University College Dublin

REVIEW GROUP REPORT

Periodic Quality Review

UCD School of Psychology

March 2020

Accepted by the UCD Governing Authority at its meeting of 15 December 2022

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Key Findings of the Review Group

The Review Group (RG) has identified a number of areas of good practice operating within the School of Psychology, and also areas which the RG highlight as requiring improvement. The main section of this Report sets out all observations, commendations and recommendations of the RG in more detail. An aggregated list of all commendations and recommendations is set out in Appendix 1.

Examples of Good Practice

The RG identified a number of commendations, in particular:

- The Review Group was impressed with the high level of commitment and dedication of staff and the strong collegiate spirit observed within the School of Psychology.

- The demand for Psychology at UCD is extremely high which translates into an undergraduate student body with very high academic potential.

- The curriculum is robust and is subject to stringent reviews as part of the accreditation process conducted by the Psychological Society of Ireland, which is an external professional accrediting body.

- The School is actively engaged with many of the UCD staff development programmes including the Performance for Growth (P4G) employee development framework, accredited qualifications in university education and Athena SWAN.

- The School's commitment to 'give psychology away' to the general public through a range of public engagements is highly commendable.

Prioritised Recommendations for Improvement

Although a full list of recommendations is set out in Appendix 1, the RG would suggest the School prioritises the following:

- Develop and articulate a clear strategic direction for the School to deliver under the themes of Teaching and Learning, Research, Innovation and Impact, Internationalisation, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and External Engagement. The School Strategy should closely align with the University/College's Strategy with similar measurable KPIs. The School Strategy should in turn shape staff membership on the School Management Team and all future hires. The School Strategy should inform the upgrade to the School's structural facilities (labs, teaching space, staff, research and administrative offices). It should also clarify the research areas within the School that should be developed, taking into consideration their feasibility, timeliness, societal priorities and external competition.

- Work with the College Principal and University Management Team to urgently address the current unsatisfactory student-faculty ratio (SFR). The RG notes a SFR of 20:1 is a requirement

for professional accreditation, with the current ratio putting the UCD Psychology degree programmes at risk.

- Appoint an External Advisory Board with representatives from clinical practice, industry, employers of psychology graduates, and other relevant stakeholders to help shape the School's strategic direction and increase external visibility. These should include graduates from a range of institutions and cognate disciplines.

- Work with UCD International to establish sustainable targets for growth in the non-EU student intake and build strategic international research alliances relevant to their areas of research interest.

- Review the teaching workload model within the School and consider streamlining the number of modules offered to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. The School should consider suspending and reviewing modules and degree courses with a low number of students. The School should introduce some work-based experience in both the undergraduate and postgraduate curricula.

- Develop more robust and agile systems to ensure the Student Voice is heard and acted upon.

1. Introduction and Overview of UCD School of Psychology

Introduction

1.1   This report presents the findings of a quality review of the School of Psychology, University College Dublin, which was undertaken on 23 – 26 April 2019. The School response to the Review Group Report is attached as Appendix 2.

The Review Framework

1.2   Irish Universities have collectively agreed a framework for their quality review and quality improvement systems, which is consistent with both the legislative requirements of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, and international good practice (e.g. Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2015). Quality reviews are carried out in academic, administrative and support service units.

1.3   The purpose of periodic review is to assist the University to assure itself of the quality of each of its constituent units, and to utilise learning from this developmental process in order to effect improvement, including:

- To monitor the quality of the student experience, and of teaching and learning.

- To monitor research activity, including: management of research activity; assessing the research performance with regard to: research productivity, research income, and recruiting and supporting doctoral students.

- To identify, encourage and disseminate good practice, and to identify challenges and how to address these.

- To provide an opportunity for units to test the effectiveness of their systems and procedures for monitoring and enhancing quality and standards.

- To encourage the development and enhancement of these systems, in the context of current and emerging provision.

- To inform the University's strategic planning process.

- The output report provides robust evidence for external accreditation bodies.

- The process provides an external benchmark on practice and curriculum.

- To provide public information on the University's capacity to assure the quality and standards of its awards. The University's implementation of its quality procedures enables it to demonstrate how it discharges its responsibilities for assuring the quality

and standards of its awards, as required by the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

The Review Process

1.4   Typically, the review model comprises four major elements:

- Preparation of a self-assessment report (SAR)

- A visit by a RG that includes UCD staff and external experts, both national and international. The site visit normally will take place over a two or three day period

- Preparation of a review group report that is made public

- Agreement of an action plan for improvement (quality improvement plan) based on the RG report's recommendations. The University will also monitor progress against the improvement plan

Full details of the review process can be found on the UCD Quality Office website: www.ucd.ie/quality.

The Review Group

1.5   The composition of the RG for the UCD School of Psychology was as follows:

- Professor Torres Sweeney, UCD School of Veterinary Medicine (Chair)

- Associate Professor Colm McLaughlin, UCD College of Business (Deputy Chair)

- Professor Cathy Craig, University of Ulster and CEO/founder of INCISIV (Extern)

- Professor John Groeger, Nottingham Trent University (Extern)

1.6   The RG visited the School from 23 to 26 April 2019 and held meetings with School staff; undergraduate and postgraduate students; postdocs, graduates, employers, the SAR Co-ordinating Committee; other University staff, including the Principal of the College of Social Sciences and Law. The site visit schedule is included as Appendix 3. All members of the Review Group participated in all discussions and meetings.

1.7   In addition to the Self-assessment Report, the RG considered documentation provided by the School and the University during the site visit.

1.8   This Report has been read and approved by all members of the Review Group.

Preparation of the Self-assessment Report (SAR)

1.9   Following a briefing from the UCD Quality Office, a Self-assessment Report Coordinating Committee (SARCC) was established by the School.

1.10   Regular meetings took place in preparing the SAR with draft sections prepared by members of the Committee with input from School staff. A SOAR analysis was undertaken in December 2018 and staff had an opportunity to feedback and comment on the final draft of the report. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the SAR Coordinating Committee oversaw the final editing of the report, which was submitted to the Quality Office on December 13, 2018.

1.11   The School chose to undertake a SOAR analysis rather than a SWOT and as a result the document lacked a critical analysis of weaknesses and threats.   The SAR was very descriptive and would have benefited from further data analysis and critical reflection.   There was evidence of aspirations by the School, such as entering the QS 200 or 'growing the School', but a clear pathway to achieving these goals was not evident.

The University

1.12   University College Dublin (UCD) is a large and diverse university whose origins date back to 1854. The University is situated on a large modern campus about 4 km to the south of the centre of Dublin.

1.13   The University Strategic Plan (to 2020) states that the University's mission is: "to contribute to the flourishing of Dublin, Ireland, Europe and the world through the excellence and impact of our research and scholarship, the quality of our graduates and our global engagement; providing a supportive community in which every member of the University is enabled to achieve their full potential".

        The University is currently organised into six colleges and 37 schools:

- UCD College of Arts and Humanities

- UCD College of Business

- UCD College of Engineering and Architecture

- UCD College of Health and Agricultural Sciences

- UCD College of Social Sciences and Law

- UCD College of Science

1.14   As one of the largest universities on the island of Ireland, UCD supports a broad, deep and rich academic community in Science, Business, Engineering, Health Sciences, Agriculture,

Veterinary Medicine, Arts, Law, Celtic Studies and Human Sciences. There are currently more than 26,000 students in our UCD campus (approximately 16,300 undergraduates, 7,800 postgraduates and 2,200 Occasional and Adult Education students) registered on over 70 University degree programmes, including over 6,300 international students from more than 121 countries. The University also has over 5,400 students studying UCD degree programmes on campuses overseas.

