

Ollscoil Mhá Nuad

Maynooth University

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE

PEER REVIEW GROUP REPORT

ESTATES AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT

ACADEMIC YEAR 2018/19

Date: May 2019

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1. Introduction

The review took place at Maynooth University

2. Peer Review Group Members

Name	Affiliation	Role
Dr Karen English	Maynooth University	Internal Reviewer
Dearbhla O'Reilly	Maynooth University	Internal Reviewer
Richard Kington	University of Edinburgh	External Reviewer
Mark Poland	University College Cork	External Reviewer

3. Timetable of the site visit

- Give the timetable of the site visit (See Appendix 1)
- Whilst very full the overall timetable was found to be adequate for the PRG to be able to undertake its role effectively.

4. Peer Review Methodology

4.1 Site Visit

The visit revolved around pre-arranged interviews with a comprehensive selection of the unit staff together with user groups (University Academics and Administrators). The selection was broad and provided the PRG with the opportunity of gaining from across the University. There were no obvious gaps and no requirement for the PRG to ask for additional or follow up meetings.

The Campus Tour was brief but sufficient to gain a good sense of how the two campuses worked and their relationship to each other.

4.2 Peer Review Group (PRG) Report

The PRG completed many of its commendations and recommendations during the visit and these were summarised at the exit presentation. Subsequently all members have contributed to the final and fuller version of the report through access to the report through Microsoft Teams.

5. Overall Assessment

5.1 Summary Assessment of the Present State of the Unit

The unit appears to be performing very well despite there being a number of factors that make such an outcome extremely difficult to achieve. The SWOT undertaken by the unit adequately covers both the main issues as well as reflecting on the areas of success.

There are a number of highlights which are covered later in the report; much of it positive. However, there are challenges which are also covered as they collectively raise questions as to the ability of the Unit in the short to medium term to be able to sustain the level of activity the University will require to support its future aspirations.

A significant number of the more worrying aspects encountered were as a result of factors largely beyond the control of the Unit, relating to a growing lack of financial resource to fund the level of activity needed, space limitations and a lack of a coherent overall IT strategy for the unit.

The situation could be a great deal more arduous than it is, if it were not for the very clear enthusiasm, dedication and resourcefulness of so many of the staff working within the Unit. That this exists is to be commended and should be recognised, indeed celebrated, by the University. It is doubtful that this can continue to make up for a fundamental lack of resource. The resources available to the Unit do not appear to have grown sufficiently over the last few years to adequately deal with the growing and ageing estate. In addition, there are no signs that resources can be expected to increase sufficiently to be able to manage the new builds planned post construction.

The issues and constraints around funding of new buildings is understood. Nonetheless the University should reconsider how buildings, for which capital may be available, but for which there is no clear funding post completion for on-going service provision and maintenance, can be sustained.

Self-Assessment Report

The Peer Review Group (PRG) found the amount of information provided within and alongside the report to be very helpful and comprehensive. Clearly a great deal of effort had gone into this and the PRG were pleased to note that many of those interviewed recognised the value of the information gathered for the Review but also its continuing assistance in better informing activities.

The University Risk Register was provided of which the Units group formed a part. It is recognised that the format is determined by the University and whilst it was not in the remit of the PRG to comment on the University Risk Register it was felt that for this Unit that the Risks identified for the Unit did not cover all the areas it should and many of the mitigations for items on the register were in the main generalised and lacking clear ownership, measures for improvement timescales or expected outcomes.

Aside: One of the external members of the panel was surprised by the size of the Register and wished to include a suggestion that a University wide review/update might be of value.

The report would have benefited from a benchmarking process against equivalent universities. This would in turn assist the Unit in the development of a continuous improvement approach to quality.

The PRG found the Draft Quality Improvement Plan lacking in detail. The level of content and the number of points raised were adequate, however, the plan would have benefited from a focus on outcomes (timescales, prioritisation, responsibility).

