University College Dublin

Quality Improvement Plan

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UCD School of Civil Engineering

26th November 2023

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1. Introduction

The Quality Review of the School of Civil Engineering took place over the 2022/23 academic year. The Self-Assessment Report was submitted on 31st January 2023, and the Review Group Site Visit took place between 20th and 24th March. A draft copy of the Review Group Report was received by the Head of School on 12th June, and the report was finalised on 14th August, inclusive of the School Response to the prioritised actions as Appendix 1 of the document. A date of 14th October was proposed for the submission of the School Quality Improvement Plan.

The School Executive Committee acted in the capacity of the Quality Improvement Committee, and commenced the development of the Quality Improvement Plan at the first School Executive meeting of the 2023/24 academic session, that being 28th September 2023. Following this meeting the Quality Improvement Plan template was populated with the 40 Review Group recommendations, and uploaded to a Google Drive folder shared with the Quality Improvement Committee members.   The Head of School sought a six-week extension on the submission date for the Quality Improvement Plan, which was granted by the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee.

The Quality Improvement Committee members contributed to the development of a draft plan, which was discussed at the School Executive meeting on 25th October. A second draft was made available for comment and review by the Quality Improvement Committee on 5th November, and a final draft on 12th November.

The Quality Improvement Committee membership was as follows:

- Associate Professor Amanda Gibney (Head of School)
- Associate Professor John O'Sullivan (Deputy Head of School)
- Associate Professor P J Purcell (School Head of Teaching and Learning)
- Associate Professor Shane Donohue (School Head of Research, Innovation and Impact)
- Dr David Morgan (Senior Technical Officer)
- Ms Roisín O'Loughlin (School Manager)

Categories

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

Timescale

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

Report	RG Recommendation	Category (see list above)	Action Taken/Action Planned/Reason for Not Implementing	Timescale (see list above)
			ORGANISATION, MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING OF THE SCHOOL	
Para. 2.14	The School needs to balance operational needs and strategic development and be proactive in carving out space for its agenda at the College level. The School should develop a vision and mission that will drive strategic developments and decision-making over the next 3 to 5 years.	1	The School will hold an away day/days to further develop its vision, mission and values (mid-January 2024). This will progress within the context of the emergence of the new University Strategy. The School will seek support from UCD HR, or UCD Agile in the facilitation of these discussions. The School has been through a period of expansion over the past four years, coupled with complexity relating to rolling out its new programme in CDIC, and delivery of on-campus teaching during Covid. Operational needs stifled strategic development during Covid, and a significant School focus over the past two years has been on engagement with the School move to the Centre for Creativity. The School will remain in Newstead for the foreseeable future, and must explore how its expansion, space and facilities needs can be accommodated within the College.	B
Para. 2.15	The School should implement a structured process to engage all staff in leading the development of a School vision and research and impact strategy, drawing on available UCD supports for this process.	1	The School will hold an away day/days (between January and March 2024), to develop its vision, mission and values, within the context of the new University Strategy. The School Head of Research, Innovation and Impact will lead in the development of a School Research, Innovation and Impact Strategy aligned with the School vision, mission and values and Strategy, and the new University Strategy (March to May 2024). Support from UCD HR, or UCD Agile in the facilitation of these away day sessions will be sought.	B
Para. 2.16	The School will develop the leadership potential of the current staff cohort through more	1	The School has many leadership roles, some with representation at College-level. These roles typically rotate on a 3 to 5-year cycle, in order to provide opportunity for staff to	A