UCD School of Psychology

1.15   UCD's School of Psychology is located in the Newman Building on the Belfield campus and incorporates the UCD Centre for Disability Studies.

1.16   The School of Psychology is one of eleven schools in the College of Social Sciences and Law.

1.17   The School has 19.2 permanent faculty, 5.5 temporary faculty, 2.5 permanent laboratory/technical staff, 4 permanent administrative staff and 1.2 permanent clinical psychology staff.

1.18   The student-faculty ratio is reported in the SAR to be 29:1. This contrasts with the figure from UCD Institutional Research of 24:1 (*2019 SFR data, UCD Institutional Research).* Neither level meets the requirement of 20:1 as required by psychology's main accreditation body (Psychological Society of Ireland).

1.19   The School offers a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes: BSc Psychology, BSc (International) Psychology, Higher Diploma in Psychology, Masters in Psychological Science, Masters in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies, Masters in Mindfulness Based Interventions, Doctoral Programme in Clinical Psychology, and MLitt/PhD Research.

1.20   Several of the School's programmes are accredited by the Psychological Society of Ireland. This process provides an external accreditation for four of the programmes: the undergraduate single honour BSc (Psychology) degree, the undergraduate BSc (International) degree programme, the H Dip Psych graduate conversion programme and the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsych).

2. Organisation and Management

General Comments and Context

2.1   The School has a very strong collegial spirit. Both permanent and temporary members of faculty undertake numerous administrative roles and are also willing to take on additional duties when required to ensure the smooth functioning of the School.

2.2   The School does, however, lack a clear and identifiable strategic vision. While there are specific objectives set out for the next five years, these are not placed within the context of a coherent overarching strategy, particularly in relation to research and internationalisation. It

is not always clear how they will achieve the objectives that they have set, but also when, or what resources might be required to achieve their goals.

2.3   At the time of the visit, the headship of the school was due to change in September 2019. Currently the Head of School operates on a three-year rotating basis. The Review Group has concerns that three years is too short for the incoming Head of School, given the need for strategic planning and re-organisation of the management structure.

2.4   The Head of School is supported by a Deputy Head of School and a Management Committee. The latter is comprised of the following; Head of School, Deputy Head of School, School Manager, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Research Innovation and Impact, a representative of faculty, a representative of post-graduate programme and a representative of administrative, technical and professional staff. The Committee meets every 4-6 weeks following a general staff meeting (faculty, technical, administrative, one postdoc representative). This structure was implemented following the 2012 Quality Review and ensures a good representation of gender and different grades, including junior faculty. Leadership roles are regularly rotated.

2.5   The structure of the Management Committee aims to ensure democratic and participatory decision-making, but to date the focus of decision-making has largely been operational rather than strategic. This has led to a proliferation of roles and School committees with ambiguous and overlapping remits.

2.6   The School Office is the main point of contact for students. It is an open plan office shared by the School Manager (AO), the Senior Executive Assistant (SEA) and the Executive Assistant (EA), with no separate space for confidential conversations with staff or students. A second AO has responsibility for the clinical programmes and is located in a separate office. This office arrangement is not conducive to an integrated administrative structure and effective line management at School level.

2.7   The School has a workload model policy based on the 40-40-20 distribution for research-teaching-administrative duties. With a 40-40-20 workload model where research and administrative duties are not quantified, it is not clear how modules are distributed across staff. Our observations of some top-level figures show a gross disparity between staff. Our conversations with staff at all levels clearly indicated that they would appreciate a more transparent model that incorporates all academic activities, yet also takes into account stage of career (i.e. phased lighter loads for new staff trying to establish a research career).

2.8   The School works closely with the College Financial Manager to manage its budgets. Despite significant cuts since the financial crisis, the School has built up substantial reserves. While it manages its operational budgets well, management were less well attuned to managing finances with the aim of expanding and adapting staffing to changing demands. Part of the problem is that while the expanding domestic or EU student numbers increase income, they do not currently do so sufficiently to merit an increase in staff numbers. This has a concomitant impact on increasing the student-faculty ratio (SFR) when there is an urgent need to reduce this for PSI re-accreditation. There is, however, a fundamental problem with the budgeting process at the University level that urgently needs to be addressed. To grow income, the School has to teach more students. If they bring in more students, this further exacerbates the

SFR. If they hire more staff, they are essentially at the same point as before. A realignment of staffing needs to take place at a university level.

Commendations

2.9   The Review Group was impressed with the positive engagement by members of the School during the site visit.

2.10   The Review Group was struck by the high levels of commitment and dedication of staff and the strong collegial spirit within the School of Psychology. Many new members of staff, in both academic and administrative roles, commented on how much they enjoyed working in the School.

2.11   The outgoing Head of School has done an excellent job in motivating the staff and building a collegial spirit in the face of budget cuts, an increasing student-faculty ratio (SFR) and out of date and inadequate laboratory facilities.

2.12   The incoming Head of School is dynamic and committed to supporting excellence in the School. The RG were concerned that it would be challenging for the HOS to maintain her current substantial teaching workload while taking on the substantial administrative role of Head of School.

Recommendations

2.13   The School needs to develop a clear strategic plan that shapes the future direction of the School and will help deliver on the following themes: research, teaching and learning, internationalisation, equality diversity and inclusion, and external engagement, aligning with both the University's and College's strategic plans.

2.14   The School needs to review and revise the Management Structure within the School to reflect and align with the strategic themes to ensure effective delivery of the School's new strategy.

2.15   The RG recommends the appointment of an advisory board with external representatives from clinical practice, industry, employers of psychology graduates, and other relevant stakeholders with relevant strategic expertise to increase external visibility and shape future direction. These should include graduates from a range of institutions and cognate disciplines.

2.16   The School should consider extending the term for Head of School to a five-year rotating term to allow adequate time for the development and embedding of a strategic plan that aligns with the University's five-year strategic planning process.

2.17   The School needs to develop an administrative structure that supports and aligns to the needs and business of the School.

2.18   Timetabling of tutorials should be organised through the Programme Office and University Room Bookings, not by members of academic staff.

2.19   The School needs to review its workload model to ensure it is transparent and adequately captures and distributes workloads fairly. The workload policy should be clearly communicated to all new and temporary members of staff.

2.20   The School needs to identify opportunities to increase the number of non-EU students and look to alternative sources of funding, including building closer links with business. At the same time, the University has an obligation to work with the School to urgently rectify the current SFR ahead of re-accreditation by the PSI.

2.21   The RG also felt that incoming Head of School would benefit from additional mentorship from outside the School/College to help her develop and achieve her leadership potential.

3.   Staff and Facilities

General Comments and Context

Staff

3.1   There have been changes in the staff profile and numbers since the last quality review. Current staff numbers for 2018-19 include: 19.2 FTE permanent faculty, 5.5 temporary faculty, 2.5 permanent lab staff, 1.2 permanent clinical staff, 4.0 administrative staff.

3.2   Overall staff gender breakdown for the School is 27:15 (female:male), with faculty gender ratio at 8:6. The School is currently planning to apply for an Athena Swan Bronze Award in 2020. Faculty staff are predominantly Irish.

3.3   Opportunities for faculty promotion are available within UCD, with a number of staff securing promotion. No system is currently in place within UCD for promoting administrative and technical staff. All staff were aware of, and positive about, the University's staff development programmes and the P4G programme.

3.4   Career development for temporary staff is a challenge, partly because staff are unsure of their entitlements, the duration of their contracts, and the time available to engage in development.

