quality review prior to renewal of the Memoranda of Agreement.

### **3. Partner Institutions and Situational Analysis**

- 3.1 The programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate level have both been offered in Singapore and Hong Kong in partnership with Kaplan over several years. During that time specialist pathways have been dropped and new ones introduced, in order to meet changing market demand and to adapt to new government priorities. It is clear that the high international rankings of the University, the UCD College of Business and the coveted triple crown accreditations from AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA are all significant factors in attracting large numbers of students to the programmes in both locations. The delivery of the BBS and MSc programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong is considered to be strategically important to the UCD College of Business and the University, contributing substantially to the achievement of UCD’s objective of being Ireland’s global university. The programmes are financially sound, generating good revenue for the College and the wider University for 20 years and likely to continue as such. The Review Group commends the College of Business for the lead it has taken in advancing the internationalisation agenda of the University, and it was evident to the Review Group that the professionalism and commitment of all staff involved in the programmes provide a bedrock for the future success of the partnership. The Review Group believes that the programmes are being managed proactively in both centres to meet changes in the environment.

3.2 The nature of the BBS and various MSc programmes that are offered in Singapore and Hong Kong is noticeably different from what is offered on a full-time basis to Irish students studying in Dublin: programmes in both locations are tailored to the local needs of people in the Singapore and Hong Kong markets. The people who are motivated to study the transnational BBS includes a mixture of those seeking to obtain a top-up degree qualification (usually following some diploma qualification) and those seeking to obtain a baseline degree, while for students studying one of the MSc degrees, their motivating factors are largely related to career development and career progression. Students are from varied backgrounds, including expatriates, local and regional cohorts. Besides the obvious order of magnitude difference between the scale of UCD's activity in Singapore and Hong Kong, there are distinct local differences as well as some similarities between these two multicultural markets. Both regions have large internationally diverse businesses, Singapore has more diversity, both in terms of the profile of local and regional industries, and the geographic spectrum of students who are drawn to UCD's programmes, whereas financial and property services industries predominate in Hong Kong, and the cohorts of students are noticeably more domestic in origin.

### 3.3 **Singapore**

The Review Group noted that Singapore has become an international hub for higher education in Asia and it continues to grow. The number of private education institutions in Singapore has reduced from 3,000 (before the *Private Education Act* in 2009 was passed) to the current number of approximately 300. Kaplan Singapore has strong links with key governmental entities, including the Economic Development Board (EDB), Workforce Development Agency (WDA), and Ministry of Education (MOE). Other overseas partners for Kaplan Singapore include Murdoch University, University of Essex and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. There are currently 200 staff members working in Kaplan Singapore. There were 2,514 undergraduate and 274 graduate students on UCD programmes in Kaplan Singapore in the academic session 2015/2016.

Looking to the future, the staff at Kaplan in Singapore believe that they have reached capacity in terms of their Business programmes, and it is likely that the Government would want providers to focus on more technical education rather than general Business degrees which could provide wider opportunities for other UCD Colleges. The Review Group believes that this should impact the strategy in Singapore as UCD will need to protect its current position, but it also provides opportunities.

### 3.4 **Hong Kong**

There is a declining trend of student numbers in the second level sector in Hong Kong. In light of this, and with increased competition with local universities for this reduced cohort of students, the viability of the programmes could be at risk. The Review Group noted one very positive development in Hong Kong has been the recent introduction of the MSc in Digital Marketing. The stimulus for the inclusion of this programme came from a UCD Finance graduate who could see the potential of the programme in Hong Kong. An innovation like this, from UCD alumni on the ground in local markets, is a good example of the way in which alumni can influence the menu of programmes available to local students. This might be a useful model to follow in marketing programmes in both centres.

Other overseas partners for Kaplan Hong Kong include Monash University, Northeastern University and Birmingham City University. There are currently 100 staff members working in Kaplan Hong Kong. There were 168 undergraduate and 33 graduate students on UCD programmes in Kaplan Hong Kong in the academic session 2015/2016.

In light of the contraction of the market in Hong Kong, the Review Group believes that the financial viability of the Hong Kong operation needs to be closely monitored over the next few years.

#### **Recommendations:**

- UCD and Kaplan should work together to further develop their strategy in relation to the programme offerings, cognisant of the changes in the market which may mean less requirement for Business programmes and a need for more technically-oriented programmes, and of the local market demands and the potential contribution that local staff/alumni can make to identifying opportunities (e.g. the MSc Digital Marketing). The financial viability of the Hong Kong operation should be closely monitored and evaluated in the context of strategic planning, while the strategy for Singapore should recognise the maturity of that market and how the current success can be sustained and enhanced.



## 4. Programme Admissions

- 4.1 The structure of the BBS is in three stages, Stage 1 Foundation Business Skills; Stage 2 Core Curriculum; Stage 3 Specialist Modules. For both centres, students generally enter the BBS programmes directly into Stage 2, with recognition of prior learning, evidenced by an Advanced Standing Qualification (ASQ). The CDL and Kaplan maintain a list of more than 100 ASQs provided by institutions, which are considered equivalent to Stage 1 of the BBS degree. In Hong Kong alone there is direct entry into stage 1 of the BBS degree using the criteria employed for entry into any university in Hong Kong under the old "A" level system or the new Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) system. Standard entry into the Masters programmes is by the achievement of a degree or degree equivalent, whereas non-standard entry is considered if the applicant has significant relevant managerial experience of at least 10 years (non-standard admission numbers are limited to 20% of the intake). The MSc offers a number of specialist pathways and the programmes last one academic year.
- 4.2 The admissions process is similar in both Singapore and Hong Kong. For the undergraduate programme, while Kaplan finds and screens applicants and advises them on their likelihood of acceptance onto any programme, UCD has complete control over all admissions decisions. The process is well established and works well such that the vast majority of applicants identified by Kaplan as meeting entrance requirements are made an offer by UCD. For both undergraduate and postgraduate students, there are pre-defined and published regulations which ensures that admissions are transparent and implemented consistently, and as a result of this there is a high conversion rate from application to registration. The Review Group is satisfied that the admissions system is robust.
- 4.3 For entry with advanced standing into Stage 2 of the BBS programme, the ASQ is considered to be equivalent to the first year of a university business degree. These candidates are accepted, based on the award of a qualification which has at least 20% of its content in business related subjects. However, since these students might not have completed some core foundation modules in Stage 1, the Review Group were concerned that their performance on later modules on the programme might be adversely affected. To minimise this risk, there should be metrics which could match the entrance achievement of ASQ entrants (and the institution from which they obtained the ASQ) with later performance on the programme. The Review Group recommends that the University gives further consideration to the enhancement and customisation of the Programme Dashboard developed by the University's Management Services Unit (MSU), so that the progression of these students can be easily monitored. If the enhancement of the Programme Dashboard is likely to be delayed, the Review Group believes that a less sophisticated analysis should be completed by CDL. If there is evidence that there is a high failure rate, or poor performance amongst ASQ entrants generally, or ASQ entrants from a specific institution in particular, then the CDL and the UCD College of Business should investigate the issue further and take appropriate action.
- 4.4 The ASQ list is diverse and extensive, and is periodically reviewed to ensure that the quality of the entrants is maintained. Maintaining this list to ensure that the qualification still meets an acceptable standard is a continuous, time-consuming exercise. The self-assessment team also recognised the problems with maintaining a comprehensive list of acceptable ASQs. Since nearly 70% of those entering the programmes with ASQ involve students from only six institutions, the Review Group recommend that formal articulation agreements with these key providers should be put in place as soon as possible. With articulation agreements in place, it should bring greater clarity to the overall structure and coherence of the pathways into the BBS programme. The Review Group understands that this work is already underway.
- 4.5 The induction of the students into the programmes is a systematic process which differs between Hong Kong and Singapore. In Singapore the Council for Private Education (CPE) requires that there is an induction by Kaplan, this is followed by the formal orientation by UCD. The UCD Orientation is to give the students a sense of belonging to UCD and to introduce them to some key expectations of UCD for their performance and behaviour, and is a positive feature. In Hong Kong there is no equivalent of the CPE, so the orientation is solely by UCD. The Student's Handbook is detailed and extensive, and the feedback from students about the orientation is good. The Review Group recognises the importance and success of the orientation programme in clarifying the expectations of students and in giving students a sense of belonging to the institution.

### Recommendations:

- Data Analytics and Reporting – the Review Group recommends that the enhancement and customisation of the Programme Dashboard by the University's Management Services Unit (MSU) be expedited, so that the progression of students can be easily monitored. This would enable, for example, the CDL to identify the performance of students admitted from particular education providers on particular

programmes/modules, so that it can identify any required remedial action to address issues which arise in relation to student performance.

- Advanced Standing Qualifications (ASQ) – most applicants to the undergraduate programmes in both Singapore and Hong Kong are admitted directly to Stage 2, with an ASQ for Stage 1 based on work completed previously through another education provider. Further formality should be introduced for these arrangements, in particular with the education providers that supply the largest number of students onto the UCD/Kaplan programmes (the Review Group was informed that six institutions provide pathways for nearly 70% of students). This should take the form of articulation agreements, and this was acknowledged as a ‘work-in-progress’.

## 5. Programme Governance

- 5.1 The management of the partnership is undertaken by the UCD-Kaplan Strategic Board which was established in 2012. This meets twice yearly, in Europe and in East Asia. The Board makes key operational and strategic decisions on the direction of the partnership. The Review Group confirmed that the partnership was progressing well and that the oversight of the partnership was creating a clear sense of direction to align the efforts of both Kaplan and UCD staff.
- 5.2 The academic governance of the programmes is via the Business Undergraduate Programme Board and the Graduate School of Business Taught Programmes Board, which are both sub-committees of the University Programmes Board (UPB). The two Business programme boards operate within the regulatory system established by the University, including exercising oversight of examinations, progression and graduation, as well as to oversee changes to both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. The separation of responsibilities for ensuring regulatory compliance, from the operational responsibilities of managing the programmes by the CDL, ensures the probity of the governance process and is a positive feature. The Review Group confirmed that the system of academic governance is working effectively.
- 5.3 Students who met with the Review Group reported that there was no systematic process in place to facilitate the student voice within the system for academic governance. As students are the ultimate consumers of the academic programmes, the academic governance of the programmes should include effective mechanisms to capture their views. The Review Group noted the existence of a Student Forum and was provided with sample minutes of its meetings, and while the Student Forum provides a useful mechanism for receiving student feedback, there is scope to further enhance this so that it might more closely resemble the formal Staff-Student Committees which exist in UCD-Belfield. This might provide for more direct engagement with students and more effective processing of student feedback and its input into programme and curriculum development. The scope of the discussions in any such Staff-Student Committee should be limited to concerns about the teaching arrangements and resources, and should not include complaints about individual teachers, as there are separate mechanisms to process these issues. (cf. 8.5)
- 5.4 In Singapore and Hong Kong, there are different local regulations which have to be met before a new programme can be introduced. There are also UCD requirements which also have to be met. The Review Group noted that the time for approval of such changes, assuming that the proposal clears local regulations, is 4-6 months in Singapore and 4-6 weeks in Hong Kong.
- 5.5 New programmes and changes to existing programmes must be approved by the Business Undergraduate Programme Board or the Graduate School of Business Taught Programmes Board. If the changes are major, then approval has to be obtained from the University Programme Board (UPB). The partners in the management of the programmes are briefed on the quality assurance mechanisms.
- 5.6 The annual programme monitoring reports required by UCD, the consolidated outputs of which are reported annually to the Academic Council Committee on Quality (ACCQ), provide opportunity for joint reflection by Kaplan and UCD staff. The self-generated feedback and learning that are generated by this monitoring process are captured in the **Closing the Loop** action planning section of the programme monitoring template. This system of reporting provides a valuable tool for ongoing quality assurance and enhancement and is a positive feature. The Review Group recommends that all stakeholders, including the College Principal and other staff in the UCD College of Business, as well as staff in Kaplan, are provided with the annual programme monitoring reports, and are made aware of issues which may arise and any and all actions planned to address them.

### Recommendations:

- The formal mechanism for collecting student feedback on the way each of the programmes are managed and delivered should be further enhanced – the Student Forum provides some opportunity for this, but this should be further enhanced so that it might more closely resemble the formal Staff-Student Committees which exist in UCD-Belfield. The Review Group recommends that all stakeholders, including the College Principal and staff from Kaplan, are provided with the annual programme monitoring reports, and are made aware of issues which may arise and any and all actions planned to address them.