6. Findings of the Peer Review Group: Commendations and Recommendations

6.1 Overview

Comment, as appropriate, on details in the Self-Assessment Report or as identified during the Peer Review Group Visit. This could include commentary on the following areas, emphasising relevant quality assurance procedures and their effectiveness:

• Unit governance and organisation

The Unit should benefit from having representation at the Executive through the VP Planning and Capital Development. This is a Unit critical to the successful operation of the University and this should now be better recognised.

Campus and Commercial Services has quite recently undergone restructuring with new departments being added, most recently the Residences team. These changes appear to have bedded in extremely well and our meeting with various teams suggested they have been able to work more effectively as a result. The Director of CCS deserves credit for this and the positive standing the Unit has across the University.

There is more uncertainty around the **Campus Planning and Development** unit especially in light of the imminent retirement of the Director. The team would benefit greatly from being included in thoughts and discussions about the future structure and the functions of what is a key team given the expected development pipeline.

Services and engagement with user groups

The PRG found across all staff groups interviewed a shared view that the Unit staff were engaged, committed and resourceful. Most if not all commented also that they were very often prepared to go 'above and beyond' and often did so without having to be asked. The Unit was universally praised for the work it did and all recognised the difficulty they had in providing the services.

Staffing and staff development

A common thread is around staffing levels. The PRG can only recommend that additional resources be found to ensure that the level of service that they and their users require can be enhanced as the University continues to grow.

Interviews suggested a lack of policy and process around personal development reviews and subsequent training and development plans. The PRG were told that there are plans centrally to recruit more resource within HR to support continuation and professional development and that an annual review process was being formulated. The Unit would benefit from a robust Staff Review and Development process as quickly as possible.

The staff feeling that they are valued through access to such training is important. As well as the general need to ensure the skills of staff continue to be refreshed and improved to meet the often changing needs of their customers.

Resourcing

Issues around resourcing are well known across all staff groups and have been mentioned several times through this report. The challenges are appreciated but the consequences even in the short term of this continuing unabated are unlikely to be positive and are likely to increasingly affect users (staff and students) of the Units services.

Internal and external communications

This is an area that the PRG considered needed to be reviewed by the University as well as within Unit. There did not appear to be a regular flow of communications keeping University staff fully up to date on campus developments.

Implementation of recommendations for improvement made in Peer Review Group Report arising from last quality review

The previous Quality Reviews go back 13 years, 12 years and 6 years. Since then there has been significant growth of the University and the Unit structure has changed in many ways. Whilst it is certain that some actions were followed through at the time, due the level of growth it is too difficult to make a meaningful assessment at this time given the significant changes in the Unit.

Health & Safety

The commitment of the current incumbent of this role is exceptional and along with many others clearly goes 'above and beyond' when needed. Whilst today having such a resource is invaluable, the University runs the risk of being seriously exposed when the current post holder steps down or the growing workload exceeds any remaining capacity to absorb. The University needs to consider moving toward a more sustainable structure, one that will require some additional resource, to mitigate the current risks. Bringing together in a more formal way the Health and Safety Advisers from across the University would be a logical first step.

6.2 Commendations

Identify achievements and quality in the units/sub-units under review.

- The PRG welcomed the extensive preparation and document provided by the Estates teams and the amount of time put into the SAR was appreciated.
- The PRG noted the high level of service right across the Unit and the general satisfaction of all service users
- The commitment of the unit staff to the university and wider community as well as their service to staff and students is to be commended.
- Every meeting with user groups highlighted the staff commitment to excellent service delivery and it was noted that many staff go above and beyond their core duties.
- There has been significant recent capital development and it has broadly been well received.
- In particular, the Green Campus initiative was viewed very positively by the review group and by the users. Overall the level of communication between Green Campus and the Estates unit were reported in positive terms.
- Progress has been made through the further consolidation of units within CCS. The
 early indications are that good progress is being made and that the unit is open to
 change.
- The PRG recognises that the Estates unit is now represented at UE and this is a positive move which should provide future benefits.
- The unit is very responsive despite a clear lack of resources.
- Excellent response to crisis including outside of core hours.
- The aesthetic of the grounds were very well presented and the review board as well as many users commented on this.