3.5   The Psychology programmes within the School are accredited by the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI). The PSI stipulate that 'Undergraduate and conversion programmes must operate a minimum student-faculty ratio of 20:1, based on FTEs and taking into account staff members other time commitments' (*PSI: Process for Accreditation of Undergraduate and Conversion Courses in Psychology, April 2019*). The student-faculty ratio is reported in the SAR as 29:1, which reflects the requirements of PSI. This contrasts with the figure from UCD Institutional Research of 24:1 (*2019 SFR data, UCD Institutional Research*) that reflects the university's criteria for calculation of SFR. Despite this discrepancy, the RG were of the opinion that an SFR above 20:1 jeopardises the accreditation of the course by the PSI and the future of such an established and well-regarded School.

3.6   The Review Group were concerned that the very substantial cohort of recently appointed largely temporary staff, carry very substantial teaching and highly responsible administrative roles.

3.7   Both administrative and technical groups were very professional. There was however concern that there was a lack of collaborative working between relevant School staff and central services such as Estates. To resolve the pressing issue of School facilities it is imperative that a closer working relationship between the two groups is established so compromises on both sides can be reached.

3.8   Administrative support is provided by four full-time administrative staff (a School Manager, one Administrative Officer, one Senior Executive Assistant and one Executive Assistant). The AO provides dedicated support for some PG programmes, as well as providing research administration assistance to the Head of School. The School Manager and the Executive Assistant posts at the time of the review were filled by temporary members of staff. There has been a high turnover of administrative staff in recent years and this has hindered the development of a coherent forward-looking administrative structure in the School.

Commendations

3.9   Engagement by the staff during the site visit is to be commended. They are dedicated to the success of the School, of each other and their students.

3.10   The Review Group were impressed with the knowledge, flexibility and commitment of all of the support staff, with particular commendation of the technical staff.

Recommendations

3.11   The student-faculty ratio needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency to meet PSI accreditation requirements, and to facilitate further developments particularly in the area of research.

3.12   Administrative roles need to be clarified to ensure that, where appropriate, relevant administrative duties currently carried out by faculty are carried out by administrative staff in the programme office. For example, timetabling of tutorials should be facilitated through the normal timetabling process, not a member of academic staff.

3.13   The job descriptions for administrative staff need to be re-evaluated based on the roles and requirements of the School.

3.14   P4G and Athena Swan pose timely challenges and opportunities for staff. The RG recommend that all staff fully engage with these processes.

Facilities

3.15   During the site visit the Review Group had an opportunity to view the footprint of the School including teaching spaces, undergraduate and staff laboratory facilities. The RG was of the opinion that the research and teaching space is sub-standard, limited, dated, and typically quite general purpose rather than particularly designed to meet the specific needs of the School. Specific concerns were raised regarding the facilities needed to properly support the participation of infants, families, older adults or those with disability in research projects.

3.16   The siting of a lecture theatre in close proximity to the research laboratories is particularly unsuitable. A 120-seat lecture theatre (E114) is situated opposite several laboratories where research experiments are conducted. The large volume of students exiting from the lecture theatre on an hourly basis could place any experiments being conducted at risk. The experiments conducted involve brain recordings of young children. Having uncontrollable noise and distractions ruins any experimental data collected. A solution needs to be urgently found (see point 3.7 about building a close and collaborative relationship with Estates).

3.17   The RG note the intention to refurbish the School's space, and were shown spaces already refurbished outside the School within the Newman Building. The quality and re-purposing of the space seems both appropriate and creative. The contrast between these spaces and the current provision in Psychology is striking.

3.18   The School has a number of specialist pieces of research equipment and should seek to explore wider engagement and usage capacity to develop greater collaboration. The School needs to move away from the 'My Lab' mentality that often pervades and look to laboratory facilities that are multifunctional and house certain types of specialised equipment and that can be booked on a needs basis.

3.19   Support facilities available to staff and students to meet and interact are dated and limited.

Commendations

3.20   Recent Newman Building refurbishments have been creative and appropriate to the needs of those Schools undergoing refurbishment.

Recommendations

3.21   Particular attention needs to be paid to the research needs of recently appointed staff, to ensure that their research careers are supported.

3.22   The plans for the development of School facilities (research and teaching) should reflect the School's research and teaching strategy. The School and UCD Estates need to work closely together with the architects to shape these plans.

4. Teaching, Learning and Assessment

General Comments and Context

4.1   The School currently offers two UG psychology pathways, a BSc in Psychology and a BSc (International) in Psychology (with a non-credit bearing year abroad). The School has an average intake of 80 students per year. The majority of the students enter the programme having applied through the Central Applications Office. The demand for the course is extremely high and very competitive. A small number of students enter through the HEAR and DARE schemes with some places (about 5) being set aside for mature students. Although the number of non-EU applications is high (>100), the applicants often do not meet the entry requirements with approximately four students being admitted per year.

4.2   The two BSc programmes are new for the academic year 2018-19 and represent an updated version of the BA Honours programme that was offered previously. Although this change did not bring about major changes to the programme, the School used the opportunity to increase the number of core psychology modules that their students needed to complete in 1st year. This is a change welcomed by the students. The School still offers a wide range of elective modules to other students from across the University. These modules are very popular, with some modules being taught twice to facilitate the high demand. Whilst the School is proactive in offering these modules it does come with significant challenges.

4.3   At graduate level, the School offers 3 Masters level (NFQ, Level 9) courses (MSc Mindfulness Based Interventions, MSc Rehabilitation & Disability Studies, MSc Psychological Sciences), and a Higher Diploma in Psychology (NFQ, Level 8, undergraduate programme). The H-Dip programme is closely aligned to the UG Psychology curriculum, offering a two-year psychology conversion course for graduates from other disciplines. The number of students enrolled is steadily increasing with 19 new students being admitted in 2018-19. This reflects the popularity of psychology as a discipline for graduates from different backgrounds. The MSc in Psychological Science offers a more hands-on skills-based programme for psychology graduates and is a popular course with an average intake of around 28 students per year. The MSc Mindfulness Based Intervention course has an intake of around 15 students per year, while the MSc in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies is in serious decline and has only 2 applications so far this year.

4.4   The Doctorate in Clinical Psychology is a highly competitive course, always filling the required number of places. The number of students entering the MLitt and PhD pathways remains relatively constant (between 2 and 3 per year).

4.5   In addition to the very high SFR, the School has also a number of key senior staff seconded to other positions within the University. To compensate for these secondments and other staff on parental or career leave, the School has appointed temporary staff (>25% of total staff body), that are given important administrative roles. In addition, the School relies heavily on Masters' and PhD students to deliver components of the teaching. This heavy reliance on temporary, and often inexperienced educators, is a very high-risk strategy that could impact on the quality of the programme and educational experience of the students.

4.6   The School has a workload model policy based on the 40-40-20 distribution for research-teaching-administrative duties. Underpinning this is a points-based system to enable additional credit for larger modules, coordination of modules, first time teaching and project supervision. However, many staff members were unaware of this system. It was also evident that there were inequities in teaching allocation, with some staff carrying teaching loads well in excess of the workload model and inequities in grading supports for large modules.

4.7   Students can give feedback on modules electronically at the end of each semester. As per the norm when capturing feedback in this way, response rates are often low (around 20%). Students when asked justified the low response rate by telling the RG that they felt any feedback they did provide (e.g. via email) was often ignored. Others stated they could not see what the benefit would be if their teaching had already finished. Some staff indicated that they were already responding to this in a more dynamic way by asking for feedback at different points during the module, which in turn allowed them to address issues (e.g. pace of the teaching) in a more timely manner rather than waiting till the following year. Students felt that paper-based feedback opportunities would work better as emails are often ignored. Students do volunteer to sit on the School Staff Student Consultative Committee (SSCC), which meets twice a year. Unfortunately, these meetings are not minuted, nor are actions recorded. Good practice would include sharing these minutes with staff and students and showing what actions are being implemented to address concerns. Likewise, hosting a students' forum open to all undergraduate students, offers a great opportunity to capture feedback from a larger number of students rather than the small number of self-selecting students who sit on SSCC. It is important that the student voice is heard and acted upon.