## 6. Programme Staffing

- 6.1 The main responsibility of the CDL is the management of the undergraduate and graduate programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong (as well as Business programmes in Sri Lanka). There are currently 11 staff members in the CDL. The responsibilities and reporting line of the staff in CDL are clearly outlined in the Information Handbook for Kaplan Staff. New staff are asked to familiarise themselves with the details of policies and operations of UCD. There is a staff orientation and training programme in place. Over the years, the UCD College of Business has increased the professional resources made available to the programmes. In addition, the Review Group learned that additional academic faculty staff positions were being recruited for. The Review Group endorses the positive increase in staff resources since the last review, to provide enhanced support to programmes in both centres. The Review Group recommends that teaching staff arrangements and the mode of delivery of the programmes (through short, 1-week visits) should be evaluated in further detail, and that the approach to this should be informed by international best practice, benchmarked against other comparable institutions and programmes, compared with other similar collaborative and transnational provision which UCD is engaged with, and undertaken in consultation with the UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement, with a view to considering a wide range of models for delivery of the programme content by UCD-Belfield academic staff.
- 6.2 The Review Group saw evidence that the relationship between CDL and Kaplan staff in both sites was excellent. The staff in all locations were very engaged and professional, highly interested in the success of the operation, and paid attention to the quality of the programme and student experience. There is close coordination between CDL staff at UCD-Belfield and the staff at Kaplan in both Singapore and Hong Kong, and decisions made by the two Business programme boards in the College of Business (and any of their sub-committees) are communicated on a shared drive with all relevant staff. Staff from the CDL undertake site visits to Singapore and Hong Kong twice a year, and there are regular video conference calls, as well as daily formal and informal meetings in order to coordinate activities. The Review Group was impressed with the close and collegial relationships which had developed between Kaplan and UCD staff which aided the delivery of the programmes.
- 6.3 The role of Programme Manager is crucial in dealing with students who may be at risk of dropping out of the programme. Students at both centres commented positively regarding the contribution of the Programme Managers. The local sales and marketing teams in both locations are also doing excellent work in providing a good volume of applications to these programmes and with strong conversion rates into registered student numbers.
- 6.4 The process of approval of overseas academic staff to teach on the programme is well documented, with final approval made by the undergraduate or graduate programme boards in the College of Business in UCD. This is a positive feature. The CDL ensures that staff employed on the programmes meet the AACSB requirements so that the appropriate proportion of Academically Qualified (AQ) staff are deployed for undergraduate and graduate teaching. UCD staff who are flown in to teach the programmes have already been approved and their AQ status confirmed. The Review Group were satisfied that staff teaching on the programmes were appropriately qualified and that the staff appointment process was effective.
- 6.5 The Review Group noted the remuneration restrictions imposed on the Irish Higher Education Institutions in recent years by the Department of Education and Skills, as a result of the economic downturn in Ireland. To some extent, this had made Singapore and Hong Kong teaching assignments for Dublin-based staff less attractive. In relation to the long-term sustainability and viability of the programmes, this issue should be considered further by the UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement and UCD Human Resources, particularly as it may also impact on other similar programmes.
- 6.6 To maintain and enhance the overall quality of staff available to the local programmes, CDL has undertaken continuing professional development for local lecturers. This takes the form of quarterly Teaching and Learning

events which aim to improve teaching skills and create more of a community amongst the local teaching staff. In addition, there is a quarterly online conference call so that all lecturers can seek support and advice on teaching upcoming modules. Subject Area Co-ordinators also provide support and advice to local faculty, in coordination with the CDL Programme Manager. The Director of Assurance of Learning in the College of Business in UCD also offers support for teaching and learning. The Review Group commends the CDL staff for their initiative in starting the Teaching and Learning Festivals, and the work by all of the staff who are offering support to local staff in developing their teaching capability. The Review Group recommends that CDL also considers developing the research skills of local staff. The Review Group believe that the visiting UCD staff might be able to contribute to the academic development of local staff, by sharing some of the results of their latest research projects. The Review Group would also encourage visiting staff to consider undertaking joint research activities with local staff, industry and the business community, to build the intellectual capital of the overseas operation, to build deeper personal relationships between local staff and staff from UCD-Belfield, and to extend the global impact of UCD research.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Review Group endorses the positive increase in staff resources since the last review, to provide enhanced support to programmes in both centres. The Review Group recommends that teaching staff arrangements and the mode of delivery of the programmes (through short, 1-week visits) should be evaluated in further detail, and that the approach to this should be informed by international best practice, benchmarked against other comparable institutions and programmes, compared with other similar collaborative and transnational provision which UCD is engaged with, and undertaken in consultation with the UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement, with a view to considering a wide range of models for delivery of the programme content by UCD-Belfield academic staff.
- The Review Group noted the remuneration restrictions imposed on the Irish Higher Education Institutions in recent years by the Department of Education and Skills, as a result of the economic downturn in Ireland. To some extent, this had made Singapore and Hong Kong teaching assignments for Dublin-based staff less attractive. In relation to the long-term sustainability and viability of the programmes, this issue should be considered further by the UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement and UCD Human Resources, particularly as it may also impact on other similar programmes.
- The Review Group recommends that CDL consider ways in which it can develop the research skills of local staff, for example by encouraging visiting UCD-Belfield staff to undertake joint research activities with local staff, including delivering research seminars for local staff, industry and the business community while in Singapore and Hong Kong, and by encouraging local staff to visit UCD-Belfield. The development of a video to give teaching tips to all faculty (not only those travelling overseas) would also be useful, and technology should be employed to enable staff at all locations to interact during teaching and learning events.

## **7. Programme Delivery**

- 7.1 With oversight within the UCD College of Business provided by the CDL, the BBS is offered on a full- and part-time basis in both Singapore and Hong Kong. Meanwhile the MSc programme is offered on a full- and part-time basis in Singapore, and on a part-time basis only in Hong Kong. The BBS programme can be completed in a period of 18 months, with students undertaking Stages 2 and 3 of a programme that is broadly aligned with the part-time BBS offered in Dublin. They are exempted from Stage 1 of the programme through recognition of prior learning evidenced by an Advanced Standing Qualification (ASQ).
- 7.2 The teaching philosophy of the College (as outlined in the SAR) is aligned with that of the University, being student-centred and outcomes-based. Each module within the BBS programmes offered in Singapore and Hong Kong carries 10 ECTS (modules on Stage 1 of the BBS, offered in Hong Kong only, are 5 ECTS). On the MSc programmes, there is a mixture of 7.5 and 10 ECTS modules (as well as a small number of 5, 15, 20, 25 and 30 ECTS modules) in all locations, though there are more 7.5 ECTS modules in Dublin and more 10 ECTS modules in Singapore and Hong Kong. In general, the full-time programmes attract younger candidates who do not have significant work experience. Typically, those studying on a part-time basis are more mature candidates who are combining work and study.
- 7.3 For full-time students, the delivery schedule for each 10 ECTS module includes 42 hours face-to-face tuition over a 7-week period. Meanwhile, part-time students receive 20 hours face-to-face tuition, delivered in an intensive 5-day block-based format, for a similar 10 ECTS module in a similar 7-week period. In each case, it is expected that students will undertake periods of self-directed study that are broadly aligned with the normal conventions for 10 ECTS modules.

- 7.4 It is noted by the Review Group that there are significant differences in the contact hours and delivery methods for full- and part-time students. While it is acknowledged that one of the attractions of the UCD provision in Singapore and Hong Kong is the opportunity to complete a BBS programme in a period of 18 months, this inevitably means that there is compression in the teaching and learning schedule which impacts upon the quality of the learning experience. For part-time students in particular, the delivery and assessment schedules do not appear to provide meaningful opportunity for students to assimilate material. Students are provided with tutorials on an ad hoc basis, and in some instances would benefit from increased levels of support with their learning. Furthermore, the delivery of modules in Singapore and Hong Kong is quite different from that in UCD-Belfield. In Singapore and Hong Kong, modules involve a single short and intensive block of teaching, with non-contact, directed learning taking place before and after the block teaching. For full-time modules, undergraduate students have 42 hours of class. For part-time students it is 20-24 hours. In the first five weeks of the module, there is no formal teaching input, and students are required to complete readings as well as a first assessment, based on a question posed by the instructor. The teaching of the module then occurs when a faculty member from UCD-Belfield visits the sites and gives formal teaching input over a 4-5 day intensive period for part-time and postgraduate programmes. After this, the students complete two more assessments and prepare for the end of module examination. The Review Group heard contradictory views on this intensive teaching pattern from students. Full-time students found the intensive teaching very demanding, but part-time students welcomed this pattern, since it allowed them to attend class and still keep up with work commitments. The Review Group was informed that attrition and first sit module failure rates are high for some modules on the BBS programme in both Singapore and Hong Kong. There was some anecdotal feedback from students that this may be indicative of difficulties experienced by students in coping with the programme schedule.
- 7.5 The Review Group acknowledged that the modes of delivery for the programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong are designed to accommodate local market-needs, which make them *different* to the programmes delivered in Dublin, but the Review Group developed some reservations regarding the *comparability* and *equivalence* of the teaching and learning experience afforded to students in Singapore and Hong Kong, as compared with students based in Dublin. The Review Group recommends that the College revisits the relationship between the workload, timeframe and mode of delivery for programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong.
- 7.6 The Review Group also recommends that the CDL provides a detailed representation (e.g. a Gant chart) of the timeframe for delivery of the programmes, from the point of admission, including module delivery, assessment dates, block teaching by UCD-Belfield academic staff, examinations and the grade approvals process, including final approval of grades. This indicative timeline is included in the response to this report provided by the CDL and the College of Business (see **Appendix 2**).
- 7.7 Localisation of the programme content is undertaken by lecturing staff based in Singapore and Hong Kong. The intention is that modules are delivered by locally based, suitably qualified lecturers in partnership with UCD faculty. Following the last quality review exercise in 2008, UCD-based faculty have provided increased input into the delivery of modules. This is considered to have significantly enhanced the quality of the provision. The Review Group recommends that the College of Business ensures that UCD faculty provide, at a minimum, 50% input to the teaching of all modules in Singapore and Hong Kong. A two year project to ensure this level of UCD input into modules commenced in September 2015. Most modules in BBS Stage 2 and Stage 3 are already delivered locally, with standardised resources provided by UCD. In 2017-18 this will be extended to postgraduate modules. The importance of UCD direct input relates to the quality of the provision, but it also helps to justify for the students the high fee, and establishes the key unique selling point for the UCD programmes. The Review Group further recommends that the College of Business considers whether UCD's Belfield faculty would deliver their course material during single two-week periods rather than more intensive one-week periods. This would significantly enhance the quality of students' learning experience and would provide further opportunity to strengthen the collaborative research activities between UCD's Belfield faculty and both staff and industry in the Singapore and Hong Kong regions.
- 7.8 Students are provided with high quality study guides to support their learning on each module. These are developed by staff based in Singapore and Hong Kong, with oversight provided by the CDL. Additionally, there is a dedicated team of administrative staff in each location to support the operation of the programmes, with a Programme Manager allocated to each programme cohort.
- 7.9 The physical infrastructure and facilities in Singapore and Hong Kong are excellent in many respects, centrally located, and it was noted that there is ongoing investment in facilities. There are limitations that are inherent in rooms and buildings that are not purpose-built, but facilities are as good as they can be in light of these limitations. Student numbers are significantly higher in Singapore and in general, facilities at this location are of

a higher standard. Alumni from both Singapore and Hong Kong commended the gradual improvements that have been made since the last review: in both locations, this has involved a change of premises. A particular example of the high quality of facilities is 'The Synergy Pod' in Kaplan Singapore (see images in **Appendix 4**), developed in association with Samsung, which is excellent, and which may provide notable opportunities to further enhancement of the student learning experience in the coming years, providing a clear way in which students and faculty in Dublin may be able to interact directly with their peers overseas in real-time.