	delegation of leadership roles, with supportive training.		develop their leadership potential. Support and training for these roles will be reviewed as current incumbents come to the end of their term, and shadowing will be put in place where feasible.	
Para. 2.17	The School should increase the implementation of a model of distributed leadership to support the Head of School in the achievement of the School's vision and mission and the development of staff.	1	The School will develop its Strategy for the coming 5-years, in line with the new University Strategy, aligned with its vision, mission and values (April to June 2024). The School will develop an action plan for the implementation of this strategy, supported by all staff. The School will seek support from UCD HR, or UCD Agile in the facilitation of these discussions.	B
Para. 2.18	The School should formulate a staffing plan providing highly qualified temporary staff with an opportunity to secure permanent positions, and support continued and coherent developments in this area, including the potential impact of planned retirements at senior level.	1, 3	The School has a staffing plan in-place. The School has budgeted for the recruitment of a Full Professor, an Associate Professor (both permanent retirement replacements), two permanent Lecturer/Assistant Professors, a 5-year Lecturer/Assistant Professor, a permanent Technical Officer, and a permanent School Administrator in the current academic year. The School will seek support for a Strategic Full Professor hire. Hiring has commenced, and will progress throughout the 2023/24 academic period.	A
Para. 2.19	The School should consider a rationalisation of teaching-related duties to reduce the load on junior faculty, thus allowing them to develop a research identity in the context of the School strategy.	1	With the recruitment of new faculty planned over the coming year, the School may have the potential to facilitate a reduced working load for junior faculty, and will keep this under consideration. It is however not possible to implement this recommendation until there is capacity within the School to redistribute teaching loads. All faculty, bar Ad Astra faculty in their early years in the School, have carried full teaching loads, and the School has already recruited two temporary teaching fellows, in addition to use of Occasional Lecturers and Adjunct Staff, in order to deliver its teaching in the 2023/24 academic period. The School acknowledges the workload which falls to new faculty when joining the School, and will aim to accommodate a reduced teaching load for junior faculty where feasible. Over the past three to four academic years the School has encouraged and facilitated five faculty members to avail of periods of sabbatical leave. The School will seek to balance the workload for junior faculty while continuing to encourage and accommodate sabbatical leave. Teaching workloads are reviewed annually by the Head of School, in consultation with the School Head of Teaching and Learning, during the period of June to August.	C
Para. 2.20	Supports for engagement with the promotion process are to be identified and implemented more formally within the School. The School should engage senior faculty within the College in mentoring and/or exploring the possible recruitment of mentors from other Schools via a cross-disciplinary mentoring programme.	1	The School P4G reviewers within the School have discussed development and progression with their reviewees, and have made staff aware of workshops and supports available within the University. The School offers all new faculty the opportunity to propose a mentor from within or beyond the School. The School will develop formal documentation around mentorship, with the support of HR, ensuring that mentors and mentees receive support in understanding their respective roles, and expectations. This documentation will be developed by the School Executive during the Spring Trimester of the 2023/24 academic year.	B
Para. 2.21	The School should examine all progression and promotion mechanisms, including non-tenured to tenured staff, assistant professor to associate	1	The School P4G reviewers within the School have discussed development and progression with their reviewees, and have made staff aware of workshops and supports available within the University. The School, through its P4G Reviewers, will continue to ensure that	B

	professor, and associate professor to professor, to ensure that highly qualified staff are supported to engage with these processes and pathways		all faculty are aware of the progression and promotion pathways within the University during the 2023/24 P4G cycle.	
Para. 2.22	The current support staff numbers should be reviewed and promotion pathways for support staff enhanced. The School should consider hiring a new technical support staff member and create a small budget for the purchase of everyday equipment.	3	The School recruited a School Manager just over a year ago, and is now at interview stage for a permanent School Administrator (November 2023). The School recruited a Technical Officer just over a year ago, and has currently advertised for an additional Technical Officer (October 2023). The School non-pay budget has covered all maintenance, everyday equipment needs, and consumables required in the laboratory, in addition to incidental items of office and IT equipment.	A
Para. 2.23	The School should undertake a risk assessment of the Chang'an Dublin International College programmes as a matter of priority, to evaluate, and revise, the structure, delivery, management and oversight of CDIC.	2	While the School is clearly financially dependent on income from the Chang'an Dublin International College (CDIC) at present, it believes that the responsibility for the structure, delivery, management and oversight of CDIC is not solely a matter for the School of Civil Engineering, and therefore an assessment of the risks associated with the programmes delivered in CDIC should be undertaken at a College-level, and at a University-level, extending to all three joint Colleges in China. The progress of this review will be discussed with the College Principal and the Vice Principal for Internationalisation.	B
Para. 2.24	The School should develop a model of using its budget to support the implementation of its strategic plan. For example, it should elaborate a budget plan to increase the attractiveness of the School to new hires at strategic/senior level and also examine ways to reduce the risk associated with the strong dependence on income generated by CDIC.	1,3	Over the past 4 years the School has invested a significant amount in the development of facilities, purchase of equipment, and support of recent and new faculty members (through starting funds and PhD scholarships). This will continue, with a focus in the current year on the development of teaching facilities/equipment. The equipment call (launch May/June 2024) will be informed by a benchmarking exercise which will be led by the School Teaching and Learning Committee (between March and May 2024), which will particularly focus on laboratory and practical work within the curriculum. The School had built up its reserves over recent years, with an understanding that duplication of a significant amount of equipment would be required with the move to the Centre for Creativity. The School Strategy will progress on the understanding that the School will remain based in Newstead, and facilities and equipment development will be budgeted accordingly, with a 3 to 5 year implementation plan (April to June 2024). The School has budgeted for the recruitment of a Full Professor, an Associate Professor (both permanent retirement replacements), two permanent Lecturer/Assistant Professors, a 5-year Lecturer/Assistant Professor, a permanent Technical Officer, and a permanent School Administrator in the current academic year. The School will seek support for a Strategic Full Professor hire. Hiring has commenced, and will progress throughout the 2023/24 academic period (consistent with approved financial plan for 2023/24).	B
	QUALITY OF PROGRAMMES AND STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE			
Para. 3.15	The School should develop more opportunities to market Civil Engineering to students during the first year common curriculum. Increasing the explicit link to Civil Engineering themes will help	1	The School has identified a number of actions for the coming year in relation to recruitment of first year engineering students. The first of the biannual presentations to first year students on civil engineering, and structural engineering with architecture, will be held in Newstead and will include a pizza lunch and social engagement opportunity with	A