4.8   Students interviewed by the RG did not know to whom they could turn to for confidential help and support both inside and outside of the School. Although there are staff assigned with responsibilities for stages of the programme, including key activities such as tutorials and final year dissertations, there does not appear to be a clear channel of support and pastoral care.

Commendations

4.9   The demand for Psychology at UCD is extremely high which translates into an undergraduate student body of very high academic potential.

4.10   The School offers a wide range of psychology modules that are very attractive to students on other programmes across the University.

4.11   The external examiners praise the very high standard and quality of work produced by the students.

4.12   The BSc Psychology International pathway provides the students with an excellent opportunity to study abroad with more students availing of the opportunity year on year.

Recommendations

4.13   The School and the Estates department of the University need to work together to agree refurbishment plans for the lab facilities required for teaching and learning to make sure they are fit for purpose.

4.14   Given its limited resource the School has to work more efficiently. This includes streamlining the number of modules offered to both UG and PGT students (e.g. discontinuing modules with a low number of students (<10) and making more modules compulsory). The School should consider temporarily suspending the MSc in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies to allow for a root and branch review.

4.15   The School should capitalise on the popularity of Psychology and develop a clear plan for internationalising all of its programmes. This may include reviewing the entry requirements for the UG programme for non-EU students and making some places available on high demand PG courses such as the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

4.16   More robust and agile systems need to be developed to ensure the Student Voice is heard and acted upon. At present module evaluations with low response rates and no review of comments are ineffective. More robust mechanisms, including teaching evaluations and peer review of teaching need to be implemented to support staff but also help ensure students are receiving a quality educational experience. Processes and outcomes should be documented and clear to staff and students.   Evidence of feedback to students needs to be documented and communicated back to students.

4.17   The School needs to clearly communicate to students how and where they can seek help both within and outside of the School, particularly if they feel there is a potential conflict of interest within the School.

4.18   Temporary staff, PhD and Masters students would benefit from more customised in-house training (induction) to manage expectations and improve teaching quality (e.g. information on how to grade, expectations for teaching etc.). This can take the form of some kind of staff induction to the pedagogic processes within the School.

4.19   The School needs to revisit its teaching allocations to ensure transparency and equity as part of a wider review of the School's workload model. This should include clarity on points for additional credit.

5. Curriculum Development and Review

5.1   The curriculum of the Psychology BSc is determined by the accreditation requirements of the professional body (the Psychological Society of Ireland). This includes reviews of the curriculum and teaching content, staff credentials and training, student-faculty ratio, lab/IT resources and library facilities. This robust process takes place every 5 years with the next one scheduled for 2021.

5.2   The core curriculum has 6 main learning outcomes i) Thinking, ii) Knowing, iii) Planning and Implementation, iv) Communicating, v) Integrating and vi) Managing, with each learning outcome having a broad and specific application. The different learning outcomes are assessed at different points throughout the degree. Given the modular nature of the degree programme, integrating psychological knowledge is often the hardest outcome to achieve and the most difficult to assess. Although the School does do this at various junctures, the RG felt that more work-based applications, offered through a placement, would be more relevant and help bring the degree alive. Also, the inclusion of a more general psychology paper at the end of the degree that focuses on integrating psychological knowledge, could help ensure this learning outcome is met.

5.3   Whilst the curriculum review appears to take place at the University level, it is unclear how module evaluations and student feedback is incorporated into the review to ensure a robust quality enhancement process. The UCD policy of limited sharing of module feedback makes it difficult for programme directors and year heads to identify issues that may need to be resolved. A more agile and robust system that allows the Student Voice to be heard would help improve the review process and drive up the quality of the programme.

5.4   Feedback is provided to students in different ways. Brightspace, the new VLE, offers a great opportunity to explore alternative forms of feedback including audio. The interviews with undergraduate students, PhD and Masters students highlighted the apparent disparity in both the quantity and quality of the feedback. A more standardised approach would help to minimise discrepancies and minimise student dissatisfaction.

Commendations

5.5   The curriculum is robust and is subject to stringent reviews as part of the accreditation process conducted by the external professional body (PSI).

5.6   The School has used the transformation of the undergraduate programme from a BA to a BSc as an opportunity to change the number of non-core modules psychology students have to take. Current students have responded well to the changes.

5.7   Students feel the laboratory report feedback in general is very good.

Recommendations

5.8   The School should consider how feedback is given to students for other forms of assessment. Students felt that different levels of feedback were given by different markers. The School should consider using only electronic feedback and Brightspace to help standardize this across modules. Also giving the feedback first and releasing the grade at a later date after the feedback has been digested by the students might help alleviate some of the student dissatisfaction (a procedure adopted by other Russell Group psychology departments).

5.9 As mentioned in several reports from the external examiner, robust moderation procedures need to be adopted by the School. In addition to numeric comparisons of marks (means and standard deviations), this includes calibration of marking of lab reports (including training of markers) and cross-marking within and between student scripts. These procedures and their outcomes should be documented.

5.10 The School needs to clearly demonstrate how the curriculum meets the learning outcome related to 'Integrating' psychological knowledge. More applications to real world problems should be introduced with appropriate forms of assessment. This could involve inviting external guests who talk about the use of psychological principles and behavioural measures as part of their work (e.g. Google Analytics, Facebook).

5.11 Given the proliferation of paid essay writing services, seen essays are not recommended as a form of assessment. Open book type exams should be considered instead of seen essays.

5.12 The School and College need to work together to find sufficient resources to introduce some kind of work-based experience into the UG curriculum. This could be a work placement module or an internship year.

5.13 The PGT programmes should introduce the Scottish Making the Most of Masters (MMM) model to make their Masters courses more relevant. This would help build links with external stakeholders and reduce pressure on research labs.

5.14 The RG strongly discourages the School from introducing more Masters programmes (e.g. the MSc in Behavioural Neuroscience) unless it closely aligns with the School's new research and teaching and learning strategy. On reviewing the current proposal, the RG was not convinced of the market demand, staff expertise nor the economic viability of putting on a course in behavioural neuroscience. Instead the School should consider increasing student numbers (particularly non-EU) in existing programmes (more cost and time efficient).

5.15 The School should capitalize on the popularity of Psychology as a discipline and build stronger links with other disciplines (e.g. Economics) so they can have a clear disciplinary presence (e.g. the Behavioural Economics Programme). They should also offer an intercalated degree programme to attract quality students from Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry studying at other UK and Irish universities.

6. Research Activity

General Comments and Context

6.1 There is a very clear commitment to research in the School together with a strong philosophy of pursuing individual personal research interests.

6.2 The School presented four long standing research strands, as well as aspirations to establish links with Neuroscience, Behavioural Economics and perhaps Big Data. In addition, the SAR sets out a number of less specific research aims reflecting:

- An aspiration to recruit 10 staff in "(a) health psychology (b) behavioural neuroscience (c) data analysis and (d) translational psychology - thematic areas that are consistent with the current research priorities of UCD".

- A need for "university funding for additional office space and improved laboratory facilities for faculty".

6.3 The School also expressed some quite specific aspirations (e.g. moving up QS rankings; benchmarking against the Russell Group), but it was not clear that the School is focusing on endeavours that will support such aspirations such as publications which are likely to gain international recognition, collaborative international funding, and laboratory facilities that are consistent with high-ranking REF departments.