- The PRG recognise the attention to detail and comprehensive support provided by the Health & Safety Officer to all departments, staff and students in the university.
- Overall success of the campus commuting plan. Transport & reduction in car use;
 Sustainable travel; Green Campus Committee.
- Recent changes to unit website are useful. Elements of the Campus and Commercial Services website (FAQs for example) are very informative and would benefit from a higher profile.
- The Residences team should be commended for their professional, innovative and student-centred approach.

6.3 Recommendations for Improvement

Provide a list of recommendations for improvement for the Unit, having reflected on those identified by the unit in the Self-Assessment Report and those that the Peer Review Group would like to make in addition to those made by the unit.

The tables below categorise recommendations as being strategic, unit level or sub unit level, in line with the guidance notes accompanying this template.

Strategic Recommendations

Number	Recommendation	Additional PRG Comments
S.1	The University should review resource allocation to Estates for day to day operations and backlog maintenance to ensure the unit is able to support the needs of growing University estate. The funding plan for new buildings should take better cognisance of the longer term funding requirement in respect of the on-going service provision and maintenance for new buildings	Teams are working exceptionally well with limited resources; however, this is not sustainable over medium to long term. Future risks will continue to grow without due consideration
S.2	The University should provide clarity on the Estates unit direction and	to this future need. The impending retirement of Director of CPD is leading to
3.2	the future structure of the CPD team.	uncertainty amongst the team. Change management training for senior staff may smooth any transitions.
S.3	The University should review and consider enhancing communications approach to campus master plan and capital development programme.	Estates, academic and support staff highlighted the lack of information.
S.4	The University should put in place a robust Space Strategy to ensure efficient use of available space, provide clarity and improve efficiency.	
S.5	Introduce one comprehensive room bookings system to cover all space used by the University.	Significant improvements in visibility and time saving likely to be achieved and hence better planning and utilisation.

S.6	The University should support the creation of a single Security Operations Room.	As the university grows there needs to be a more robust centre to coordinate operations incl. Security, CCTV, BMS, etc. To the benefit of buildings and staff and student safety.
S.7	The University should review its Health & Safety management system and resources including training.	While the service provided is excellent, it appears too heavily dependent on one individual. Consider structure to involve all Departmental Health & Safety activities.
S.8	The University should clarify its relationship with St. Patricks College, Maynooth (SPCM) in respect of delivery of services.	Relationship has developed over years often on an informal basis. The introduction of Service Level Agreements would assist in more efficient delivery of services and clarity over costs allocation. Given the growth of the University, the current arrangements are not sustainable.

Whole of Unit Recommendations

Number	Recommendation	Additional PRG Comments
U.1	The University should complete Estates Strategy as a matter of urgency	This should address the overall approach to management of the facilitates and identify the process and policies to manage the estate in an effective manner.
U.2	The Estates team should develop a risk register covering all aspects of its operations.	The current University risk register may not fully reflect all the activities and risks for the Estates Unit. It should include clear ownership and timelines.

U.3	Develop a staff development and training plan including all necessary statutory training.	Work with HR to develop plans.
U.3	Build on SAR development process to develop more cross functional teams to enhance strategy, communication etc.	
U.4	Enhance ease of access on MU website to Estates, Campus Planning & Development, Campus and Commercial Services. MCCA should also feature more prominently as a commercial venture of MU.	Given this is an important revenue generator which has the opportunity to further grow income, it must have home page visibility. Very hard to find as buried in the Estates pages.
U.5	Develop and communicate policies and service level agreements (SLAs) with internal customers and contractors.	General lack of SLA's leads to uncertainty, the introduction would lead to improved processes, performance, value for money and quality.
U.6	Undertake an overall review of the varied range of IT systems currently in use, rationalise where possible. Ensure training of users and end users is adequate.	Work with IT Services to support this initiative which has significant efficiency benefits available.
U.7	Develop a unit level communication strategy (which might include social media) to staff and where appropriate students.	Increase awareness of university and department plans to ensure engagement. Take the opportunity to celebrate success.
U.8	Ensure that there is strong student and staff voice at all stages of capital development programme.	It is important that adequate engagement with all stakeholders takes place at all stages of project development including the student voice.