- 7.10 The appointment of UCD faculty based in Singapore and Hong Kong is a particularly welcome development, as is the appointment of Subject Area Co-ordinators, and External Examiners who have specific responsibility for the Singapore and Hong Kong based provision. This is a positive feature. Since the last review, the use of Blackboard and the standardisation of academic and orientation materials, together with closer liaison with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, are perceived to have led to significant improvements.
- 7.11 If the technology already being used to deliver the programme was pushed further, then it should be possible to link the classrooms in East Asia to the teacher in UCD-Belfield in real time, giving way to an international virtual classroom such that students can interact with the lecturer and with each other in different locations. This would also meet the needs of the full-time students to have a less intensive programme delivery, and since these sessions could be recorded and posted online, the part-time students who have work commitments could catch up when it was convenient for them. The lecturer would still visit these Asian centres, but the visit would allow him/her to go beyond the delivery of material and concentrate on some of the higher order learning goals of the BBS programme, such as personal and reflective learning and developing a global mind-set. This would therefore also assist UCD in truly internationalising its operations and its learning community. The Review Panel noted the classroom in Singapore which had been sponsored by Samsung. Rooms like this, with the addition of connectivity back to UCD-Belfield, would mean that this global connectivity is probably not difficult to achieve. The Review Group heard evidence of some plans to develop a Global Classroom at UCD-Belfield in a new development to be built near the existing Quinn School of Business. If these plans come to fruition, it would present an opportunity to achieve greater equivalence between UCD-Belfield programmes and those offered in international centres, and to achieve one of UCD's strategic objective of strengthening its global reach.
- 7.12 The UCD Summer School is a notable and welcome development since the last review. At this present stage, the Review Group does have concerns, however, regarding the quality and depth of the learning experience afforded to students, given the mode of delivery for the Summer School. There are two 10-credit modules in the Summer School delivered over two weeks, with one module delivered per week in five consecutive half-day periods. There is an opportunity to provide a USP to students in which a longer and more comprehensive learning experience, combined with relevant local field trips in Ireland, would be offered. At present, the Summer School is available only to BBS students, however, MSc students may also benefit from a period of study at the home campus. Additionally, the Summer School would provide an opportunity for Dublin based MSc students to meet with international participants. Whether some Dublin students would wish to accelerate their own learning, by taking Summer Semester modules together with the Singapore and Hong Kong students, merits due consideration by the CDL and the UCD College of Business.
- 7.13 In meetings with students, and having reviewed programme material, the Review Group concluded that there is no systematic approach taken in relation to the development of employability skills amongst students (particularly full-time BBS students). While 'the business of' seminars provide an opportunity for students to participate in sessions delivered by business practitioners, there are no formalised links with employers that facilitate internships, for example. While there is evidence of considerable contact and excellent relationships with local industry and employers in Singapore and Hong Kong, there appears to be limited practical elements embedded within the curriculum of the programmes offered in each location. This should be considered further with a view to enhancing the student experience, particularly for full-time students who may lack professional experience.
- 7.14 As part of this quality review exercise, the Review Group noted some difference in English competence between Singapore and Hong Kong. While all students admitted to the programmes meet the University's English language entry requirements, students based in Singapore appeared to have a greater command of the language. This has implications for teaching delivery, and also for the quality of assessed work.
- 7.15 The Review Group recommends that students be made more aware of what supports are available to them to assist them in understanding the academic material, for example through additional seminars/tutorials. Students from different (academic and/or language) backgrounds may experience different challenges with different modules (e.g. non-Maths oriented students may experience difficulties with statistics modules). This does not necessarily need to be provided for all students, but at least for those who require this additional

support. Academic writing and the correct way of referencing should also be introduced to students – there have been attempts to introduce this in orientation sessions, though not always with success.

- 7.16 It is acknowledged that UCD and the College of Business have ambitious plans in relation to global engagement. This should be reflected in the day-to-day teaching and learning opportunities provided to its students. It is clear that students based in Singapore and Hong Kong do not currently have any opportunity to engage with their Dublin based counterparts, and vice versa.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Review Group acknowledged that the modes of delivery for the programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong are designed to accommodate local market-needs, which make them *different* to the programmes delivered in Dublin, but the Review Group developed some reservations regarding the *comparability* and *equivalence* of the teaching and learning experience afforded to students in Singapore and Hong Kong, as compared with students based in Dublin. The Review Group recommends that the College revisits the relationship between the workload, timeframe and mode of delivery for programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong.
- The Review Group also recommends that the CDL provides a detailed representation (e.g. a Gant chart) of the timeframe for delivery of the programmes, from the point of admission, including module delivery, assessment dates, block teaching by UCD-Belfield academic staff, examinations and the grade approvals process, including final approval of grades. This indicative timeline could be included in the response to this report to be provided by the CDL and the College of Business.
- The Review Group recommends that the College of Business ensures that UCD faculty provide, at a minimum, 50% input to the teaching of all modules in Singapore and Hong Kong. A two year project to ensure this level of UCD input into modules commenced in September 2015. Most modules in BBS Stage 2 and Stage 3 are already delivered locally, with standardised resources provided by UCD. In 2017-18 this will be extended to postgraduate modules. The importance of UCD direct input relates to the quality of the provision, but it also helps to justify for the students the high fee, and establishes the key unique selling point for the UCD programmes. The Review Group further recommends that the College of Business considers whether UCD's Belfield faculty would deliver their course material during single two-week periods rather than more intensive one-week periods. This would significantly enhance the quality of students' learning experience and would provide further opportunity to strengthen the collaborative research activities between UCD's Belfield faculty and both staff and industry in the Singapore and Hong Kong regions.
- In the context of both the institutional aims and objectives, and the College of Business desire to provide a truly international experience for its students, the Review Group recommends that the College of Business establishes a Global Classroom (facilitated by relevant technology) to enable students based in Dublin, Singapore and Hong Kong to participate in classes/lecture sessions that are delivered in Dublin and seek to engage students in remote locations. Through scheduling, this may be in real time, or through the availability of podcasts.
- The mode of delivery of the Summer School in UCD-Belfield should be evaluated closely, and discussed at the relevant programme board in the College of Business to ensure the quality of the student experience for those who undertake the Summer School. It is recommended that in advance of making any decision to participate in the Summer School, students should be provided with more detailed information about it, and should be provided with opportunities to meet with students who have previously attended the School. The Review Group also recommends that the College of Business considers offering the opportunity for Dublin based students to participate in summer modules, and that opportunities are provided for international participants to meet Dublin based students. The Review Group also recommends that the College of Business introduces a Summer School for MSc students that is open to both international and Dublin based students.
- The Review Group recommends that the CDL, through Kaplan, explores the development of stronger links with employers to facilitate student internships, and that increased opportunity is provided for students to develop employability skills. This would also support the building of the UCD brand in overseas markets.
- The Review Group recommends that students be made more aware of what supports are available to them to assist them in understanding the academic material, for example through additional seminars/tutorials. Students from different (academic and/or language) backgrounds may experience different challenges with different modules (e.g. non-Maths oriented students may experience difficulties with statistics modules). This does not necessarily need to be provided for all students, but at least for those who require this additional support. Academic writing and the correct way of referencing should also be introduced to students – there have been attempts to introduce this in orientation sessions, though not always with success.

## 8. Curriculum Design and Assessment

- 8.1 There is a robust governance structure in place to provide oversight to matters of curriculum development, design and delivery. In particular, since the previous quality review and as an outcome of other review exercises (e.g. AACSB and the UCD curriculum review), a number of developments have taken place which serve to strengthen the quality of the offering. These include the appointment of Subject Area Co-ordinators, the appointment of a Director for the Assurance of Learning, and the appointment of External Examiners with specific subject responsibility for the Singapore and Hong Kong provision, a positive feature.
- 8.2 The curriculum for the BBS and MSc programmes has been developed by the College of Business with input from local faculty based in Singapore and Hong Kong. Each programme has a set of learning outcomes and a prescribed diet of modules, and information regarding the overall programme structures was provided in Appendix 10 of the SAR. The curricular content of the full- and part-time versions of the respective programmes are considered to be comparable, and the learning outcomes are also considered to be equivalent to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered in Dublin. In particular, the BBS provision in Singapore and Hong Kong is considered to be most closely aligned with the BBS part-time programme offered in Dublin.
- 8.3 The Review Group noted that the curriculum for the MSc programmes provides a number of core modules, together with some specialist modules. For students who are admitted to the MSc with a cognate degree, the Review Group heard feedback from students and alumni that the design of the MSc does not provide sufficient challenge.
- 8.4 The assessment schedule for the BBS and MSc programmes includes a combination of coursework and examination. Typically, students undertake two pieces of coursework and one examination. The assessments are developed by the module teaching team with oversight from the Subject Area Head, and in the case of examinations, approval of the paper by the External Examiner. As part of the review exercise, the Review Group was provided with samples of student work in the form of examination scripts. In general, the examination papers were considered to be pitched at the right level for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the Business and Management field.
- 8.5 An important element in the student learning process is the provision of feedback to students on their academic performance. Although general feedback to students on modules is provided, the Review Group found no evidence of a systematic approach to provide individual feedback to students on their coursework. The large scale of the provision in Singapore and the compressed module delivery schedule constitute impediments to the provision of feedback. Nonetheless, the absence of any formalised mechanism for providing feedback to students on coursework prior to examinations is considered by the Review Group to be a significant shortcoming of the provision, and the Review Group recommends that this be addressed. (cf. 5.3)
- 8.6 The synchronisation of the Grade Approvals Process for the home and overseas provision has facilitated a degree of peer reflection, comparison of provision and enhanced oversight by External Examiners and by the College of Business. However, the Review Group noted that there are two intakes to the overseas provision, and the schedule associated with each is not aligned with the home provision. Inevitably this means that the Grade Approvals Process is protracted. The Review Group was informed that provisional examination results are approved within sixty days from examination, but formal approval may take 6 months from the date of examination. This is excessively long, and can also impact on the timeframes for the application of the University's examination appeals process for students on the programmes. The Review Group recommends that the CDL and the College of Business, in consultation with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, evaluates this matter further and identifies the reasons why the process can take this long, with a view to improving alignment with the Grade Approval Process as it applies to programmes delivered at UCD-Belfield. The Review Group further recommends that the CDL monitors the usage of the appeals process. The CDL clarified that the *UCD Code of Practice for Students with a Disability* is applied to all students registered to the programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong (this can impact on student applications for extenuating circumstances and appeals).
- 8.7 There were some notable differences in student performance in examinations across the two locations. The quality of student work was higher in Singapore, with students demonstrating much greater understanding of issues and an ability to exercise some critical evaluation of material. By contrast, for Hong Kong based students, final year undergraduate and postgraduate work was deemed to be relatively elementary, with little evidence of critical reflection or an evaluative stance. The Review Group therefore has concerns regarding the depth of understanding that some Hong Kong students are able to demonstrate when answering examination questions, as evidenced by apparent instances of rote learning versus a more mature level of understanding and insight.



Whether this is due solely to academic matters within the control of UCD and Kaplan, or it is influenced by gradually declining levels of competence in English in Hong Kong, or by cultural norms and a reticence on the part of Hong Kong students to interact during classroom periods, is unclear. The Review Group noted that Kaplan does offer students some free English language supports, and that UCD has sought to increase the proportion of tutorial style engagement during timetabled periods for students.

- 8.8 Data provided by the University Secretariat reveals a high number of examination infringements associated with the College of Business overseas programmes in Singapore. The Review Group considers it unlikely that this is due to higher detection rates as compared with programmes assessed in Dublin. In Singapore (and Hong Kong), it is Kaplan staff that organise and oversee the examinations process. With respect to other transnational programmes offered by UCD in other locations, there has been detailed discussion and interaction with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, with a view to investigating the reasons for a high number of examination infringements and determining a mutually agreeable course of action to address the issue – the Review Group recommends that the UCD College of Business and the Centre for Distance Learning consider a similar approach and consults with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry to address the issue.
- 8.9 While students in both Singapore and Hong Kong have on-line access to the UCD library facilities, a number of those based in Singapore reported difficulties in obtaining some reading materials listed within their study guides. The Review Group recommends that an audit be carried out to assess the availability of all materials listed in study guides within the UCD Library, and that difficulties associated with remote access to UCD Library facilities be investigated and addressed.
- 8.10 A more thorough review of curriculum issues would have usefully included reports from a panel of subject specific External Examiners successively over a 3-year period, along with the corresponding detailed response from the CDL and the UCD College of Business, outlining how specific concerns are dealt with in the corresponding period. In addition, it would have been useful for the Review Panel to have been provided with statistics regarding grade distribution within modules and across programmes, including also final degree award classification statistics. This information was not available to the Review Group.