6.4 The overall level of research income recorded is impressive, we are concerned that the nature and reporting of this funding perhaps overstates the actual current achievement. A substantial proportion of the School's research funding comes from the Irish Research Council (IRC) which is postgraduate training bursaries applied for by intending students and research funding for faculty and post-doctoral researchers. The School has received funding under all IRC streams. Together this amounts to approximately one third of all the funding in the period (c£1.5m), while the source of an equivalent proportion is described as 'Other'. The most successful member of staff in research income generation terms, is on temporary secondment. It was also noted that there are discrepancies between how income is reported in the SAR and the Research Activity Dashboard. The latter, if we have understood the figures received correctly, shows that Psychology at UCD has attracted no EU funding over the review period, the SAR presents a sum of €470K. Clarification with the School indicated that it relates to a Horizon 2020 grant currently held by a member of faculty that was awarded at the end of 2018, though the grant was only formally registered within UCD in Summer 2019.

6.5 The SAR provides some benchmarking of outputs and staff in terms of publications (Scopus, citations, journal reputation) and staff H-indices based on Scopus and Google scholar. Actual publication lists were not easily amenable to analysis. Scopus H-indices seem quite low, even for senior staff. This needs further analysis, as low H-indices mitigate against progress up the QS rankings. More detailed benchmarking against other/specific Irish psychology departments would have enhanced the SAR, as these are more likely to reflect the challenges Irish psychology has, and continues to face.

6.6 From the SAR, or meetings with staff, it was unclear how closely the research interests of staff appointed in the last decade were part of the four research strands identified, nor whether any attempts were made to deliberately hire into these areas to ensure they continue to thrive. It would also have been helpful if the relationship between the proposed strategic hires, and improved laboratory space, was more clearly articulated.

6.7 It would have been helpful if the SAR clarified why the proposed areas for development are relevant to Psychology at UCD, particularly with respect to their feasibility, timeliness and

potential competition. It is important to consider which aspects of each might facilitate (or inhibit) progress on other aspects of research and how these will increase the volume of high quality publications, increase grant capture and engagement with national/societal priorities/stakeholders. For example, the School specifically expressed a desire to develop Neuroscience as a research strand. However, the types of equipment/facilities/systems one would expect to see available and well used in a School of Psychology aspiring to develop an exceptional neuroscience strand was not evident within the School's current resource portfolio. These would include, but are not limited to, mid-level "imaging" systems (such as fNIRS, TMS, TDCS), and 'wet lab' provision for collecting, storing and analysing minimally invasive human tissue (saliva/blood).

6.8   More information might have been given with regard to the systems used to manage and support research. For example, there was no evidence of the level of analysis routinely carried out on unsuccessful research bids, the exploration of new research funding opportunities etc., and in particular how staff with different experience/expertise may guide each other in this process. Similarly, while the AO provides some research support to the HOS, it was unclear whether other staff saw a benefit in having access to this support which might facilitate the development of grants, any hires, purchasing or meeting space requirements resulting from successful grant applications.

Commendations

6.9   The School is research active and a substantial number of staff have been active in research income generation over the review period.

6.10   Staff members are to be commended on their commitment to research informed teaching. The School provides staff the opportunity to teach in their particular area of specialism in final year, and on some postgraduate courses.

6.11   Staff members are to be commended on their commitment to publishing and benchmarking their research.

6.12   The School has a research Centre for Disability Studies that has, in the past, had a strong national and international reputation. Consideration needs to be given as to whether it is still a strategically important area for Irish psychology and society.

Recommendations

6.13   The School needs to review its current Research Committee, its activity, structure and terms of reference. Membership roles and responsibilities should be clearly articulated, feeding into the School's Senior Management Team and School Strategy. This might include dedicated research oversight in which the School's research is considered strategically, where direction is set, progress towards this monitored, plans made for investment in facilities, training, staff hire, grant capture, promotion of impact, etc.

6.14   There is an urgent need to develop a clear Research Strategy that builds on current strengths and is linked to the overall School and University Strategy.

6.15   As part of the Research Strategy the School needs to: 1) clarify the continued viability and relevance of its current four-theme structure, in the light of more recent appointments and future challenges; 2) clarify why the areas identified for development have been chosen. This should include looking at their feasibility, timeliness and potential competition, how these will enhance high quality publications, increase grant capture and engage with national/societal priorities/stakeholders. As part of its staffing strategy going forward, the School should consider administrative support for research endeavour from all staff.

6.16   The RG would suggest that the School staff identify opportunities for collaboration in other research areas such as Big Data, psychometric instrument development and social media, and explore opportunities to build research collaborations with the private sector around commercially relevant aspects of psychology.

6.17   The School needs to continue to collect and analyse relevant data to underpin regular evaluation of, and decision making regarding, research benchmarks including funding, research outputs, and research support systems, as well as drawing on the resources of UCD Research.

6.18   The School needs to review the activity of the Centre for Disability Studies and its future within the School. As noted above, the Centre has occupied an important place strategically in Irish Psychology's history, but it now needs a new vision and leadership to enable it to maintain and enhance this position.

7. Management of Quality and Enhancement

General Comments and Context

7.1   The School is actively engaged in the UCD Performance for Growth employee development framework. At the time of the review, the HOS and Deputy HOS had already undergone their review process.

7.2   The School offers a mentorship programme and this is an integral part of the Newly Appointed Assistant Professor Pilot Development Programme, which is currently being evaluated in the CoSSL. Newly appointed staff expressed varying levels of engagement with this programme.

7.3   While all newly appointed staff had engaged with university level induction, they experienced varying levels of local induction.

7.4   UCD offers accredited qualifications in university education (Prof Cert/Prof Dip).

7.5   UCD received the Bronze Athena SWAN award in 2017. Schools are now being supported to apply for the School level Bronze Athena SWAN awards.

7.6   The School relies heavily on the recommendations of the external examiners feedback to maintain academic standards on grade distributions, assessment strategies, overall standard of student work, and nature/breadth of modules offered. The student feedback has a very low return rate and is only visible to the module coordinator.

Commendations

7.7   The School is actively engaged in the UCD Performance for Growth employee development framework, with the review process on target for all permanent members of staff.

7.8   The majority of eligible academic staff have engaged with the accredited qualifications in university education.

7.9   The School is actively involved in preparing its Bronze level Athena SWAN application, which is due to be submitted in November 2019. It has very sensibly appointed two co-chairs to lead the initiative and is following the UCD timeline guide.

Recommendations

7.10   A School level induction programme should be offered to all new members of the School (academic, administrative, technical, postdoctoral fellows and postgraduate students).

7.11   Consideration should be given to offering a 'P4G review' style annual meeting for temporary members of academic, technical and administrative staff to facilitate their developmental trajectory.

7.12   All permanent and temporary members of academic staff (Including postdoctoral fellows) should be offered appropriate mentorship.

8. Support Services

General Comments and Context

8.1   The School of Psychology engages well with a range of support services across the University. The Review Group met representatives from a range of units across the University, including the International Office, Human Resources, Registry, the Library, UCD Estates, UCD Research, UCD Access and Lifelong Learning, UCD Career Development Centre, and UCD Teaching and Learning and there were no significant issues raised about the engagement levels of the School.

8.2   The UCD International Office reported excellent engagement with the School over internationalisation. However, this has not translated into increasing enrolments from non-EU students. Currently around 5 non-EU students are accepted into the Psychology Undergraduate Programme each year out of 100 applications.

8.3   The School reports strongly supporting University initiatives designed to widen participation and working well with UCD Access and Learning. Students that come into the Psychology programme through alternative entry pathways are offered support both by the School and UCD Access and Learning and these students do well in their chosen programmes. However, only 16 % of Psychology students come through alternative entry routes compared to a UCD average of 21%.

Commendations

8.4   The engagement by members of the School of Psychology with UCD Teaching and Learning is impressive. Two faculty members have been awarded prestigious Teaching and Learning Fellowships and a number of faculty have won UCD Teaching and Learning Awards. Many have undertaken the accredited teaching and learning courses, and some have conducted research and published on teaching and learning.