	increase the motivation of students to specialise in this area.		students from the School. The School will ensure that female role models are visible to first year students through these recruitment sessions (November 2023). Within the Creativity in Design module, four faculty members (2 males and 2 females) presented on a variety of civil and structural engineering topics, linked with sustainability, aligned with an infrastructure assignment. The Level 1 option modules delivered by the School in the Spring Trimester will also be marketed to the students at this time (October 2023).	
Para. 3.16	The School should further improve the mapping of real-world engineering experience in modules at undergraduate level. Students linked poor attendance to overly theoretical content, and feel that real world application/discussion would improve engagement (particularly Stage 2). Training in soft skills and critical thinking could be expanded/made more explicit than in the current curriculum.	1	The implementation of this recommendation has already begun. For example, in Spring 2023, a national civil engineering contractor and its team of surveying specialists gave an overview of the work that they do, demonstrating state-of-the art surveying technology to the Stage 2 students. A recent UCD Civil Engineering graduate employed by the contractor gave a PowerPoint presentation on her construction site experience and the graduate entry programme she was undertaking (April 2023). Training in critical thinking (e.g. open-ended problem solving, creativity, analysis and research) and soft skills (e.g. communication, teamwork and time management) is well embedded in the curriculum in all years.	A
Para. 3.17	The School should implement mechanisms to ensure that all staff involved in delivering a programme have a holistic understanding of the programme structure and the place of their module(s) within it, and more effectively communicate this to students	1	The School is currently preparing for accreditation of its programmes by Engineers Ireland, which entails mapping programme module learning outcomes to the Engineers Ireland Programme Outcomes (November 2023). Once the mapping process is completed the School Head of Teaching and Learning Committee will analyse the mapping to identify strengths and gaps (November/December 2023). Evidence of assessment supporting the achievement of these learning and programme outcomes will also be presented to the accreditation panel (March, 2024). The School Teaching and Learning Committee will review the most recently expressed programme outcomes for each programme, and determine whether these require modification (June, 2024). The School Teaching and Learning Committee will share the Programme Outcomes with the School Year Heads, and request that these are shared with students at the start of each academic year (September 2024).	B
Para. 3.18	The School should evaluate any envisaged development of new study programmes to avoid dispersion of students. The School should capitalise on existing strengths and expand only in newly identified areas that reflect the School's strategic vision, and can be supported by staff's existing expertise or by planned staff growth.	1	The analysis and market case for new programmes will be developed with recruitment of students onto the programme supporting the hiring of additional faculty to support the new programme. The School has identified a number of potential areas for programme development building on existing strengths, and will continue with market analysis in order to prioritise the programme with the most potential (during the 2023/24 academic year). In developing new programmes the School will ensure that the markets identified will result in the recruitment of additional students.	C
Para. 3.19	Where new programmes are envisaged the School will need to invest in and commit resources to attract highly qualified junior faculty and maximise their experience of the School as a stimulating, inclusive, contemporary and productive scientific work environment, with clear pathways for professional development.	1	The analysis and market case for new programmes will be developed with recruitment of students onto the programme supporting the hiring of additional faculty to support these new programmes. The School has identified a number of potential areas for programme development building on existing strengths, and will continue with market analysis during the 2023/24 academic year, in order to prioritise the programme with the most potential. Once identified the relevant PDARF documentation submission will progress.	C