#### **Recommendations:**

- An important element in the student learning process is the provision of feedback to students on their academic performance. Although general feedback to students on modules is provided, the Review Group found no evidence of a systematic approach for providing individual feedback to students on their coursework. The large scale of the provision in Singapore and the compressed module delivery schedule constitute impediments to the provision of feedback. Nonetheless, the absence of any formalised mechanism for providing feedback to students on coursework prior to examinations is considered by the Review Group to be a significant shortcoming of the provision, and the Review Group recommends that this be addressed.
- The Review Group was informed that provisional examination results are approved within sixty days from examination, but formal approval may take 6 months from the date of examination. This is excessively long, and can also impact on the timeframes for the application of the University's examination appeals process for students on the programmes. The Review Group recommends that the CDL and the College of Business, in consultation with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, evaluates this matter further and identifies the reasons why the process can take this long, with a view to improving alignment with the Grade Approval Process as it applies to programmes delivered at UCD-Belfield. The Review Group further recommends that the CDL monitors the usage of the appeals process. The CDL clarified that the *UCD Code of Practice for Students with a Disability* is applied to all students registered to the programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong (this can impact on student applications for extenuating circumstances and appeals).
- Data provided by the University Secretariat reveals a high number of examination infringements associated with the College of Business overseas programmes in Singapore. The Review Group considers it unlikely that this is due to higher detection rates as compared with programmes assessed in Dublin. In Singapore (and Hong Kong), it is Kaplan staff that organise and oversee the examinations process. With respect to other transnational programmes offered by UCD in other locations, there has been detailed discussion and interaction with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, with a view to investigating the reasons for a high number of examination infringements and determining a mutually agreeable course of action to address the issue – the Review Group recommends that the UCD College of Business and the Centre for Distance Learning consider a similar approach and consults with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry to address the issue.

- The Review Group recommends that an audit be carried out to assess the availability of all materials listed in study guides within the UCD Library, and that difficulties associated with remote access to UCD Library facilities be investigated and addressed.

## 9. Quality Assurance and Annual Programme Review

- 9.1 The UCD College of Business has acquired an international reputation as a leading business school. The triple crown accreditation from AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB is impressive and is, in itself, a hallmark of quality for the College, and the wider University. Internally, the College operates a robust quality management and enhancement system through regular, annual and periodic monitoring and review mechanisms. The fact that the College has been highly successful in retaining its accreditations over a sustained period (which encompasses the programmes offered in Singapore and Hong Kong) provides independent evidence of the quality of its provision. Additionally, it is clear that the College has implemented a number of recommendations arising from the previous quality review exercise conducted in 2008.
- 9.2 Given the diversity of ASQs currently recognised for the accreditation of prior learning and direct entry to Stage 2 of the BBS programmes, it would be helpful to track the progress of students according to their entry qualification. While the programme team acknowledged that this would be an important element of the quality management process, it was noted that the current IT systems within UCD do not facilitate such analysis. The Review Group recognise that the provision in Singapore and Hong Kong is large and complex, and does not fit neatly with established University systems and processes. As a consequence, a number of manual exercises must be undertaken by the CDL and the UCD College of Business staff to facilitate, for example, data mining associated with Module Assessment Review Forms, grade distributions and Subject Area Reviews. These manual exercises are highly inefficient and are open to human error. The Review Group recommends that to support its quality assurance processes, the University is asked to give consideration to the provision of IT systems for data analytics and reporting mechanisms that support the required forensic interrogation of data by the CDL and the College of Business. The specific requirements in this respect are set-out in **Appendix 6**.
- 9.3 With regard to the progress and performance of students, it was noted that progression and attrition rates, particularly in Singapore, merit consideration by the College. The Review Group was informed that attrition, module failure rates, extenuating circumstances and leaves of absence are all high. For example, the programme team reported attrition rates of 20% in Hong Kong. These are particularly high during the first semester, and particularly for part-time students. Attrition and progression are important performance and quality indicators.
- 9.4 During the review exercise it was noted that students registered on UCD programmes in both Singapore and Hong Kong have achieved the required level of competence in English language. While English is the first language in Singapore, it was noted that 30% of students studying in Singapore were international. Meanwhile, in Hong Kong, with few exceptions, students were from the region. The standard of English language was noticeably higher in Singapore. In Hong Kong, some concerns were expressed regarding the level of language competence amongst students. As a consequence, there was a tendency for locally based lecturers having to revert to Cantonese when trying to explain complex material to students. This is significant and impacts upon the quality of the student experience and may contribute to issues noted in 8.7.
- 9.5 The Review Group noted that the External Examiners associated with the overseas provision have had some opportunity during the July Grade Approvals meeting to interact with External Examiners associated with College of Business programmes delivered in Dublin. This interaction is considered to be important, and permits some level of comparison between the home and overseas provision.
- 9.6 It was particularly useful for the Review Group to have access to External Examiner feedback, and the documentary evidence reviewed by the Review Group indicated that the mechanisms for handling any concerns raised by External Examiners were robust and mirrored what would apply in UCD-Belfield, and is a positive feature. On many occasions it was, therefore, clear that the concerns and recommendations of External Examiners had been addressed. In a minority of incidences, however, this had not been the case.
- 9.7 The Review Group noted that at this juncture, there is no documented information that records the post-graduation activities of students. Additionally there is no mechanism in place to make comparison between the home and overseas provision in relation to, for example, attrition, progression, achievement, and graduate destinations.

### Recommendations:

- The Review Group recommends that to support its quality assurance processes, the University is asked to give consideration to the provision of IT systems for data analytics and reporting mechanisms that support the required forensic interrogation of data by the CDL and the College of Business. The specific requirements in this respect are set-out in **Appendix 6**.
- It is recommended that the College of Business and CDL seek to clearly identify the root causes of high attrition and low progression in some modules on the BBS programme in both Singapore and Hong Kong and, where possible, put in place measures to address this.
- It is recommended that the College of Business affirms that the English language entry requirement of IELTS 6.5 is sufficient for its overseas provision. It is further recommended that students who have difficulty with English language are identified at an early stage, and that they are required to avail of the additional English language support classes provided by Kaplan (particularly in Hong Kong).
- It is recommended that the CDL ensures that in all cases, the comments and recommendations made by External Examiners are addressed and that in providing a response to them, it is made clear what action/s have been implemented and/or planned in relation to the provision in question. Additionally, the CDL must make clear and document how the reports from the External Examiners are systematically evaluated, how they are actioned, and how they influence programme planning.

## 10. Marketing and Alumni Activity

- 10.1 The marketing of the UCD-Kaplan programmes in both Singapore and Hong Kong is effective. The Review Group noted the particular challenges in relation to the branding and marketing of UCD in Singapore, which is the result of restrictions placed on UCD and Kaplan by the Singapore Council for Private Education (CPE). Private education providers in Singapore are only able to offer degree-level programmes if it is done in partnership with an established university, hence the arrangement with an institution such as UCD. UCD effectively oversees the branding of UCD and its programmes, and this is a positive feature.
- 10.2 The Review Group noted the scale and professionalism of the operation for the recruitment of students, involving separate teams with responsibility for initial consultation with students, and subsequent support for the application process, resulting in high application-to-registration conversion rates. There is a division of labour among the teams responsible for recruitment, admission and registration, where students are provided with personal support from Kaplan staff at each of these stages. In addition to the marketing of the programmes, these teams also arrange regular preview sessions. These preview sessions are provided on campus in Singapore and Hong Kong to allow prospective students to meet with UCD faculty and the programme management team. These sessions also make clear the expected academic workload and expectations for assessment.
- 10.3 The UCD College of Business has a dedicated Alumni Relations Department, which includes the Kaplan programmes in Hong Kong and Singapore. It is noted that there are approximately 2,400 alumni in Hong Kong and 8,700 alumni in Singapore. There is a programme of alumni activity including regular events, communications and the 'Alumnus of the Year' award, which is presented annually, managed locally by the UCD Alumni Associations in Hong Kong and Singapore and supported centrally by the Alumni Relations Department in Dublin. However, given the scale of the programmes, the large student numbers year-on-year, and the length of time that the partnership between UCD and Kaplan has been in existence, the Review Group was disappointed at the limited number of alumni and employers who were available to meet the Review Group. This element of quality review is critical as the involvement of external stakeholders is a key component of any quality assurance evaluation. It was noted more generally, that the area of alumni engagement was underdeveloped – indeed, the lack of interaction between the Review Group, employers and alumni may have been a by-product of this. In its interaction with students, the Review Group also noted requests for more 'real-world' experience and application within modules, greater opportunity for interaction between current students and alumni, a desire for internship opportunities, and a need for career development support – the Review Group recommends that a more enhanced framework for interaction with alumni be developed, which could be of great benefit to the programmes and the students alike. It was further noted that the developing Global Engagement framework in UCD could be of great assistance in providing support for further enhancement in this area.

10.4 The Review Group also met with a number of BBS and MSc students in Singapore and in Hong Kong and a small number of alumni and employers in Hong Kong. It was particularly unfortunate that the Review Group did not have a comparable opportunity to meet with any alumni or employers in Singapore, which would have allowed the Review Group to acquire a richer level of feedback informed by perspectives from such key stakeholders.

**Recommendations:**

- Alumni engagement is not quite yet ingrained. The Review Group recommends that the CDL, Kaplan and the UCD College of Business explore strategies to develop this area. This can assist, for example, with the development of internship opportunities, use of 'real-world' experience and examples within modules, and enhanced career development support. A more consistent, structured and holistic approach to alumni engagement would be valuable for the alumni themselves. Linking with the Irish consulate, and having collaborative research activities between UCD-Belfield and local staff and regional industry contacts, would also be particularly valuable, and this would help UCD to differentiate itself. Closer interaction and alignment with the UCD Global Engagement framework is recommended by the Review Group in order to exploit opportunities which may be of mutual benefit, particularly in relation to engagement with alumni and regional employers of graduates.

## Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

### Kaplan (Business Programmes) – Singapore and Hong Kong Full List of Commendations and Recommendations

This Appendix contains a full list of commendations and recommendations made by the Review Group for the Kaplan (Business Programmes) – Singapore and Hong Kong and should be read in conjunction with the specific chapter above. *(Please note that the paragraph references below refer to the relevant paragraphs in the report text)*

#### 1. Introduction and Review Methodology

##### Commendations:

- 1.6 The team at the CDL at UCD-Belfield supported the preparation of the Report, and together with the Kaplan staff in both Singapore and Hong Kong, provided comprehensive and well organised information and documentation in the Base Rooms in both locations (see **Appendix 5**).

#### 2. Collaborative Partnership Arrangements / Memoranda of Agreement

##### Recommendations:

- 2.4 In accordance with best practice in UCD and internationally, the Review Group recommends that the duration of all associated Memoranda of Agreement be no longer than 5 years. This is appropriate even for such long-established partnerships, and any automatic renewal period should be conditional on satisfactory completion of a periodic quality review prior to renewal of the Memoranda of Agreement.

#### 3. Partner Institutions and Situational Analysis

##### Commendations:

- 3.1 The delivery of the BBS and MSc programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong is considered to be strategically important to the UCD College of Business and the University, contributing substantially to the achievement of UCD's objective of being Ireland's global university. The programmes are financially sound, generating good revenue for the College and the wider University for 20 years and likely to continue as such. The Review Group commends the College of Business for the lead it has taken in advancing the internationalisation agenda of the University, and it was evident to the Review Group that the professionalism and commitment of all staff involved in the programmes provide a bedrock for the future success of the partnership. The Review Group believes that the programmes are being managed proactively in both centres to meet changes in the environment.
- 3.4 The Review Group noted one very positive development in Hong Kong has been the recent introduction of the MSc in Digital Marketing. The stimulus for the inclusion of this programme came from a UCD Finance graduate who could see the potential of the programme in Hong Kong. An innovation like this, from UCD alumni on the ground in local markets, is a good example of the way in which alumni can influence the menu of programmes available to local students.

##### Recommendations:

- 3.3 UCD and Kaplan should work together to further develop their strategy in relation to the programme offerings, cognisant of the changes in the market which may mean less requirement for Business programmes and a need for more technically-oriented programmes, and of the local market demands and the potential contribution that local staff/alumni can make to identifying opportunities (e.g. the MSc Digital Marketing). The financial viability

of the Hong Kong operation should be closely monitored and evaluated in the context of strategic planning, while the strategy for Singapore should recognise the maturity of that market and how the current success can be sustained and enhanced.

