



Fheabhsú Cáilíochta Quality Enhancement

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK: CINNTE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW ACTION PLAN

The University Strategic Plan, [Securing our Future 2023-28](#), (published February, 2023) was developed concurrently with the self-evaluation process for CINNTE Institutional Review (March 2023). Both the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) and CINNTE Report (September 2023) noted the high degree of alignment between the outcomes of both processes. The [Strategic Plan](#) is founded on 5 main GOALS of activity: Research and Innovation; Student Success; Global Engagement; Our Staff, Our Culture and Our Place, Our Footprint.

To underpin the five GOALS a suite of [Strategic Enablers](#) have been identified, these encompass institutional processes such as communication, governance, data, operational excellence.

Targets for the achievement of the planned objectives and goals are defined on an annualised basis and reported on quarterly through a University Leadership Team Strategic Plan Implementation sub-committee for monitoring and development. Institutional Review is included as an enabling activity within the strategy implementation framework thereby acknowledging the interrelationship between the CINNTE Review recommendations and implementation of the Strategic Plan. The CINNTE Action Plan detailed below, cross-references to published strategy implementation activities as appropriate as well as operational projects in response to the Review recommendations. This integration of strategy and strategic quality review illustrates the university's commitment to excellence and ongoing enhancement. This Action Plan summarises the UCC position in response to the CINNTE Report as at January 2024. Progress on the Action Plan will be reported through the University's Annual Quality Report to Quality & Qualifications Ireland in 2025.

30th January 2024

| CINNTE Report Area | Recommendation | UCC Strategy Implementation Plan and Process | Operational Projects (where applicable) | Responsibility | Status as at January 2024 |
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| Strategy (including global) | <p>1. Recognising the ambition of the new UCC Strategic Plan, the review team recommends that UCC should set sufficient income growth targets which include substantial non-exchequer components. The developing financial model should prioritise 'quick wins' to boost university income, such as the development of high-volume economic-fee-based postgraduate taught programmes informed by market research.</p> | <p>University Strategic GOAL 2 Student Success Actions 2.1 & 2.2</p> <p>GOAL 3 Global Engagement Action 3.5</p> | | Deputy President & Registrar, Vice President Learning & Teaching, Vice President Global | |
| | <p>2. The review team recommends that the university reviews the size of the 'President's Strategic Fund',</p> | | University budget allocation process | President | |

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| | benchmarks it against other research-intensive universities and adjusts it accordingly. | | | | |
| | 3. The review team recommends that, given the weight attached to the role of the newly appointed Vice President for Global Engagement, UCC should develop an appropriately and strategically resourced Global Strategy which includes a student recruitment plan with specific College and University targets based on sound market research and marketing | University Strategic Plan GOAL 3 Global Engagement actions | | Vice President Global | |
| | 4. The review team recommends that UCC's strategic goal of increasing the number of postgraduate (particularly PhD) students should be more coherently elaborated (including clearly specified | University Strategic GOAL 1 Research and Innovation actions (1.3) | Thematic Review of Doctoral Student Learning Experience (scheduled for AY 23/24) along with progression of the Research Administration Project (RAP) will inform and provide the necessary infrastructure to support increases in PhD student numbers. | Deputy President & Registrar; Vice President Research & Innovation; Dean of Doctoral Studies; Director of Quality Enhancement; Head of Graduate Studies | |

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| | targets, timelines and implementation mechanisms) and should avoid over-reliance on exchequer funding. | | | | |
| | 5. The review team recommends that UCC should undertake careful and robust business planning and granular monitoring guided by clearly-defined KPIs to optimise the implementation of its ambitious industrial engagement strategy. | University Strategic Plan GOAL 1 Research and Innovation actions (1.5) | | Vice President Research and Innovation | |
| Governance | | | | | |
| | 6. The review team recommends that, taking into account proposed changes to governance, the university should update its published governance scheme to clarify accountability and associated decision-making workflows, and further recommends that UCC should develop a | University Strategic Plan Implementation : Strategic Enablers | | Corporate Secretary/ Deputy President and Registrar | |

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| | system for ongoing monitoring of the implementation of university policies and procedures across the Colleges to identify potential inconsistencies in their application and where appropriate, to remedy these. | | | | |
| Staff | 7. The review team recommends the consistent implementation of Workload Models across the university which include provision for research supervision (particularly that of PhD students). | | The University has a methodology for Academic Workload Distribution (AWD) (see: https://www.ucc.ie/en/registrar/awdm/) Implementation issues will be addressed at future discussion Heads of School Consultative Forum convened by Deputy President & Registrar | Deputy President and Registrar | |
| | 8. The review team recommends that UCC should address the slow delivery of a career development infrastructure for administrative and technical staff in order to provide a fit-for-purpose mechanism to ensure equitable and | University Strategic Plan GOAL 4 Our Staff, Our Culture actions 4.4 & 4.5 | A Community of Practice (CoP) for School Managers, has been established, with the support of President and Quality Enhancement Committee in response to the dialogue with School Managers during the Institutional Review Site Visit (report p 27). The CoP will provide a forum for enhanced connectivity between School Managers and the | Chief People and Culture Officer Convenors of School Managers (CoP) | |