Sub-Unit Recommendations

Campus and Commercial Services

Number	Recommendation	Additional PRG Comments
CCS 1.	Explore possible benefits from better integration of Estates and MCCA. This may present a better opportunity for the way in which internal events are handled.	There are different skill sets between Residences and Conference teams. Many services are similar but some provided for differently. Rationalisation is likely to provide (cost) benefits. More cross functional activity between teams would also grow skills and resilience. Clear opportunity to manage some of the internal events issues by using an already well established skill set.
CCS 2.	Consider a North campus location for trades and grounds staff.	There is compelling evidence to suggest this this might improve efficiency and ensure these teams are better resourced to service campus growth.
CCS 3.	Consider a review of catering service with a particular emphasis on current evening and weekend access. Consider whether current provision is adequate to deal with peak time requirements.	Lack of services outside main study periods was seen as a significant weakness in the overall support provided for staff and students working outside 'normal' hours. Equally lack of capacity at peak times leads to frustration and loss of social and study time.
CCS 4.	The introduction of FastTrack has been generally welcomed, however, planned preventative maintenance functionality is not	More comprehensive information should lead to improvements especially around PPM.

	yet in use and not all jobs are currently being entered into the system. To enable more effective planning both issues should be addressed ASAP.	Explore use of mobile devices to support and further improve efficiencies.
CCS 5.	Review existing signage and way finding strategy.	
CCS 6.	Review KPIs and opportunities to benchmark those against comparable universities in the sector.	While we recognise the unit has KPIs, there seemed to be a lack of information around comparators in the sector.
CCS 7.	Review the strategy for AV service and how it relates to next generation teaching technology and IT Strategy.	It is recognised that the service provided by the AV unit is excellent. There are medium to long term sustainability issues with such a small team.
CCS 8.	Review awareness training provided to all security staff to ensure that they are able to properly meet the particular requirements of a student-based population.	Consideration should be given to mental health awareness, and equality and diversity etc.
CCS 9.	The service would benefit from an early adoption of the new electronic purchasing system.	Existing reliance on paper-based system is inefficient.
CCS 10.	The Residences team must be fully engaged in the design and development of new residences accommodation and the services provided therein.	The team should also seek to engage with other organisations to ensure that new student accommodation is the best it can be by seeking out examples of good practice and innovation. Such organisations should include CUBO and ACUHO-I.
CCS 11.	The Unit should development an approach to Residence Life with the Residence team fully engaged in that process.	In most places with extensive Residence Life operations they tend to work best when co located with the Residence teams and associated functions.

Sub-Unit Recommendations

Campus Planning and Development

Number	Recommendation	Additional PRG Comments
CPD 1.	Project management resource does not appear to be sufficient. Recommend VP reviews CPD group and ensures Capital Development project management is appropriately resourced.	The existing unit may not have the capacity to facilitate planned increase in growth, there is a short terms systems issue and a longer-term structural review is needed.
CPD 2.	Ensure all stakeholders involved in each capital project are included from the start of the process and are provided with opportunities to input into the design process throughout the life of the project.	There were several comments from across all staff and student groups to suggest that they were not sufficiently engaged and thus were unable to effectively contribute to the design development of projects, variously from inception right through to completion.
CPD 3.	Undertake post-occupancy reviews and make available within twelve months of a building being opened or following refurbishment.	Important to be able to learn from such projects. What works well and what does not to ensure future projects are better delivered.