#### **4. Programme Admissions**

##### **Commendations:**

- 4.2 The admissions process is similar in both Singapore and Hong Kong. For the undergraduate programme, while Kaplan finds and screens applicants and advises them on their likelihood of acceptance onto any programme, UCD has complete control over all admissions decisions. The process is well established and works well such that the vast majority of applicants identified by Kaplan as meeting entrance requirements are made an offer by UCD. For both undergraduate and postgraduate students, there are pre-defined and published regulations which ensures that admissions are transparent and implemented consistently, and as a result of this there is a high conversion rate from application to registration. The Review Group is satisfied that the admissions system is robust.

##### **Recommendations:**

- 4.3 Data Analytics and Reporting – the Review Group recommends that the enhancement and customisation of the Programme Dashboard by the University’s Management Services Unit (MSU) be expedited, so that the progression of students can be easily monitored. This would enable, for example, the CDL to identify the performance of students admitted from particular education providers on particular programmes/modules, so that it can identify any required remedial action to address issues which arise in relation to student performance.
- 4.4 Advanced Standing Qualifications (ASQ) – most applicants to the undergraduate programmes in both Singapore and Hong Kong are admitted directly to Stage 2, with an ASQ for Stage 1 based on work completed previously through another education provider. Further formality should be introduced for these arrangements, in particular with the education providers that supply the largest number of students onto the UCD/Kaplan programmes (the Review Group was informed that six institutions provide pathways for nearly 70% of students). This should take the form of articulation agreements, and this was acknowledged as a ‘work-in-progress’.

#### **5. Programme Governance**

##### **Commendations:**

- 5.1 The management of the partnership is undertaken by the UCD-Kaplan Strategic Board. This meets twice yearly, in Europe and in East Asia. The Board makes key operational and strategic decisions on the direction of the partnership. The Review Group confirmed that the partnership was progressing well and that the oversight of the partnership was creating a clear sense of direction to align the efforts of both Kaplan and UCD staff.
- 5.2 The separation of responsibilities for ensuring regulatory compliance, from the operational responsibilities of managing the programmes by the CDL, ensures the probity of the governance process and is a positive feature. The Review Group confirmed that the system of academic governance is working effectively.

##### **Recommendations:**

- 5.3 The formal mechanisms for collecting student feedback on the way each of the programmes are managed and delivered should be further enhanced – the Student Forum provides some opportunity for this, but this should be further enhanced so that it might more closely resemble the formal Staff-Student Committees which exist in UCD-Belfield.
- 5.6 The Review Group recommends that all stakeholders, including the College Principal and staff from Kaplan, are provided with the annual programme monitoring reports, and are made aware of issues which may arise and any and all actions planned to address them.

## 6. Programme Staffing

### Commendations:

- 6.2 The Review Group saw evidence that the relationship between CDL and Kaplan staff in both sites was excellent. The staff in all locations were very engaged and professional, highly interested in the success of the operation, and paid attention to the quality of the programme and student experience. There is close coordination between CDL staff at UCD-Belfield and the staff at Kaplan in both Singapore and Hong Kong, and decisions made by the two Business programme boards in the College of Business (and any of their sub-committees) are communicated on a shared drive with all relevant staff. Staff from the CDL undertake site visits to Singapore and Hong Kong twice a year, and there are regular video conference calls, as well as daily formal and informal meetings in order to coordinate activities. The Review Group was impressed with the close and collegial relationships which had developed between Kaplan and UCD staff which aided the delivery of the programmes.
- 6.3 The role of Programme Manager is crucial in dealing with students who may be at risk of dropping out of the programme. Students at both centres commented positively regarding the contribution of the Programme Managers. The local sales and marketing teams in both locations are also doing excellent work in providing a good volume of applications to these programmes and with strong conversion rates into registered student numbers.
- 6.6 The Review Group commends the CDL staff for their initiative in starting the Teaching and Learning Festivals, and the work by all of the staff who are offering support to local staff in developing their teaching capability.

### Recommendations:

- 6.1 The Review Group endorses the positive increase in staff resources since the last review, to provide enhanced support to programmes in both centres. The Review Group recommends that teaching staff arrangements and the mode of delivery of the programmes (through short, 1-week visits) should be evaluated in further detail, and that the approach to this should be informed by international best practice, benchmarked against other comparable institutions and programmes, compared with other similar collaborative and transnational provision which UCD is engaged with, and undertaken in consultation with the UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement, with a view to considering a wide range of models for delivery of the programme content by UCD-Belfield academic staff.
- 6.5 The Review Group noted the remuneration restrictions imposed on the Irish Higher Education Institutions in recent years by the Department of Education and Skills, as a result of the economic downturn in Ireland. To some extent, this had made Singapore and Hong Kong teaching assignments for Dublin-based staff less attractive. In relation to the long-term sustainability and viability of the programmes, this issue should be considered further by the UCD Vice-President for Global Engagement and UCD Human Resources, particularly as it may also impact on other similar programmes.
- 6.6 The Review Group recommends that CDL consider ways in which it can develop the research skills of local staff, for example by encouraging visiting UCD-Belfield staff to undertake joint research activities with local staff, including delivering research seminars for local staff, industry and the business community while in Singapore and Hong Kong, and by encouraging local staff to visit UCD-Belfield. The development of a video to give teaching tips to all faculty (not only those travelling overseas) would also be useful, and technology should be employed to enable staff at all locations to interact during teaching and learning events.

## 7. Programme Delivery

### Commendations:

- 7.7 Following the last quality review exercise in 2008, UCD-based faculty have provided increased input into the delivery of modules. This is considered to have significantly enhanced the quality of the provision.
- 7.9 The physical infrastructure and facilities in Singapore and Hong Kong are excellent in many respects, centrally located, and it was noted that there is ongoing investment in facilities. There are limitations that are inherent in

rooms and buildings that are not purpose-built, but facilities are as good as they can be in light of these limitations. Alumni from both Singapore and Hong Kong commended the gradual improvements that have been made since the last review: in both locations, this has involved a change of premises. A particular example of the high quality of facilities is 'The Synergy Pod' in Kaplan Singapore (see images in **Appendix 4**), developed in association with Samsung, which is excellent, and which may provide notable opportunities to further enhancement of the student learning experience in the coming years, providing a clear way in which students and faculty in Dublin may be able to interact directly with their peers overseas in real-time.

#### **Recommendations:**

- 7.5 The Review Group acknowledged that the modes of delivery for the programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong are designed to accommodate local market-needs, which make them *different* to the programmes delivered in Dublin, but the Review Group developed some reservations regarding the *comparability* and *equivalence* of the teaching and learning experience afforded to students in Singapore and Hong Kong, as compared with students based in Dublin. The Review Group recommends that the College revisits the relationship between the workload, timeframe and mode of delivery for programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong.
- 7.6 The Review Group also recommends that the CDL provides a detailed representation (e.g. a Gant chart) of the timeframe for delivery of the programmes, from the point of admission, including module delivery, assessment dates, block teaching by UCD-Belfield academic staff, examinations and the grade approvals process, including final approval of grades. This indicative timeline could be included in the response to this report to be provided by the CDL and the College of Business.
- 7.7 The Review Group recommends that the College of Business ensures that UCD faculty provide, at a minimum, 50% input to the teaching of all modules in Singapore and Hong Kong. A two year project to ensure this level of UCD input into modules commenced in September 2015. Most modules in BBS Stage 2 and Stage 3 are already delivered locally, with standardised resources provided by UCD. In 2017-18 this will be extended to postgraduate modules. The importance of UCD direct input relates to the quality of the provision, but it also helps to justify for the students the high fee, and establishes the key unique selling point for the UCD programmes. The Review Group further recommends that the College of Business considers whether UCD's Belfield faculty would deliver their course material during single two-week periods rather than more intensive one-week periods. This would significantly enhance the quality of students' learning experience and would provide further opportunity to strengthen the collaborative research activities between UCD's Belfield faculty and both staff and industry in the Singapore and Hong Kong regions.
- 7.11 In the context of both the institutional aims and objectives, and the College of Business desire to provide a truly international experience for its students, the Review Group recommends that the College of Business establishes a Global Classroom (facilitated by relevant technology) to enable students based in Dublin, Singapore and Hong Kong to participate in classes/lecture sessions that are delivered in Dublin and seek to engage students in remote locations. Through scheduling, this may be in real time, or through the availability of podcasts.
- 7.12 The mode of delivery of the Summer School in UCD-Belfield should be evaluated closely, and discussed at the relevant programme board in the College of Business to ensure the quality of the student experience for those who undertake the Summer School. It is recommended that in advance of making any decision to participate in the Summer School, students should be provided with more detailed information about it, and should be provided with opportunities to meet with students who have previously attended the School. The Review Group also recommends that the College of Business considers offering the opportunity for Dublin based students to participate in summer modules, and that opportunities are provided for international participants to meet Dublin based students. The Review Group also recommends that the College of Business introduces a Summer School for MSc students that is open to both international and Dublin based students.
- 7.13 The Review Group recommends that the CDL, through Kaplan, explores the development of stronger links with employers to facilitate student internships, and that increased opportunity is provided for students to develop employability skills. This would also support the building of the UCD brand in overseas markets.
- 7.15 The Review Group recommends that students be made more aware of what supports are available to them to assist them in understanding the academic material, for example through additional seminars/tutorials. Students from different (academic and/or language) backgrounds may experience different challenges with different modules (e.g. non-Maths oriented students may experience difficulties with statistics modules). This does not necessarily need to be provided for all students, but at least for those who require this additional



support. Academic writing and the correct way of referencing should also be introduced to students – there have been attempts to introduce this in orientation sessions, though not always with success.

## 8. Curriculum Design and Assessment

### Commendations:

- 8.1 There is a robust governance structure in place to provide oversight to matters of curriculum development, design and delivery. In particular, since the previous quality review and as an outcome of other review exercises (e.g. AACSB and the UCD curriculum review), a number of developments have taken place which serve to strengthen the quality of the offering. These include the appointment of Subject Area Co-ordinators, the appointment of a Director for the Assurance of Learning, and the appointment of External Examiners with specific subject responsibility for the Singapore and Hong Kong provision, a positive feature.

### Recommendations:

- 8.5 An important element in the student learning process is the provision of feedback to students on their academic performance. Although general feedback to students on modules is provided, the Review Group found no evidence of a systematic approach for providing individual feedback to students on their coursework. The large scale of the provision in Singapore and the compressed module delivery schedule constitute impediments to the provision of feedback. Nonetheless, the absence of any formalised mechanism for providing feedback to students on coursework prior to examinations is considered by the Review Group to be a significant shortcoming of the provision, and the Review Group recommends that this be addressed.
- 8.6 The Review Group was informed that provisional examination results are approved within sixty days from examination, but formal approval may take 6 months from the date of examination. This is excessively long, and can also impact on the timeframes for the application of the University's examination appeals process for students on the programmes. The Review Group recommends that the CDL and the College of Business, in consultation with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, evaluates this matter further and identifies the reasons why the process can take this long, with a view to improving alignment with the Grade Approval Process as it applies to programmes delivered at UCD-Belfield. The Review Group further recommends that the CDL monitors the usage of the appeals process. The CDL clarified that the *UCD Code of Practice for Students with a Disability* is applied to all students registered to the programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong (this can impact on student applications for extenuating circumstances and appeals).
- 8.8 Data provided by the University Secretariat reveals a high number of examination infringements associated with the College of Business overseas programmes in Singapore. The Review Group considers it unlikely that this is due to higher detection rates as compared with programmes assessed in Dublin. In Singapore (and Hong Kong), it is Kaplan staff that organise and oversee the examinations process. With respect to other transnational programmes offered by UCD in other locations, there has been detailed discussion and interaction with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry, with a view to investigating the reasons for a high number of examination infringements and determining a mutually agreeable course of action to address the issue – the Review Group recommends that the UCD College of Business and the Centre for Distance Learning consider a similar approach and consults with the Assessment unit in UCD Registry to address the issue.
- 8.9 The Review Group recommends that an audit be carried out to assess the availability of all materials listed in study guides within the UCD Library, and that difficulties associated with remote access to UCD Library facilities be investigated and addressed.

## 9. Quality Assurance and Annual Programme Review

### Commendations:

- 9.1 The UCD College of Business has acquired an international reputation as a leading business school. The triple crown accreditation from AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB is impressive and is, in itself, a hallmark of quality for the College, and the wider University. Internally, the College operates a robust quality management and enhancement system through regular, annual and periodic monitoring and review mechanisms. The fact that the College has been highly successful in retaining its accreditations over a sustained period (which

encompasses the programmes offered in Singapore and Hong Kong) provides independent evidence of the quality of its provision. Additionally, it is clear that the College has implemented a number of recommendations arising from the previous quality review exercise conducted in 2008.