8.5   In conjunction with UCD Career Development, the School has developed a successful career skills module for final year undergraduate students.

8.6   The School has set itself the goal of achieving the Athena Swan Bronze Award in 2020, which will create a platform for the exploration of potential improvements with regard to gender equality and wider issues within the School. Two members of staff have completed the Aurora Leadership Programme.

Recommendations

8.7   The School should work closely with UCD International to develop a feasible recruitment strategy, and establish sustainable targets for growth in non-EU students.

8.8   The School should work with UCD Access and Learning to raise the intake on University Access programmes to the UCD average. This could be achieved by widening the intake of mature students through new access routes such as Open Learning and mature students with relevant practitioner experience.

9. External Relations

General Comments and Context

9.1   There is a high level of external engagement by faculty with academic institutions, journals, professional associations, clinical practices, charities and not-for-profits, public policy and the wider general public.

9.2   Members of the School engage with the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) and have served as President, editors of its academic and professional journals, members of the Council and chairs of various PSI committees.

9.3   Engagement with employers appears to be largely limited to employers in the healthcare sector, reflecting the strong tradition and focus within the School on Clinical Psychology. At our meeting with employers, only two employers were scheduled to meet with us, both from the Health Services Executive, and only one was able to make the meeting. Opportunities exist for developing the more commercially relevant aspects of psychology, with the promotion of career opportunities for students in the private sector being very underdeveloped.

9.4   It was not clear from the SAR if there are existing relations with alumni of the School. This is something that should be very actively pursued.

Commendations

9.5   The School's commitment to 'give psychology away' to the general public through a range of public engagements is commendable.

Recommendations

9.6   The School should develop relations with private sector employers who utilise psychological methods and tools within their operations (e.g. psychometric instrument development and analysis, general behavioural data analytics, HCI, end-user/product testing in technology firms, etc.). Private sector employers should be invited on to the advisory board to build links and help the School understand their needs and how psychology as a discipline could serve those needs (see Section 2 recommendation).

9.7   Work with the advisory board and other experts to develop commercialisation opportunities. Develop a balance between 'giving psychology away' and exploring the potential to earn more income for the School by capitalising on the value of psychology as a discipline to businesses in general.

9.8   Work with UCD Alumni Relations and harvest data from LinkedIn to build a database of School of Psychology alumni to start to develop and nurture alumni relations. Alumni can be a great resource for graduate career opportunities and for the development of an internship programme.

UCD School of Psychology – Full List of Commendations and Recommendations

This Appendix contains a full list of commendations and recommendations made by the Review Group for the UCD School of Psychology, 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)*

Organisation and Management

Commendations

2.9   The Review Group was impressed with the positive engagement by members of the School during the site visit.

2.10   The Review Group was struck by the high levels of commitment and dedication of staff and the strong collegial spirit within the School of Psychology. Many new members of staff, in both academic and administrative roles, commented on how much they enjoyed working in the School.

2.11   The outgoing Head of School has done an excellent job in motivating the staff and building a collegial spirit in the face of budget cuts, an increasing student-faculty ratio (SFR) and out of date and inadequate laboratory facilities.

2.12   The incoming Head of School is dynamic and committed to supporting excellence in the School. The RG were concerned that it would be challenging for the HOS to maintain her current substantial teaching workload while taking on the substantial administrative role of Head of School.

Recommendations

2.13   The School needs to develop a clear strategic plan that shapes the future direction of the School and will help deliver on the following themes: research, teaching and learning, internationalisation, equality diversity and inclusion, and external engagement, aligning with both the University's and College's strategic plans.

2.14   The School needs to review and revise the Management Structure within the School to reflect and align with the strategic themes to ensure effective delivery of the School's new strategy.

2.15   The RG recommends the appointment of an advisory board with external representatives from clinical practice, industry, employers of psychology graduates, and other relevant stakeholders with relevant strategic expertise to increase external visibility and shape future direction. These should include graduates from a range of institutions and cognate disciplines.

2.16   The School should consider extending the term for Head of School to a five-year rotating term to allow adequate time for the development and embedding of a strategic plan that aligns with the University's five-year strategic planning process.

2.17   The School needs to develop an administrative structure that supports and aligns to the needs and business of the School.

2.18   Timetabling of tutorials should be organised through the Programme Office and University Room Bookings, not by members of academic staff.

2.19   The School needs to review its workload model to ensure it is transparent and adequately captures and distributes workloads fairly. The workload policy should be clearly communicated to all new and temporary members of staff.

2.20   The School needs to identify opportunities to increase the number of non-EU students and look to alternative sources of funding, including building closer links with business. At the same time, the University has an obligation to work with the School to urgently rectify the current SFR ahead of re-accreditation by the PSI.

2.21   The RG also felt that incoming Head of School would benefit from additional mentorship from outside the School/College to help her develop and achieve her leadership potential.

Staff and Facilities

Staff

Commendations

3.9   Engagement by the staff during the site visit is to be commended. They are dedicated to the success of the School, of each other and their students.

3.10   The Review Group were impressed with the knowledge, flexibility and commitment of all of the support staff, with particular commendation of the technical staff.

Recommendations

3.11   The student-faculty ratio needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency to meet PSI accreditation requirements, and to facilitate further developments particularly in the area of research.

3.12   Administrative roles need to be clarified to ensure that, where appropriate, relevant administrative duties currently carried out by faculty are carried out by administrative staff in the programme office. For example, timetabling of tutorials should be facilitated through the normal timetabling process, not a member of academic staff.

3.13   The job descriptions for administrative staff need to be re-evaluated based on the roles and requirements of the School.

3.14   P4G and Athena Swan pose timely challenges and opportunities for staff. The RG recommend that all staff fully engage with these processes.

Facilities

Commendations

3.20   Recent Newman Building refurbishments have been creative and appropriate to the needs of those Schools undergoing refurbishment.

Recommendations

3.21   Particular attention needs to be paid to the research needs of recently appointed staff, to ensure that their research careers are supported.

3.22   The plans for the development of School facilities (research and teaching) should reflect the School's research and teaching strategy. The School and UCD Estates need to work closely together with the architects to shape these plans.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Commendations

4.9   The demand for Psychology at UCD is extremely high which translates into an undergraduate student body of very high academic potential.

4.10   The School offers a wide range of psychology modules that are very attractive to students on other programmes across the University.

4.11   The external examiners praise the very high standard and quality of work produced by the students.

4.12   The BSc Psychology International pathway provides the students with an excellent opportunity to study abroad with more students availing of the opportunity year on year.

Recommendations

4.13   The School and the Estates department of the University need to work together to agree refurbishment plans for the lab facilities required for teaching and learning to make sure they are fit for purpose.

4.14   Given its limited resource the School has to work more efficiently. This includes streamlining the number of modules offered to both UG and PGT students (e.g. discontinuing modules with a low number of students (<10) and making more modules compulsory). The School should consider temporarily suspending the MSc in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies to allow for a root and branch review.

4.15   The School should capitalise on the popularity of Psychology and develop a clear plan for internationalising all of its programmes. This may include reviewing the entry requirements for the UG programme for non-EU students and making some places available on high demand PG courses such as the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

4.16   More robust and agile systems need to be developed to ensure the Student Voice is heard and acted upon. At present module evaluations with low response rates and no review of comments are ineffective. More robust mechanisms, including teaching evaluations and peer review of teaching need to be implemented to support staff but also help ensure students are receiving a quality educational experience. Processes and outcomes should be documented and clear to staff and students. Evidence of feedback to students needs to be documented and communicated back to students.

4.17   The School needs to clearly communicate to students how and where they can seek help both within and outside of the School, particularly if they feel there is a potential conflict of interest within the School.