Para. 3.20	The School should work towards a more balanced ratio between Dublin-based and CDIC-based student numbers, and consider a wide range of target markets for first year recruitment, including widening participation pathways, which currently sits at 17%.	1, 2	Recruitment of students to Civil and Structural Engineering has been a challenge for all universities in Ireland since the downturn in 2008. While the School has seen improvement in numbers in recent years, these have not returned to pre-2008 levels. The School has identified a number of actions for the coming year in relation to recruitment of first year engineering students, and the School is engaging in discussions relating to a collaboration with Study Group on an International Year 1 through which students would be directly recruited to Stage 2 of the civil engineering programme (Programme development commencing November 2023 with Study Group, first intake to Stage 1 planned for September 2025).	C
Para. 3.21	The School should address student criticisms relating to the Design and Communication module, and the integration of the Civil Engineering and Structural Engineering with Architecture Programmes. A preference for studio design classes rather than architectural theory and relevant topics that reflect the overall focus of the programme such as more Total Station experience should be considered.	1	The School Teaching and Learning Committee will make recommendations in relation to the enhancement of the Stage 2 Design and Communications module, particularly relating to the studio-based element of the module, with consideration of differentiation between the civil engineering and structural engineering with architecture cohorts taking this module (January 2024). The Programme Coordinator for the Structural Engineering with Architecture programme will liaise with the relevant module coordinators in the School of Architecture, to review the content of the History & Theory of Architecture modules across the Structural Engineering with Architecture programme, and propose any changes considered necessary to the Teaching and Learning Committee (June 2024). A national civil engineering contractor and its team of surveying specialists have engaged in demonstrating state-of-the-art surveying technology to the Stage 2 students, including introducing the students to Total Station surveying technology (April 2023).	A
Para. 3.22	The School should balance the dependence on external inputs from the professional world with greater attention to the evolution of international academic programmes.	1	The School Teaching and Learning Committee will keep this under review, through engagement with the School Industry Advisory Group, and engagement of either the College Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning, or the School Head of Teaching and Learning, with the CESAER Learning and Teaching Task Force (November 2024). CESAER is an association of 58 leading research-intensive universities of science and technology from 28 countries in Europe and beyond.	C
Para. 3.23	The School should consider complementing the Industry Advisory Board with an Academic Advisory Board in order to balance the academic and practice-based forces that inform programme design and content.	1	The School believes that academic feedback on curriculum development and review is available through subject extern examiner and accreditation feedback, however the School will consider direct engagement of the School Head of Teaching and Learning, or engagement of the College Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning, in the CESAER Learning and Teaching Task Force (November 2024). CESAER is an association of 58 leading research-intensive universities of science and technology from 28 countries in Europe and beyond.	C