- 9.5 The Review Group noted that the External Examiners associated with the overseas provision have had some opportunity during the July Grade Approvals meeting to interact with External Examiners associated with College of Business programmes delivered in Dublin. This interaction is considered to be important, and permits some level of comparison between the home and overseas provision.

#### **Recommendations:**

- 9.2 The Review Group recommends that to support its quality assurance processes, the University is asked to give consideration to the provision of IT systems for data analytics and reporting mechanisms that support the required forensic interrogation of data by the CDL and the College of Business. The specific requirements in this respect are set-out in **Appendix 6**.
- 9.3 It is recommended that the College of Business and CDL seek to clearly identify the root causes of high attrition and low progression in some modules on the BBS programme in both Singapore and Hong Kong and, where possible, put in place measures to address this.
- 9.4 It is recommended that the College of Business affirms that the English language entry requirement of IELTS 6.5 is sufficient for its overseas provision. It is further recommended that students who have difficulty with English language are identified at an early stage, and that they are required to avail of the additional English language support classes provided by Kaplan (particularly in Hong Kong).
- 9.6 It is recommended that the CDL ensures that in all cases, the comments and recommendations made by External Examiners are addressed and that in providing a response to them, it is made clear what action/s have been implemented and/or planned in relation to the provision in question. Additionally, the CDL must make clear and document how the reports from the External Examiners are systematically evaluated, how they are actioned, and how they influence programme planning.

## **10. Marketing and Alumni Activity**

#### **Commendations:**

- 10.2 The Review Group noted the scale and professionalism of the operation for the recruitment of students, involving separate teams with responsibility for initial consultation with students, and subsequent support for the application process, resulting in high application-to-registration conversion rates. There is a division of labour among the teams responsible for recruitment, admission and registration, where students are provided with personal support from Kaplan staff at each of these stages. In addition to the marketing of the programmes, these teams also arrange regular preview sessions. These preview sessions are provided on campus in Singapore and Hong Kong to allow prospective students to meet with UCD faculty and the programme management team. These sessions also make clear the expected academic workload and expectations for assessment.

#### **Recommendations:**

- 10.3 Alumni engagement is not quite yet ingrained. The Review Group recommends that the CDL, Kaplan and the UCD College of Business explore strategies to develop this area. This can assist, for example, with the development of internship opportunities, use of 'real-world' experience and examples within modules, and enhanced career development support. A more consistent, structured and holistic approach to alumni engagement would be valuable for the alumni themselves. Linking with the Irish consulate, and having collaborative research activities between UCD-Belfield and local staff and regional industry contacts, would also be particularly valuable, and this would help UCD to differentiate itself. Closer interaction and alignment with the UCD Global Engagement framework is recommended by the Review Group in order to exploit opportunities which may be of mutual benefit, particularly in relation to engagement with alumni and regional employers of graduates.

## UCD School of Business / Kaplan Response to the Review Group Report

UCD College of Business found the preparation for the March 2017 Quality Review very useful. The College is grateful for the Review Group's time and effort to closely examine our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong so comprehensively. We are grateful also to them for compiling such a positive report. UCD College of Business will ensure to take on board the feedback during our Quality Improvement Planning process.

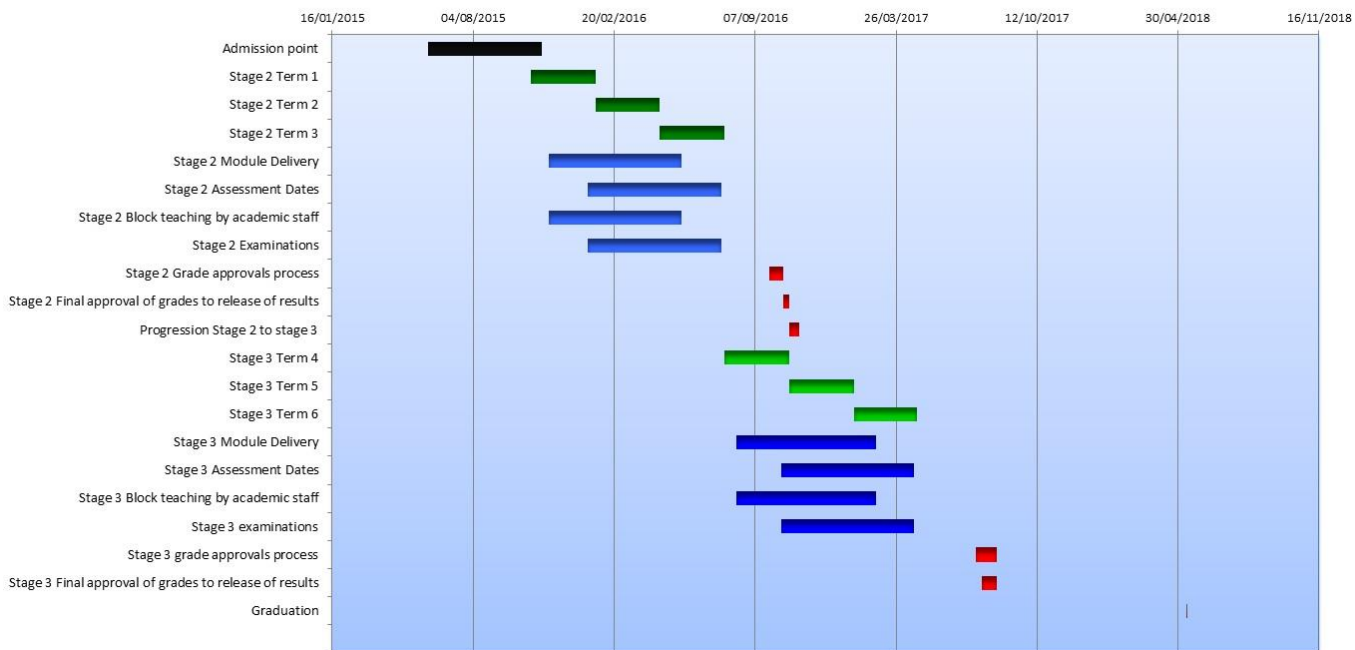
In the meantime, we would like to address some of the prioritised recommendations which fall within the control of the College:

- 1) The Memoranda of Association will be of 5 years in duration when they are renewed in 2021, as recommended.
- 2) The note regarding the Advanced Standing Qualifications list is well received and the work on developing articulation agreements will continue.
- 3) The recommendation regarding the duration of visits for teaching staff will be explored. It may be possible to investigate if there is a more staggered offering possible for the undergraduate full-time provision for core modules. The recommendations are a sizable change to the current model of offering. The extension of attendance also places the programmes at a significant disadvantage in the local market, where short, quality, intensive delivery is preferred.
- 4) The suggestion regarding the teaching input is salient. All content from the 50% of modules taught by UCD faculty has UCD input. For the remaining 50% which are locally taught, a two-year project to ensure UCD input into modules commenced in September 2015. This is currently the case with most modules in BBS Stage 2 and Stage 3 which are delivered locally, having standardised resources developed by UCD staff. For 2017/2018, we will start to standardise materials for postgraduate modules also. This will mean almost 90% of modules will have direct UCD input.
- 5) We wish to correct the suggestion of no feedback to students. Currently 75% of our modules provide general feedback based on continuous assessment (based on an example of BBS FT 23 and BBS PT 47 in Singapore). Many lecturers provide in-class feedback also. Admittedly, there is a body of work to be undertaken regarding individual formative feedback. As part of the output of the Curriculum Review and Enhancement Project 2016, there will be a reduction in assessment for September 2017 on all programmes. This enhancement is designed to unburden the students and also to provide the teaching staff with greater opportunity for feedback.
- 6) The extension of the offering of the Summer School to students in Dublin has happened and we will be able to provide this for 2018/2019, if not 2017/2018.
- 7) UCD College of Business notes the recommendation regarding the enhancement of IT provisions and reporting mechanisms. This is a necessity for the College and the University at large. Manual solutions are not a good use of resources in the University.
- 8) A detailed representation using a Gant chart of the timeframe for delivery is included overleaf.
- 9) The recommendation regarding a review of the timing for the Grade Approvals Process has been well received and plans have been made to ensure a more efficient Grade Approvals Process for students for 2017/2018.

**Outline of the timeframe for delivery of the BBS programme in Hong Kong and Singapore**

Overseas Student Lifecycle (September 2016 start date) <b>BBS40 Hong Kong</b>	Start	End	Duration (days)
Admission point	01/06/2015	10/11/2015	162
Stage 2 Term 1	25/10/2015	25/01/2016	92
Stage 2 Term 2	25/01/2016	25/04/2016	91
Stage 2 Term 3	25/04/2016	25/07/2016	91
Stage 2 Module Delivery	19/11/2015	25/05/2016	188
Stage 2 Assessment Dates	14/01/2016	21/07/2016	189
Stage 2 Block teaching by academic staff	19/11/2015	25/05/2016	188
Stage 2 Examinations	14/01/2016	21/07/2016	189
Stage 2 Grade approvals process	27/09/2016	17/10/2016	20
Stage 2 Final approval of grades to release of results	17/10/2016	25/10/2016	8
Progression Stage 2 to stage 3	25/10/2016	08/11/2016	14
Stage 3 Term 4	25/07/2016	25/10/2016	92
Stage 3 Term 5	25/10/2016	25/01/2017	92
Stage 3 Term 6	25/01/2017	25/04/2017	90
Stage 3 Module Delivery	11/08/2016	25/02/2017	198
Stage 3 Assessment Dates	14/10/2016	20/04/2017	188
Stage 3 Block teaching by academic staff	11/08/2016	25/02/2017	198
Stage 3 examinations	14/10/2016	20/04/2017	188
Stage 3 grade approvals process	17/07/2017	16/08/2017	30
Stage 3 Final approval of grades to release of results	26/07/2017	16/08/2017	21
Graduation	12/05/2018	13/05/2018	1

**BBS (HK/SG) Student Lifecycle**



**UCD College of Business – Kaplan**

**Collaborative Programme Review**

**Singapore and Hong Kong Site Visits**

**27 February – 8 March 2017**

**Review Group (RG):**

- Professor Michael Gilchrist (Head, UCD School of Mechanical & Materials Engineering and Panel Chair)
- Professor Marie McHugh (Ulster University, former Dean of Ulster Business School)
- Professor John Beck (Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore)[John will join the panel in Singapore]
- Mr Michael Kennedy (Senior Policy Officer, UCD Quality Office & Panel Rapporteur)

**UCD Co-ordinator:**

- Dr Roy Ferguson, UCD Director of Quality

**Timetable: UCD -Dublin**

**Monday 27 February - Dublin**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
9.30	Review Group arrive at UCD – Q272 UCD college of Business Boardroom (Michael; Marie; Michael K only) [+Roy]
9.40-12.00	Review Group Planning Meeting (Tea/ Coffee)
12.00.12.15	Break
12.15-1.30	Review Group meeting with College of Business and UCD Centre for Distance Learning staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Professor Ciaran O’Hogartaigh, Dean of Business</li><li>- Professor Damien McLoughlin, Associate Dean, International</li><li>- Dr Orna O’Brien, Programme Office Director and School Manager</li></ul>
1.30-14.45	Lunch (RG only) and Private Meeting of RG
14.15- 15.00	Break
15.00-15.45	Review Group meet Professor Mark Rogers Registrar & Deputy President, Professor Dolores O’Riordan VP Global Engagement
15.45-16.30	Review Group Meeting
16.30	Review Group departs