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| | timely recognition and reward for staff. | | exchange and fostering of good practice | | |
| Students | 9. The review team recommends that UCC should ensure, via the ongoing pilot project and related initiatives, that student satisfaction data is appropriately gathered and factored into the assessment of the quality of modules and programmes across UCC | | <p>The University Student Surveys Office manages the University's engagement with Irish Student Survey, data analysis and internal reporting via Academic Council and across Colleges. The university increased its engagement with In-Touch to facilitate programme based engagement with student data.</p> <p>Given the suspension of the Irish Student Survey for ay 23/24, the university will develop a mechanism to capture student voices until the revised survey is established.</p> <p>The University Student Feedback Project piloted module surveys in AY22/23 and a user-focused evaluation of the project (completed September 23) will inform next stages of development.</p> | Deputy President & Registrar, Vice-President Learning & Teaching, Student Survey Project Manager, Director of Quality Enhancement, Quality Enhancement Manager | |
| | 10. The review team recommends that UCC should implement mechanisms to promote connection | University Strategic Plan GOAL 1 Research and | The post of Dean of Doctoral Studies was established May 2023 and working in conjunction with Deputy President& Registrar, Vice President Research and Innovation | Deputy President & Registrar, Vice President Research and Innovation | |

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| | between graduate students in different Schools & Colleges as a means of promoting cross-disciplinary collaboration. | Innovation actions (1.3) | will take forward development initiatives and policies to support the enhancement of the graduate student experience | Dean of Doctoral Studies | |
| Student Services | 11. Given the university's strategic aim to increase postgraduate and international student numbers substantially, the review team recommends that UCC should undertake comprehensive resource planning to ensure that Student Services provision is scalable to meet the increase in demand. | | As part of self-evaluation process for periodic Quality Review of Deputy President & Registrar's functional area (March, 2024), the process of SWOT and self-evaluation of Student Services Directorate (2023) along with the outcomes of the review will inform resource planning for 2024/5 onwards | Deputy President & Registrar, Director of Student Experience | |
| | 12. The review team recognises the quality of support services provided to students at UCC but recommends, in support of that, the development of an | University Strategic Plan : Strategic Enablers (pp46-47) for communication and operational excellence | This will be explored further within the scope of the periodic Quality Review (March, 2024) for the functional area of Deputy President & Registrar. | Director of Student Services/ Director of Communications | |

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| | omni-channel Communication Strategy to optimise student awareness of and engagement with the services available. | | | | |
| Teaching, Learning & Assessment | 13. The review team recommends that UCC should introduce formal processes for annual Module- and Programme-Monitoring enabled by the new Curriculum Management IT System. | | Implementation of the re-defined Curriculum Management System will enable annualised monitoring approaches for modules and programmes, through embedded quality assurance rules for the approval of updated curricula and additional reporting capability to inform internal monitoring | Curriculum Management Project & Academic Secretary | |
| | 14. The review team recommends that UCC should prioritize the development and implementation of comprehensive assessment rubrics (including marking schemes) to ensure equivalence of grading – especially at exit degree award level – between disciplines, Schools and Colleges. | University Strategic Plan GOAL 2 Student Success (Action 2.1) | Continued work on University Assessment Strategy, inclusive of review and rationalisation of Marks and Standards. Consultation with the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching & Learning (CIRTL) to support the development of assessment rubrics through training and resources. | Deputy President & Registrar, Vice President Learning & Teaching and Chair of Academic Development and Standards Committee Director of CIRTL | |

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| | <p>15. The review team recommends that examination papers submitted to External Examiners for review should be accompanied by the cognate sample answers where feasible / appropriate, which is standard practice across the third level sector in Ireland.</p> | | <p>Review and revision as appropriate of current policy and procedures for External Examiners, including guidance to Schools. This will be informed by the outcomes of the national policy research project on External Examining (ExPERA) being led by the IUA Quality Directors during 2023/24</p> | <p>Academic Board (External Examiners Sub-Committee)</p> | |
| <p>Library & Information Technology Services</p> | <p>16. The review team recommends that, given the crucial importance of Library & IT services to the quality of the student experience, UCC should strive to protect existing budgetary allocations for these services against competing internal demands, and to continue to lobby for greater exchequer funding support to permit their adequate resourcing.</p> | <p>University Strategic Plan GOAL 2 Student Success (Action 2.3)</p> | <p>Library Vision and Plan for the future developed and presented to Academic Council (January 2024) by the University Librarian.</p> <p>The Universities Digital masterplan was presented and approved by University Leadership Team (ULT) on June 2023 and Finance Committee in July. The Director of IT will work with the Finance Office to source the funding and implement the Digital Masterplan.</p> | <p>University Librarian & Vice-President for Learning & Teaching</p> <p>IT Services</p> | |

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| | <p>17. The review team recommends that UCC should seek to maximise the value of its significant investment in IT systems and data-capture through the appointment of a Chief Information Officer charged with the development of a Data Strategy for the university to support data-driven decision making and quality enhancement at all levels within the university.</p> | <p>Strategic Plan Strategic Enablers: Digital Capabilities and Data Quality</p> | <p>The development of integrated high quality data resources is underway as an enabler of strategic plan implementation. This will allow the development of real-time data, that is configured to be easily visualised and interrogated at various levels of activity. The capability to support this development is incorporated through the functions of the Chief Financial and Operations Officer role.</p> | CFOO | |
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Internal Consultation and Approval

Institutional Review Group, 8th November, 2023

Academic Council, 10th November, 2023

Quality Enhancement Committee, 23rd November 2023

University Leadership Team, 21st November and 6th February 2023

Governing Body, 5th December 2023