QUALITY OF POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH EDUCATION AND RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Para. 4.14	The School should develop an internationally oriented research and impact strategy, which identifies focal thematic areas with high international research potential. The School research and impact strategy should be complemented by, and harmonised with, an infrastructural development plan and a teaching and learning plan, encompassing estate, equipment, the student experience and industry engagement. These should inform the development of an enhanced research identity for the School and include criteria to measure success of implemented measures, such as the UK Research Excellence Framework (REF), both at strategic and operational level.	1, 3	The School will hold an away day/days to develop its vision, mission and values, and its strategy, within the context of the new University Strategy, encompassing a research, impact and innovation, and a teaching and learning strategy. The School will develop an action plan for the implementation of this strategy, supported by all staff. (See responses to Para. 2.14, 2.15 and 2.17 under Organisation, Management and Staffing for the proposed timeline of away days planned during 2023/24). Over the past 4 years the School has invested a significant amount in the development of facilities, purchase of equipment, and support for recent and new faculty members (through starting funds and PhD scholarships). This investment will continue, supporting the achievement of the School Strategic Plan, including development of facilities, equipment, teaching and research infrastructure (see response to Para. 2.24, Equipment Call launch May/June 2024).	B
Para. 4.15	The School should strategically expand research into societal challenges to strengthen the School's identity, attractiveness and uniqueness of expertise, and build upon the existing cooperation with other Schools in the College or other Colleges and networks of the academic centres by scaling-up interdisciplinary research from project-based to thematic scientific partnerships.	1	The School has identified the areas of climate change, data analytics, digitisation and renewable energy as key focus areas for research, curriculum and programme development, and all recent recruitment activities have sought to strengthen expertise within these areas. The School also has a joint Lecturer/Assistant Professor post in Climate Responsive Design with the School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy. These identified areas relate directly to areas of societal challenge, as do the already highlighted areas of resilience, sustainability, water resources, and nature-based solutions which are key research areas within our School research centres, and our teaching programmes. The importance of civil engineering in the context of societal challenges will continue to inform our marketing and recruitment activities, and will feature within the aims of our School Strategy. The areas of research focus for the School are dependent on collaborative engagement beyond the School, and the School Centre Directors will continue to widen the membership of the School research centres, promoting cross-disciplinary collaboration and research, and the potential for large scale collaborative research funding proposals. Continued faculty engagement within the Earth Institute, NexSys, and iCRAG will be encouraged to build institutional networks, and potential for large scale international research collaboration.	A
Para. 4.16	The School research strategy should guide the recruitment of two full professors, to include one University-funded strategic hire, and one School-funded hire. These appointments must have a	1, 3	The School will commence the recruitment process for a Full Professor in the current academic year, and will also submit a case for a strategic hire of a Full Professor, supported by the recruitment (already) of two permanent Lecturer/Assistant Professor posts, the recruitment of an additional permanent Lecturer/Assistant Professor, and a 5-year	B

	strong international network and a proven scientific leadership profile and should be encouraged to provide research leadership and the continued development of the School's vision.		Lecturer/Assistant Professor this academic year, supporting and strengthening the School focus areas (across 2023/24 academic year).	
Para. 4.17	The School should implement a structured process to engage all permanent staff in leading the development of a School vision and research strategy, for example, by transforming the Research and Impact Committee into a strategic body, which leads on this area while also providing input and support to the Head of the School.	1	The School will hold an away day/days to develop its vision, mission and values, within the context of the new University Strategy, encompassing a research, impact and innovation strategy. The School will seek support from UCD HR, and UCD Agile in the facilitation of these discussions. (See responses to Para. 2.14, 2.15 and 2.17 under Organisation, Management and Staffing for the proposed timeline of away days planned during 2023/24).	B
Para. 4.18	The Review Group recommends that the School examine and reflect on barriers to PhD recruitment e.g., job perspectives, perceived lack of careers, general reputation/image problem of academia and how students can be supported to address these. Possible solutions include engagement with industry partners, development of funding opportunities, and access to industry donors through the UCD Foundation.	1, 2	The School Head of Research, Innovation and Impact has given a talk to our ME, MEngSc and undergraduate students to increase awareness among our taught students on the PhD pathway, the benefits of PhD study, and funding opportunities for PhD study. This will continue as an annual event in the Spring Trimester. The School Head of Research, Innovation and Impact is hosting an industry showcase event in December 2023. The aims of this event are to raise awareness amongst industry partners of the research which is being undertaken in the School, in addition to outlining industry/academia research funding opportunities. The event will also assist our new faculty, a number of whom commenced during Covid and have not had the chance to engage with industry, in making contacts with local industry. Presentations will be given by bodies that fund collaborative research with industry, including Construct Innovate and iCRAG.	A
Para. 4.19	The School should improve onboarding of PhD students so that they are inducted and supported in the transition into full time research in a well-coordinated, timely and empathetic manner.	1	Over the past two years the School has engaged in organising Town Hall events for new research students, to ensure that they are welcomed to the School, and informed of key academic regulations relating to their studies. The School Head of Graduate Studies hosted a Townhall and poster event, with a pizza lunch, for the postgraduate research students at the end of October 2023). The School has recently established a Civil Engineering Researcher Committee (CERC) comprising postgrads and postdocs. One of the roles of this committee is to organise a 'buddy' system for new researchers to help integrate and support them when they arrive in the School. This committee will report to the School Research, Innovation and Impact Committee.	A
Para. 4.20	The School should consider whether growth in research activity, including growth in faculty, students and funding, is impacted more by structural factors or the absence of a strong strategic vision. The School should consider how the development of a vision for the School might support the team in addressing or overcoming structural issues.	1	The School has seen unprecedented growth in staff (faculty and research), and research student numbers over the past 5 years, along with increased research funding/awards. This growth will continue over the short-medium term, with posts aligned, where appropriate, with the Schools areas of strategic interest (posts included in approved financial plan for 2023/24). The School has reappointed space within the Newstead Building to accommodate the growth which has occurred, however the School is reaching capacity. Growth and space requirements will be considered as part of the School strategic planning. (See responses to	B