**Tuesday 28 February**

**RG fly Dublin to Singapore**

**Timetable:Kaplan-Singapore**

**Thursday 2 March – Singapore**

Time	Activity
09.30	Review Group arrive at Kaplan
09.30-11.00	Review Group Planning Meeting and examine documentary evidence
11.00-12.00	Review Group meet Senior Programme/Partnership Staff – UCD/Kaplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leong Choong, Kaplan President (Singapore)</li> <li>- Rhys Johnson, Senior Vice President and Provost (Singapore)</li> <li>- Stephen Li, Senior Director of Business Development and University Relations (Singapore)</li> <li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International (UCD), UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Dr Orna O’Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li> </ul> Tea/Coffee booked
12.00-12.30	Review Group Meeting and examine documentary evidence
12.30-13.30	Lunch (Lunch provided)
13.30-13.45	Review Group Meeting
13.45-14.45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International (UCD), UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Dr Orna O’Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Shanshan Luo, Asia Manager, UCD College of Business</li> </ul>
14.45-15.00	Review Group Meeting
15.00-15.45	Review Group meet with Key Programme Office Staff Kaplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Florence Sia, Director Programme Management</li> <li>- Femmy Lais, Assistant Manager</li> <li>- Sharon Seah, Assistant Manager</li> <li>- Shirley Ho, Programme Manager</li> <li>- Titus Sim, Programme Manager</li> <li>- Cindy Neo, Programme Manager</li> <li>- Anthony Ho, Programme Manager</li> <li>- Veronica Yeo, Programme Manager</li> <li>- Lance Neo, Programme Manager</li> </ul>

15.45-16.00	Review Group Private Meeting
16.00-17.00	Review Group meet Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tay Kok Kehng Willian (MSC 36 Mgt)</li> <li>- Pang Kee Lin (MSc 36 PM)</li> <li>- Sakam Srree Lekha (MSc 22 Mgt)</li> <li>- Zhang Yan (MSc 22 MGT)</li> <li>- Arunika Prakash (MSc 23 Mgt)</li> <li>- Dalvir Kaur (MSc 23 Fin)</li> <li>- Ashihsh Srivastava (MSc 23 Fin)</li> <li>- Carina Maria Bonisch (MSc 23 Fin)</li> <li>- Michelle Yong Wei Sih (BBS 23 Business and Law)</li> <li>- Zhang Ruida (BBS 49 Mgt)</li> <li>- Ny Guo Cai (BBS 46 Mgt)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ng Peng Song (BBS 47 Banking and Wealth Mgt)</li> <li>- Muhammada Shirazi Bin Abdul Rashid (BBS 47 Mkt)</li> <li>- Tan Kai Xian (BBS 49 HRM)</li> <li>- Li Yisha (BBS 24 LSCM)</li> <li>- Chen Sina (BBS 24 LSCM)</li> <li>- Thia Wee Kwang Ivan (BBS 24 LSCM)</li> </ul>
17.00-17.15	Review Group Private Meeting
17.15-18.15	Meeting with local faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr Yung Chiang Yang (full-time UCD faculty in Singapore)</li> <li>- Dr Ajit Prasad (Local faculty part-time) (arriving at 18.00pm)</li> <li>- Jane Cao (Local faculty part-time)</li> <li>- June Neo (Local faculty part-time)</li> <li>- Krishna Rajulu (Local faculty part-time)</li> <li>- Rodney Sim (Local faculty part-time)</li> </ul>
17.45-18.00	Review Group Private Meeting and Depart
18.00	Transport back to the hotel
19.30	Dinner for Review Team and UCD and Kaplan reps - Dinner for Review Team (Dinner Organised in Tandoor, Holiday Inn) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International (UCD), UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Dr Orna O'Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Leong Choong, Kaplan President (Singapore)</li> <li>- Rhys Johnson, Senior Vice President and Provost (Singapore)</li> <li>- Stephen Li, Senior Director of Business Development and University Relations (Singapore)</li> </ul>



**Timetable:Kaplan-Singapore**

**Friday 3 March – Singapore**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
09.00	Review Group Arrives at Kaplan, POMO
09.00-10.00	Guided Tour of relevant T&L accommodation – POMO, including the UCD Faculty Office and Synergy Pod and then on to Wilkie Edge
10.15—11.00	Meeting with alumni and employers (phone in) (Tea/coffee) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ong Ina (Graduate)</li><li>- Yuvaraj S/O Mathisya (Graduate Dial in)</li><li>- Ng Book Koon (Graduate)</li><li>- Daniel Goh Ek Tuang (Self employed)</li><li>- Ng Chee Mien (manager overseas)</li><li>- Chong Hoong Ern Patrick</li></ul>
11.00 -12.00	Review Group begin to draft Report and preliminary feedback points
12.00-12.30	Lunch – Review Group (Lunch provided)
12.30-13.00	Review Group continue to draft Report and preliminary feedback points
13.00-13.15	Review Group communicate <u>preliminary</u> feedback points UCD <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International (UCD), UCD College of Business</li><li>- Dr Orna O’Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li><li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li></ul> Kaplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Stephen Li, Director of University Relations</li><li>- Florence Sia, Director Programme Management</li></ul>
13.15	Review Group Departs
13.15	Transport back to the hotel

**Saturday 4 March – Travel to Hong Kong**

**Timetable: Kaplan-Hong Kong**

**Monday 6 March - Hong Kong**

Time	Activity												
08.45	Review Group arrive at Kaplan												
09.00-11.00	Review Group Planning Meeting and examine documentary evidence												
11.00-12.00	Review Group meet Senior Programme/Partnership Staff – UCD/Kaplan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wen Lu, Managing Director (Hong Kong)</li> <li>- Rebecca Lui, Vice President (Hong Kong)</li> <li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International (UCD), UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Dr Orna O’Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li> </ul>												
12.00-12.30	Review Group meet Senior Programme/Partnership Staff – UCD only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Dr Orna O’Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li> </ul>												
12.30-13.30	Lunch – Review Group (Lunch provided)												
13.30-14.30	Review Group Meeting												
14.30-15.45	Review Group meet with Key Programme Office Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Michael Lei, Director</li> <li>- Ms Eva Lock, Programme Manager</li> <li>- Ms Koey Kwong, Programme Manager</li> </ul>												
15.45-16.00	Review Group Private Meeting												
16.00-17.00	Review Group meet Students <table border="1" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tbody> <tr> <td>MSc 35 Year 1</td> <td>Wong Ming Kei (Graduate student)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BBS DT9 Stage 3</td> <td>SHERIDAN Chilli (Summer School)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BBS DT10 Stage 2</td> <td>CHOY Hiu Wa (Summer School)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BBS DT11 Stage 2</td> <td>CHEUNG Ho Cheung</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BBS DT11 Stage 2</td> <td>CHEUNG Yi Shing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BBS DT11 Stage 2</td> <td>MUHAMMAD Umar</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	MSc 35 Year 1	Wong Ming Kei (Graduate student)	BBS DT9 Stage 3	SHERIDAN Chilli (Summer School)	BBS DT10 Stage 2	CHOY Hiu Wa (Summer School)	BBS DT11 Stage 2	CHEUNG Ho Cheung	BBS DT11 Stage 2	CHEUNG Yi Shing	BBS DT11 Stage 2	MUHAMMAD Umar
MSc 35 Year 1	Wong Ming Kei (Graduate student)												
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BBS DT11 Stage 2	CHEUNG Ho Cheung												
BBS DT11 Stage 2	CHEUNG Yi Shing												
BBS DT11 Stage 2	MUHAMMAD Umar												
17.00-18.00	Review Group meet local faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr Markus Vanharanta (UCD full-time Faculty in Hong Kong)</li> <li>- Dr Eva Lee (Local Faculty, part-time)</li> <li>- Dr Tim Li (Local Faculty, part-time)</li> </ul>												
18.00-18.15	Review Group Private Meeting and Depart												

19.30	<p>Dinner for Review Team and UCD and Kaplan reps - Dinner for Review Team (Dinner Organised – Yun Kee, 32-40 Wellington St at 19.30pm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International (UCD), UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Dr Orna O'Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li> </ul> <p>Kaplan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wen Lu, Managing Director</li> <li>- Rebecca Lui, Vice President</li> </ul>
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### **Kaplan-Hong Kong**

#### **Tuesday 7 March - Hong Kong**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
09.00	Review Group Arrives at Kaplan
09.15-10.00	Guided Tour of relevant T &L accommodation
10.00-11.00	<p>Alumni</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sui, Jack (MSc grad)</li> <li>- Byrne, Gerard (MSc grad)</li> </ul>
11.00-12.00	<p>Employers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dr David Chu (Company, Profit Royal Pharmaceutical Limited)</li> <li>- Wong Ming Kei, Frank (Company, First Class Management)</li> </ul>
12.15-12.30	<p>Alumni</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chiu Kim Wai, Walter (MSc grad)</li> </ul>
12.00-12.30	Additional sweep up meeting(s) to clarify any outstanding issues or Review Group begin to draft Report and preliminary feedback points
12.30-13.15	Lunch – Review Group (Lunch provided)
13.15-14.30	Review Group continue to draft Report and preliminary feedback points
14.40 -14.55	<p>Review Group communicate outline <u>preliminary</u> feedback points UCD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professor Damien Mc Loughlin, Associate Dean International (UCD), UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Dr Orna O'Brien, Programme Officer Director, UCD College of Business</li> <li>- Ms Ruth Harrison, Operations Manager, UCD College of Business</li> </ul> <p>Kaplan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wen Lu, Managing Director</li> <li>- Rebecca Lui, Vice President</li> </ul>
15.00	Review Group Departs

Photos of Kaplan Campuses and Facilities (Singapore and Hong Kong)

KAPLAN SINGAPORE



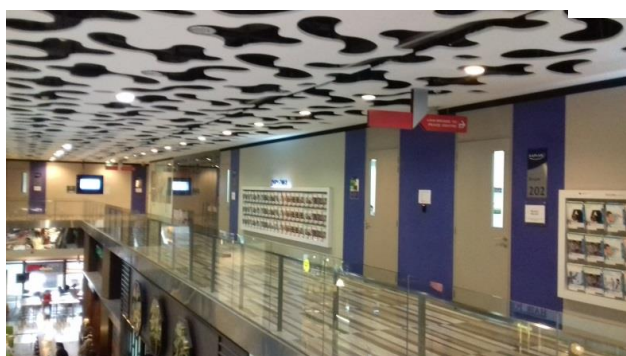
Kaplan Singapore – main reception



Kaplan Singapore – adjacent to main reception



Kaplan Singapore – adjacent to main reception



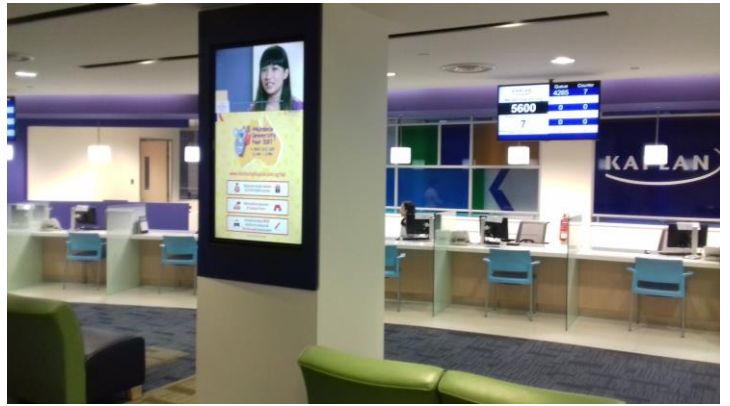
Kaplan Singapore – adjacent to main reception



Kaplan Singapore – applicant/student consultation room



Kaplan Singapore – vision & company details



Kaplan Singapore – Student Advisory Desk



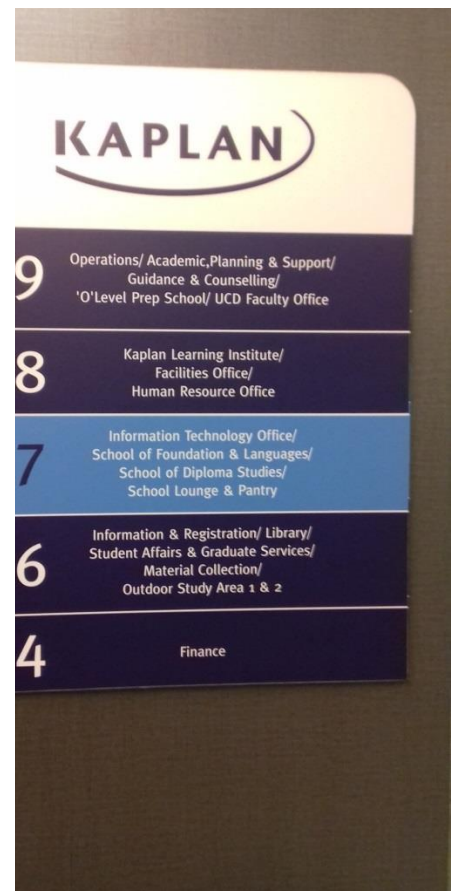
Kaplan Singapore – Digital Noticeboard



Kaplan Singapore – Student Area (programme brochures)