4.18   Temporary staff, PhD and Masters students would benefit from more customised in-house training (induction) to manage expectations and improve teaching quality (e.g. information on how to grade, expectations for teaching etc.). This can take the form of some kind of staff induction to the pedagogic processes within the School.

4.19   The School needs to revisit its teaching allocations to ensure transparency and equity as part of a wider review of the School's workload model. This should include clarity on points for additional credit.

Curriculum Development and Review

Commendations

5.5   The curriculum is robust and is subject to stringent reviews as part of the accreditation process conducted by the external professional body (PSI).

5.6   The School has used the transformation of the undergraduate programme from a BA to a BSc as an opportunity to change the number of non-core modules psychology students have to take. Current students have responded well to the changes.

5.7   Students feel the laboratory report feedback in general is very good.

Recommendations

5.8   The School should consider how feedback is given to students for other forms of assessment. Students felt that different levels of feedback were given by different markers. The School should consider using only electronic feedback and Brightspace to help standardize this across

modules. Also giving the feedback first and releasing the grade at a later date after the feedback has been digested by the students might help alleviate some of the student dissatisfaction (a procedure adopted by other Russell Group psychology departments).

5.9   As mentioned in several reports from the external examiner, robust moderation procedures need to be adopted by the School. In addition to numeric comparisons of marks (means and standard deviations), this includes calibration of marking of lab reports (including training of markers) and cross-marking within and between student scripts. These procedures and their outcomes should be documented.

5.10   The School needs to clearly demonstrate how the curriculum meets the learning outcome related to 'Integrating' psychological knowledge. More applications to real world problems should be introduced with appropriate forms of assessment. This could involve inviting external guests who talk about the use of psychological principles and behavioural measures as part of their work (e.g. Google Analytics, Facebook).

5.11   Given the proliferation of paid essay writing services, seen essays are not recommended as a form of assessment. Open book type exams should be considered instead of seen essays.

5.12   The School and College need to work together to find sufficient resources to introduce some kind of work-based experience into the UG curriculum. This could be a work placement module or an internship year.

5.13   The PGT programmes should introduce the Scottish Making the Most of Masters (MMM) model to make their Masters courses more relevant. This would help build links with external stakeholders and reduce pressure on research labs.

5.14   The RG strongly discourages the School from introducing more Masters programmes (e.g. the MSc in Behavioural Neuroscience) unless it closely aligns with the School's new research and teaching and learning strategy. On reviewing the current proposal, the RG was not convinced of the market demand, staff expertise nor the economic viability of putting on a course in behavioural neuroscience. Instead the School should consider increasing student numbers (particularly non-EU) in existing programmes (more cost and time efficient).

5.15   The School should capitalize on the popularity of Psychology as a discipline and build stronger links with other disciplines (e.g. Economics) so they can have a clear disciplinary presence (e.g. the Behavioural Economics Programme). They should also offer an intercalated degree programme to attract quality students from Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry studying at other UK and Irish universities.

Research Activity

Commendations

6.9 The School is research active and a substantial number of staff have been active in research income generation over the review period.

6.10 Staff members are to be commended on their commitment to research informed teaching. The School provides staff the opportunity to teach in their particular area of specialism in final year, and on some postgraduate courses.

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6.15 As part of the Research Strategy the School needs to: 1) clarify the continued viability and relevance of its current four-theme structure, in the light of more recent appointments and future challenges; 2) clarify why the areas identified for development have been chosen. This should include looking at their feasibility, timeliness and potential competition, how these will enhance high quality publications, increase grant capture and engage with national/societal priorities/stakeholders. As part of its staffing strategy going forward, the School should consider administrative support for research endeavour from all staff.

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7.11   Consideration should be given to offering a 'P4G review' style annual meeting for temporary members of academic, technical and administrative staff to facilitate their developmental trajectory.

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8.5   In conjunction with UCD Career Development, the School has developed a successful career skills module for final year undergraduate students.

8.6   The School has set itself the goal of achieving the Athena Swan Bronze Award in 2020, which will create a platform for the exploration of potential improvements with regard to gender

equality and wider issues within the School. Two members of staff have completed the Aurora Leadership Programme.

Recommendations

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8.8   The School should work with UCD Access and Learning to raise the intake on University Access programmes to the UCD average. This could be achieved by widening the intake of mature students through new access routes such as Open Learning and mature students with relevant practitioner experience.

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Commendations

9.5   The School's commitment to 'give psychology away' to the general public through a range of public engagements is commendable.

Recommendations

9.6   The School should develop relations with private sector employers who utilise psychological methods and tools within their operations (e.g. psychometric instrument development and analysis, general behavioural data analytics, HCI, end-user/product testing in technology firms, etc.). Private sector employers should be invited on to the advisory board to build links and help the School understand their needs and how psychology as a discipline could serve those needs (see Section 2 recommendation).

9.7   Work with the advisory board and other experts to develop commercialisation opportunities. Develop a balance between 'giving psychology away' and exploring the potential to earn more income for the School by capitalising on the value of psychology as a discipline to businesses in general.

9.8   Work with UCD Alumni Relations and harvest data from LinkedIn to build a database of School of Psychology alumni to start to develop and nurture alumni relations. Alumni can be a great resource for graduate career opportunities and for the development of an internship programme.

UCD School of Psychology – Response to the Review Group Report

The UCD School of Psychology is committed to high quality research, teaching and scholarly activity and uses reflective practice in pursuit of that goal. We welcome UCD's QAQI process, and the development of the Self-assessment Report was a very valuable exercise for the School. The Review Group (RG) Site Visit was another opportunity for reflection, both internally and in the company of the Group, whose input prompted significant discussions across the School. The process generated an enthusiasm for change within the School and between the RG visit in April 2019 and receipt of the report in November 2019, several actions were taken to capitalise on the insights gained from the review process. These developments reflect many of the Group's recommendations and are noted below as actions. The level of engagement by members of the School at all stages of the QAQI process to date reflects the energy and commitment present within the School Team.

Having had the opportunity to reflect on the RG's report, we are grateful to the Group for its comprehensive assessment of the School, as well as its helpful commendations and recommendations. We are encouraged by the conclusions that the School provides a research-intensive, collegial academic environment that attracts top-quality students. We also acknowledge praise of the School's highly dedicated staff and robust curriculum. Nevertheless, we share concerns about the inadequacy of laboratory and teaching facilities, the challenge of student-faculty ratios and the absence of a high-level strategic research strategy. Appointments under the recent UCD Ad Astra Programme represent a significant development for us, and we will seek further appointments as this programme develops. However, this increases demand for facilities and will not support our student-faculty ratio immediately, as the Fellows' workload increases over time (in line with UCD policy).

Initial actions, proposals and comments regarding selected recommendations identified by the RG are outlined below. Further actions will be developed as part of the Quality Improvement Plan.

2.13   The School needs to develop a clear strategic plan that shapes [its] future direction …
The process of developing a new strategic plan for the School is underway in the context of the University's new Strategy ("Rising to the Future, 2020-2024"). This process is supported by a review of the leadership structure (Summer 2019) and a School planning day (9 December 2019).

2.14   The School needs to review and revise the Management Structure within the School …
3.12   Administrative roles need to be clarified …
In Summer 2019 all staff were invited to contribute to a consultation on faculty administrative structures within the School. This resulted in a revised structure of Leadership, Management and Operational duties, including the development of new roles (see below) and the introduction of an open system of expression of interest for new and infilled roles. In addition, the (now) Executive Committee has been re-constituted to ensure a focus on strategic development of the School.

2.15   The RG recommends the appointment of an advisory board …

9.8   Work with UCD Alumni Relations … to start to develop and nurture alumni relations.
        The School is exploring the development of an Alumni Forum, which would provide some of the supports envisioned in the recommended advisory board and increase engagement with alumni.