ESTATES AND CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT UNIT: PEER REVIEW GROUP SITE VISIT TIMETABLE

Time	Description	Venue
19:00	Convening of the Peer Review Group. Briefing by: Professor Aidan Mulkeen, Vice President Academic and Registrar PRG agrees a Chair, and discuss the visit. Identification of any aspects requiring clarification or additional information.	Booked Becketts Hotel at 7.00pm for 5 people under the name Mulkeen
	Dinner for members of the Peer Review Group, Professor Aidan Mulkeen, VP Academic, Registrar and Deputy President	Aidan Mulkeen Richard Kington Mark Poland Karen English Dearbhla O'Reilly
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weanesaay, t	th February, 2019	
Time	Description	Venue
8:30-9.00	Convening of Peer Review Group	Council Room
9.00-9.30	Ms Eliz Dunne, VP Estates and Capital Development	Council Room
9.30-10:30	Meet with Senior Management Team Mr Finbarr Horrigan, Director Campus Planning & Development Mr Michael Rafter, Director Campus and Commercial Services	Council Room
10.30-11.00	Meeting with Staff Group 1/Self-Assessment Committee Ms Eliz Dunne, VP Estates and Capital Development Mr Michael Rafter, Director Campus and Commercial Services Mr Finbarr Horrigan, Director Campus Planning & Development Mr Brendan Ashe, Health & Safety Officer Mr John Keane, Deputy Head of Security Mr David Cusker, Fabric Maintenance Manager Mr Ivan Griffin, General Services Manager Mr Peter Hodson, Electrician Powerhouse Mr Michael Lennon, Powerhouse Supervisor Ms Corla Mansfield, Accommodation Officer Mr Andrew Maloney, AV Teaching Support Technician Ms Anne Pemberton, Post Room Mr John Saults, Assistant Campus Services Officer Mr Stephen Seaman, Acting Supervisor Grounds	Council Room

External Reviewers: Mr Richard Kington, Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events, University of Edinburgh, Mr Mark Poland, Director of Buildings & Estates, UCC

Internal Reviewers: Dr Karen English, Biology Dept., Ms Dearbhla O'Reilly, IT Services

11:00-11:30	Break	Council Room
11:30-12:00	Meeting with Staff Group 2/Maintenance Ms Anne Travers, Maintenance Admin Mr Michael Lennon, Powerhouse Supervisor Mr Brendan Bean, Powerhouse Mr Eddie Fitzpatrick, Powerhouse Mr Peter Hodson, Electrician Mr David Lennon, Powerhouse Mr David Cusker, Fabric Maintenance Manager	Council Room
12.00-12.30	Meeting with Staff Group 3/Safety and Security Mr Brendan Ashe, Health & Safety Officer Mr Ivan Griffin, General Services Manager Mr John Keane, Deputy Head of Security	Council Room
12.30-13.00	Meeting with Staff Group 4/ Capital Planning and Development (Campus Planning, Design Team and Construction Procurement, Capital Development, Minor Capital Works, Infrastructure planning and implementation, Building Records, Energy Management, Space Management) Mr Ciaran Coffey, Services Engineer/Energy Manager Mr Sean Nolan, Architect/Project Coordinator	Council Room
13.00-14.00	Working Lunch	Reserve Pugin Hall/Table with service for Quality/4 people
14.00-15.00	Tour of North/South Campus	Michael Rafter
15.00-15.30	Meeting with User Group 1/Green Campus, MSU Student Rep Mr Joe Larragy - Green Campus Mr Jim Carolan – Biodiversity Mr Dillon Grace, Union Development Administrator, Maynooth Students Union	Council Room
15:30-16.00	Meeting with User Group 2/ Administrative Staff Admin Mr Paul Davis, Sports Officer Ms Niamh Lynch, Director Student Services Ms Rebecca Doolin, Director External Relations Ms Vivienne Murray, Deans Office Administrator Ms Grace Edge, Disability Officer Mr Cathal McAuley, Librarian Dr Tom Kenny, Director of Finance Dr Carol Barrett, Director of Research Ms Sandra Byrne, General Manager SU Mr Brian Carolan, Director Of IT Services Mr Bill Tinley, Director Conference and Accommodation	Council Room