Kaplan Singapore – Student Area (programme brochures)



Kaplan Singapore – Building Floorplan

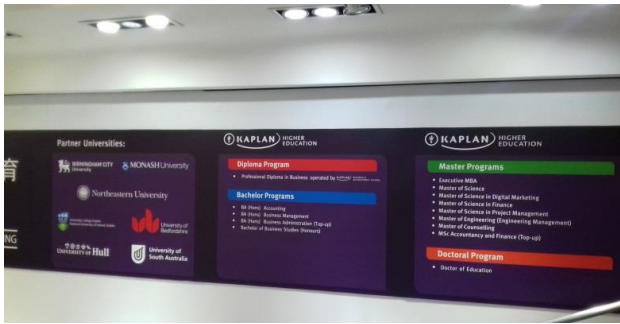


Kaplan Singapore – Student Lounge



Kaplan Singapore – Synergy Pod (developed in partnership with Samsung)

# KAPLAN HONG KONG



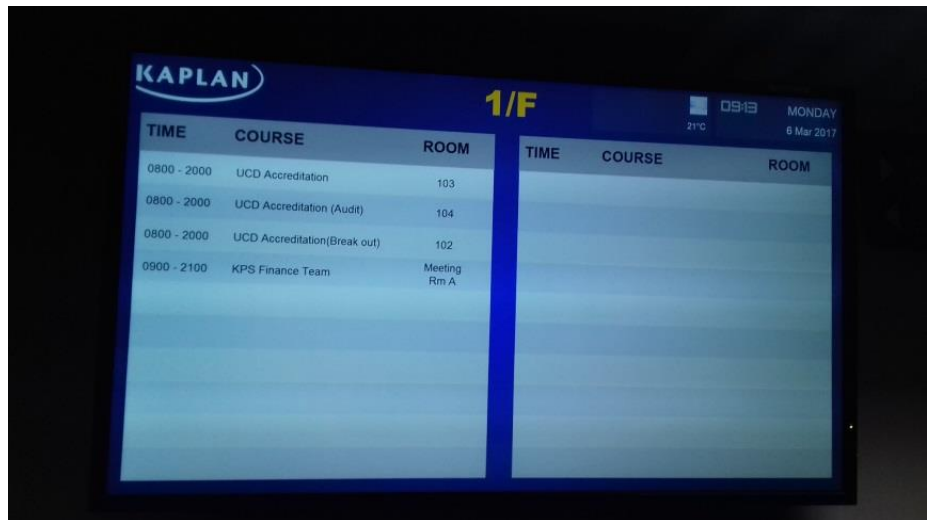
Kaplan Hong Kong – Reception/Student Advisory Desk



Kaplan Hong Kong – Reception/Student Advisory Desk



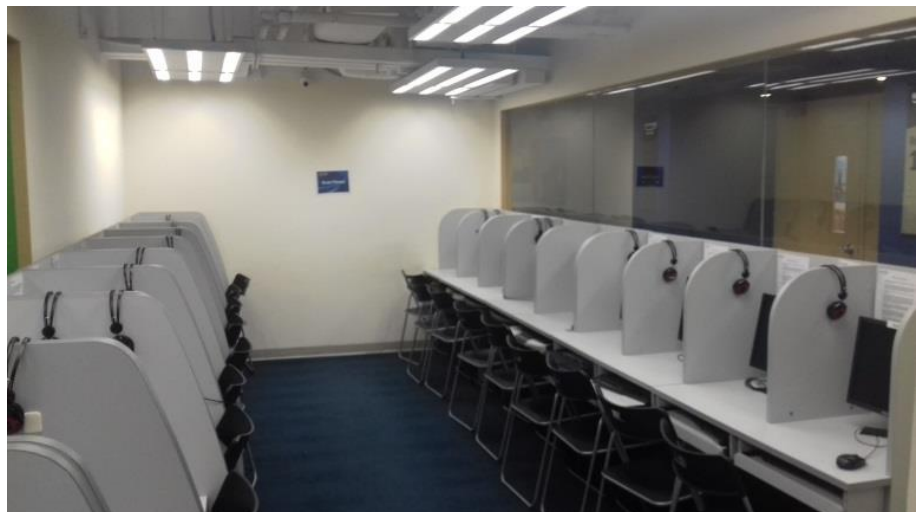
Kaplan Hong Kong – Building Floorplan



Kaplan Hong Kong – Digital Noticeboard



Kaplan Hong Kong – Media Lab



Kaplan Hong Kong – Media Lab



Kaplan Hong Kong – Office Space



Kaplan Hong Kong – Meeting Space



Kaplan Hong Kong – Social Space



Kaplan Hong Kong – Library



Kaplan Hong Kong – Classrooms





Kaplan Hong Kong – Classroom Signage



Kaplan Hong Kong – Support Staff Desk Space



Kaplan Hong Kong – Support Staff Desk Space

## Sample Listing of Base Room Documentation (Singapore and Hong Kong)

Sample listing of the additional Base Room documentation material provided to the Review Panel in both Singapore and Hong Kong:

- Admission Procedures
- Programme Outcomes
- Module Descriptors
- Curriculum Review Report
- Subject Area Review Report
- UCD Policy on Extenuating Circumstances
- UCD Policy on Plagiarism
- UCD Withdrawal Procedure
- UCD Leave of Absence Academic Policy
- Student Newsletters
- UCD memos to Students
- Blackboard Access for Local Lecturers
- College of Business Academic Protocol
- Student Completion Rates
- Team Work Protocol
- Orientation information
- Orientation Reviews
- Sample of Student Orientation Programme
- Curriculum Structure
- Student Profile
- College of Business Programme Boards and Sub-committee meetings
- UCD – Kaplan Strategic Board meetings (agenda and minutes)
- Approval Process for Project Management Pathway (BBS)
- Video Conference Meetings
- Staff Site Visit Record
- Annual Reports
- UCD Memos for Partners
- Module Assessment Samples – MIS, BMGT, FIN, ACC, LAW
- Responses to External Examiners Reports
- Examples of staff research papers
- EduTrust Assessment Report (Council for Private Education, Singapore)

## Centre for Distance Learning (UCD College of Business)

### Reporting Requirements as identified as part of the Periodic Quality Review of Programmes in Singapore and Hong Kong

March 2017

(v3.0, 27.03.2017)

In accordance with the [UCD Guidelines for the Review of Collaborative and Transnational Taught Programmes](#) UCD Collaborative and Transnational Taught provision is normally subject to quality review on a 5-7 year cycle. Undergraduate (BBS) and graduate (MSc) programmes in the College of Business are delivered in co-operation with Kaplan Higher Education in Singapore and Hong Kong and through the Centre for Distance Learning (CDL) which is one of four key pillars in the College of Business (Quinn School (UG), Smurfit School (PG), and Executive Education being the other three) – this provision was reviewed in 2008 and again in 2016-2017. Each review is divided into four distinct phases:

- **Self-reflection and analysis** – Programme Team produces a confidential Self-Assessment Report (SAR);
- **External review** – a site-visit to the partner/transnational location is undertaken by a Review Group (RG) to meet UCD/Partner staff and students. The RG issues a report;
- **Planning for Quality Improvement** – the Programme Team is given an opportunity to respond to any factual errors in the draft report and a final RG report is issued; the Programme Team then develops a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in response to the RG Report recommendations;
- A **Memorandum of Agreement** is prepared and signed by the appropriate officers of the partner institutions, if the arrangement is to continue.

In the context of this review, one of the issues identified in the Self-Assessment Report and by the Review Group is the reporting requirements of the Centre for Distance Learning in relation to the students in Singapore and Hong Kong. The reporting needs are complex for a number of reasons, including:

- Multiple sites – Singapore and Hong Kong;
- Multiple entry/programme/major pathways with multiple term start dates and part-time/full-time status – 9 pathways on the BBS in each of Singapore and Hong Kong and in each of the September and April term start dates and each with part-time and full-time pathways;
- Multiple Module Co-ordinators, consisting of UCD-Belfield staff as well as local staff in Singapore and Hong Kong, many of whom's input into specific modules varies over the course of a year and between years, and who are not currently identified in any systemic way against modules (via the Module Descriptor);
- Lack of system alignment between UCD student registration system (which admits cohorts on the basis of term codes) and local student registration/tracking system (which admits cohorts on the basis of sequential order);
- Inability to link systems to track students from initial consultation, to admission, to registration, to progression, to graduation, to employment;
- Ongoing discussion with the University's Management Services Unit (MSU), including exploration/enhancement of Programme Dashboard, has not yet achieved sufficient progress in this regard.

Enhanced reporting functionality is therefore required in the following areas:

1. Class lists which can be run by term, by module, and by full-time/part-time basis;
2. CRNs that can be run by term and by programme code;
3. Programme Metrics – student lifecycle data including previous qualification (and institution attended), nationality, Stage 2 GPA, Stage 3 GPA, Final Degree Award, etc.;
4. Module Co-ordinators and recording of all contributors to a module in the Module Descriptor;
5. Exam Board Reports – run by major code (not just by programme code);
6. Management of student cohort intakes to enable variation of content in the Module Descriptor Form and CMS.

A more detailed summary of these requirements is provided below.

## 1. Class lists that can be run by term, by module, and by full-time/part-time status

Parameters to be input when running the report:

- Module Code
- Term
- Full Time/Part Time Status

Output to show:

Many of the same items as exist for Class List SIS103. i.e.

- Student Name
- Student Number
- Major Code
- Major Description
- Registration Status
- Student Status
- Full Time/Part Time Status

## 2. CRNs that can be run by term and by programme code

Currently we have access to the report SIS137 to run for CRNs. But at the moment, we can only run it by school, which means that a lot of modules that are not relevant for us are listed and also that we cannot sort by the different programme codes. It would be helpful if we could run a version of this report but by programme code.

Parameters to be input when running the report:

- Programme Code
- Term

Output to show:

Many of the same items as exist for CRN List SIS137. i.e.

- Module Name
- Module Code
- CRN
- Type, e.g. first attempt or resit
- Semester to which the CRN applies

PLUS the new addition of information on which Programme Code the CRN applies to:

- Programme Code

## 3. Programme Metrics

The types of fields which data is required from include:

- Applicant Number
- Student Name
- Previous qualification
- Institution
- English language
- Nationality
- Stage 2 GPA
- Stage 3 GPA
- Final degree award
- Students with an incomplete status.
- Students with a registered repeat status.

Ideally these fields might be cross-tabulated to allow for a more forensic analysis. The data is currently reviewed on a manual basis and there is no report which captures admissions detail with degree award/stage GPA. This is crucial to actively manage advanced standing qualifications listing and ongoing student recruitment.

#### **4. Module coordinators**

There is no time sensitive way to accurately record module coordinators on the UCD system. We have requested a function to allow all lecturers to be shown on the Module Descriptor form. With the introduction of the T&L awards, it is more critical than ever to be able to accurately record who taught what module and in what term; if it was taught by one lecturer or jointly by two lecturers; if the lecturer is UCD or Local (who are provided with a V number).

#### **5. Exam Board Reports**

CDL have large numbers of PT and FT students. When running a PEB report we can only do this by Programme which complicates the Exam Board Processes. The request is for an additional parameter to be included in the report to enable reports to be run for FT or PT programmes (by major code).

#### **6. Management of student cohort intakes to enable variation of content in the Module Descriptor Form and CMS**

- The current system, on CMS, does not allow for sufficient functionality within the majors that will allow changes to be highlighted in September or May majors. There is only one module descriptor for any module in a single academic year. If a change is required to a module title, for example to develop the programme for an April intake, it is not currently possible as the module descriptor system, currently on CMS, is not sufficiently time sensitive. A second module descriptor would need to be created – however, if the title was to be amended for the April intake, it would then be incorrect for the September intake.
- A free text box in the Assessment area/option for Banner and CMS is needed, which would allow CRN's for the term they run in to be recorded/updated.

For example: 201504 student takes a module which runs September to December. The main cohort will be on a 201600 crn. 201504 students take Assessment components based on delivery time of the module (ie 201600), but are under 201500 assessment strategy (which is often different). Student is taking the module in 201600 and are under the 201600 assessment strategy, but Gradebook will only show 201504 strategy.

- A free text box/option is needed to allow additional information to show in a major in CMS, ie BBS26 (the naming convention for student cohorts which is used locally in Singapore and Hong Kong) could be added to 201600 majors (the term-code specific instance of a major) to enable compatibility and universal understanding of this naming format.