2.17   … develop an administrative structure that supports and aligns to the needs … of the School.

3.13   The job descriptions for administrative staff need to be re-evaluated …
        During Summer 2019 the School restructured its administration team to align with key activity in the School and ensure appropriate seniority in the team (e.g. replacing the Executive Assistant grade with a Senior Executive Assistant (SEA) grade and a SEA grade with an Administrative Officer II grade). Our permanent School Manager also returned from secondment in October 2019.

2.19   The School needs to review its workload model ....
        A workshop was held at the planning day (December 2019) to review the existing workload model, and to inform further development led by the Directors of UG and PG Teaching & Learning.

3.3   Opportunities for faculty promotion are available within UCD, with a number of staff securing promotion. No system is currently in place within UCD for promoting administrative and technical staff. All staff were aware of, and positive about, the University's staff development programmes and the P4G programme.

        While "no system is currently in place within UCD for promoting administrative and technical staff", it could be noted that the "job families" initiative was developed by UCD HR for that purpose (see https://www.ucd.ie/hr/a-z/jobfamilies/) and was introduced in UCD during the period in which the Review Group's report was being prepared.

3.22   The plans for the development of School facilities (research and teaching) should reflect the School's research and teaching strategy.

4.13   The School and the Estates department of the University need to work together to agree refurbishment plans for the lab facilities required for teaching and learning …
        The decision has been made to restructure the current use of lab space to ensure efficient usage in advance of redevelopment. A working group has made specific recommendations for the flexible, multifunctional use of existing labs (as opposed to labs being assigned to faculty/lab groups). The School is also exploring the sharing of space with other schools in the College of Social Sciences and Law. The redevelopment will be directly informed by the School's new research strategy.

4.14   Given its limited resource the School has to work more efficiently … The School should consider temporarily suspending the MSc in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies

5.14   The RG strongly discourages the School from introducing more Masters programmes (e.g. the MSc in Behavioural Neuroscience) unless it closely aligns with the School's new …strategy.
        The MSc in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies was suspended in Summer 2019 to allow for a review of the programme. A revised one-year programme, which may include exit options at diploma level, is currently being developed. Appointments under the UCD Ad Astra

programme in Summer 2019 significantly increased the School's capacity and activity in the areas of both disability and neuroscience. This, combined with the School's new research strategy and the strategic objectives of the University, will inform decisions regarding UG and PG teaching and training.

5.9   … robust moderation procedures need to be adopted by the School.
At a Staff Meeting earlier in the trimester, the Director of UG Teaching and Learning introduced a process of moderation, and it was agreed that this would be introduced on a trial basis.

6.13   The School needs to review its current Research Committee, …
6.14   There is an urgent need to develop a clear Research Strategy …
A Director of Research, Innovation and Impact (a new leadership role and member of the Executive) has been appointed, developing terms of reference for and leading the Research Innovation and Impact Committee in the School. In addition, the process of developing a new Research Strategy for the School has started (workshop at the School's Planning Day, 9th December 2019).

6.16   The RG would suggest that the School staff identify opportunities for collaboration …
6.18   The School needs to review the activity of the Centre for Disability Studies
The School's Research Strategy, once finalised, will inform strategic decisions regarding core research activity within the School. However, a comprehensive review of the Centre's activity was carried out in Q4 of 2018 by UCD's Academic Council Committee for Academic Centres (ACCAC) who noted the valuable contribution of the Centre to the University's Policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the contribution of the Centre to public policy and its impact in relation to disability.

7.10   A School level induction programme should be offered to all new members of the School …
7.11   … offering a 'P4G review' style annual meeting for temporary members of [staff]
7.12   All permanent and temporary members of academic staff … should be offered … mentorship.
A Director of Faculty and Staff Development (a new leadership role) has been appointed to lead on the implementation of mentoring/promotion/development supports for all faculty and technical, administrative and professional staff. This role will be supported by the School Manager.

8.7   The School should work closely with UCD International to develop a feasible recruitment strategy, and establish sustainable targets for growth in non-EU students.
A meeting has been arranged between the Head of School and the School's Director of Internationalisation, and Director of UCD Global and the CoSSL VP for Internationalisation to discuss recruitment of non-EU students in the context of overall plans for development.

UCD School of Psychology

Quality Review Site Visit: 24-26 April 2019

TIMETABLE

Review Group Pre-Site visit Meeting

Day 1: Wednesday 24 April 2019

Venue: F209 Newman Building

08.45-09.15	Private meeting of Review Group (RG)
09.15 – 10.00	RG meet with College Principal
10.00 – 10.15	Break
10.15 – 11.15	RG meet with Head of School, SAR Co-ordinating Committee Chair, and Incoming Head of School
11.15 – 11.30	Tea/Coffee Break
11.30- 12.15	RG meet with SAR Coordinating Committee
12.15-12.45	Break – RG review key observations and prepare for lunch time meeting
12.45-13.45	Working lunch - meeting with employers and/or external stakeholders
13.45-14.15	RG review key observations
14.15-15.30	RG meet with representative group of academic staff – primary focus on Teaching and Learning, and Curriculum issues
15.30-15.45	RG Tea/Coffee break
15.45-16.30	RG meet with support staff representatives (e.g. administrative / technical etc)
16.30-16.35	Break
16.35-17.15	Tour of facilities
17.15-17.20	Break
17.20-18.00	RG meet Programme Dean
18.00	RG depart

Day 2: Thursday 25 April 2019

Venue: F209

08.15-8.45	RG arrive at School, private meeting of the RG (tea & coffee available on arrival)
08.45-0915	RG meet with HR partner for College of Social Sciences & Law
09.15-9.55	RG meet relevant support service representatives - Registry (Director), Liaison Librarian, College of Social Science & Law, (Senior Research Administrator), UCD Access and Lifelong Learning (Head of Outreach, Engagement & Transition), UCD Career Development Centre (Deputy Director), UCD Teaching & Learning (Teaching Development Officer)
9.55-10:00	RG Break
10.00-10.40	RG meet with a representative group of postgraduate students (taught and research, recent graduates; PG and UG).
10.40-11:00	RG Tea/Coffee Break
11.00-11.50	RG meet with meet with a representative group of postdoctorates
11.50-12:00	RG Break
12.00-13.00	RG meet with the School Research Committee
13.00-13.50	RG working lunch with representative group of undergraduate students
13.50-14.15	RG private meeting - review key observations
14.15-15.00	RG meet with College Finance Manager – and outgoing and incoming Head of School, to outline School's financial situation
15.00-15.15	Break
15.15-16.15	RG meet with recently appointed members of staff
16.15-17.15	RG available for individual meetings with staff.
17.15-18.00	RG private meeting – review key observations/findings. Begin to prepare draft report.
18.00	RG depart

Day 3: Friday 26 April 2019

Venue: F209 (E114 final meeting)

09.00-11.00	RG continue to prepare Draft Report (Tea/Coffee on arrival)

11.00-11.15	Tea/Coffee Break
11.15-13.00	RG finalise first draft of Report and feedback commendations/recommendations
13.00-13.30	Lunch
13.30-13.45	RG meet with College Principal to feedback initial outline commendations and recommendations
13:45-14.00	Break
14.00-14.15	RG meet with Head of School **t**o feedback initial outline commendations and recommendations
14:15-14.30	Break
14.30	Exit presentation to <u>all available staff of the unit</u> – usually made by an extern member of the Review Group (or other member of the Group, as agreed) summarising the principal commendations/recommendations of the Review Group. *This meeting generally takes 20 minutes and <u>is not</u> a question and answer session – Room E114*
15:00	Review Group depart