External Reviewers: Mr Richard Kington, Director of Accommodation, Catering and Events, University of Edinburgh, Mr Mark Poland, Director of Buildings & Estates, UCC Internal Reviewers: Dr Karen English, Biology Dept., Ms Dearbhla O'Reilly, IT Services

16.00-16.15	Break	Council Room
16.15-16.40	Meet with User Group 3/ HOD's Academic & Admin Professor Aidan Mulkeen, VP Academic & Registrar Ms Rosaleen McCarthy, HR Director	
16.40-17.00	Meet with User Group 3/ HOD's Academic & Admin Dr Jennifer McManus, HOD Chemistry Professor Peter McNamara, HOD School of Business Ms Mary Ryan, HOD Adult and Community Education Dr Joe Timoney, HOD Computer Science	Council Room
17.00-18.00	Phone Calls to External Stakeholders (4 x 15 mins)	
17.00	Ms. Elaine Bean, Maynooth Darkness into Light Chair	
17.15	Mr. Gareth McGuire, Architect BDP, Campus Master Planner and Project Architect	
17.30	Ms. Elaine Grimes, Catering Contractor Compass Catering Operations Manager	
17.45	Sgt. Paul Kealy, Garda Rep Maynooth Garda Sergeant	
18.00-18.15	PRG Group meeting	Council Room
19.00	PRG private working dinner	Booked Carton House Hotel at 7pm for 4 people under the name O'Reilly

Time	Description	Venue
8.30-9.00	Convening of Peer Review Group	Council Room
9:00-9:30	Meeting with Staff Group 5/Teaching Support, Cleaning, MyCard, Website, Post Room, Campus Services Mr Andrew Maloney, AV Teaching Support Technician Mr Ivan Griffin, General Services Manager Ms Geraldine Coyne, Cleaning Supervisor Ms Anne Pemberton, Post Room Ms Melina Lawless, Admin/Website Ms Sylvia Bourke, Post Room Ms John Tracey, Post Room Mr John Saults, Assistant Campus Services Officer Mr Mark Fisher, General Operative Mr George Mullan, General Operative	Council Room
9.30-10.00	Meeting with Staff Group 6/Commuting, Transport, Waste Management, Campus Services Admin, Switchboard Mr Lar Byrne, Commuting Manager Mr Oliver Geoghan, Transport Mr Kevin Tracey, Transport Mr Ivan Griffin, General Services Manager Ms Angela Foye, Campus & Commercial Services Admin	Council Room
10.00-10.30	Meeting with SPCM	Council Room
	Fidelma Madden, Bursar	
10.30-11.00	Meeting with User Group 4/ Academic Staff Admin Ms Paula Uhel, Admin School of Business Ms Phil Dully, Admin, Computer Science Ms Maire Adderley, Admin Economics Finance & Acct Ms Rebecca Boyle, Admin Froebel Ms Anne Dooley, Admin Psychology	Council Room
11.00-11.30	Break	Council Room

11.30-12.00	Meeting with Staff Group 7/Residential Services Ms Corla Mansfield, Accommodation Officer Ms Maria Fahy, Administrator Ms Shirley McClean, Administrator Ms Aoife Collins, Residences Mr Seamus Carr, Residences	Council Room
12.00-12.30	Meeting with Staff Group 8/Grounds Mr Stephen Seaman, Acting Supervisor Mr David Doran, General Operative Mr Patrick Brereton, General Operative Mr Thomas McMahon, General Operative Mr Sean O'Callaghan, General Operative	Council Room
13.00-14.00	Lunch	Reserve Pugin Hall/Table with service for Quality, 4 people
14:00-16:30	Preparation of Exit Presentation	Council Room
16:30-17:00	Exit presentation to all departmental staff, made by the Chair of the PRG, summarising the principal commendations and recommendations of the Peer Review Group.	Physics Hall
17:00	Refreshments and Exit of the PRG	TBC