			Para. 2.14, 2.15 and 2.17 under Organisation, Management and Staffing for the proposed timeline of away days planned during 2023/24).	

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<tr><td colspan="5" align="center">MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY AND ENHANCEMENT</td></tr>
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<td>Para. 5.13</td>
<td>The School should review existing programme governance structures, and consider rationalising or simplifying these structures, where appropriate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The School is aligned with the programme governance structures within the College, which are aligned with the requirements of the Academic Regulations, and have been adapted to satisfy the programme governance requirements of the accreditation body, Engineers Ireland. At this time the School believes that the governance structures are efficient and fit-for-purpose, and will ensure that this continues to be the case as additional programmes emerge.</td>
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<td>Para. 5.14</td>
<td>The School should develop and/or institutionalise themed Away Days on topics such as research, teaching and learning, and infrastructural development, to facilitate strategic reflection, management of quality and enhancement, and future planning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The School will hold an away day/days to further develop its vision, mission and values. This will progress within the context of the emergence of the new University Strategy. During the development of the School Strategic Plan the School has held themed workshop sessions to develop alignment of its strategic plan with the university strategy. The School also held an Away Day at the commencement of the self-assessment process for the quality review. These sessions will be continued, particularly as the School develops its strategic plan aligned to the emergence of the new University Strategy. (See responses to Para. 2.14, 2.15 and 2.17 under Organisation, Management and Staffing for the proposed timeline of away days planned during 2023/24).
A School Development Committee, chaired by the Deputy Head of School, is in place, with the Chair representing the School on the College-level Development Committee. The Development Committee reports to the Head of School, and recommendations are discussed at the School Executive Committee.</td>
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<td>Para. 5.15</td>
<td>The School should create a student handbook to provide tailored guidance, information and support to students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The School ran a funded Academic Advisory Project during the 2022/23 academic session, resulting in online web pages bringing together valuable resources to support students. These pages have been updated to reflect role changes within the School (School Head of Teaching and Learning, School Year Heads, Programme Directors, etc.). The School believes that the online resources developed, along with the system of Year Heads, Programme Directors, Student Class Representatives, and the Newstead Staff-Student Forum offer a valuable and valued supportive infrastructure for students.</td>
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<td>Para. 5.16</td>
<td>The School should implement measures to 'close the feedback loop,' and demonstrate engagement with student feedback, drawing on the existing Newstead Staff Student Forum, and best practice within the University.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The School engaged in the new Student Feedback on modules and teaching pilot in 2022/23, which specifically aimed to close the feedback loop. The second iteration of this pilot is now being rolled out, and the School will continue to engage with this process during the 2023/24 academic year, with commitment to feedback to students, which is an integral part of the process.
The School's Newstead Staff-Student Forum is an active and engaged forum, whereby student feedback is gathered, deliberated upon, brought to the School Executive where necessary, and responded to. The School believes that the frequency of meetings, coupled with the formal issuing of minutes serves to close the feedback loop.</td>
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			SUPPORT SERVICES	
Para. 6.11	The School should work more closely with central university services, such as UCD Research, Innovation and Impact, UCD Estate Services, UCD Teaching and Learning and UCD Human Resources, to develop a holistic strategic vision, research and impact strategy, teaching and learning strategy, and infrastructural development plan.	1, 3	The School has close working relationships with university services and units, and will utilise these relationships and the support of these units as the School works to clearly express its vision, mission and values, and develop its strategic plan. Support from relevant units will be sought for planned away days and workshop sessions to facilitate this work. (See responses to Para. 2.14, 2.15 and 2.17 under Organisation, Management and Staffing for the proposed timeline of away days planned during 2023/24).	B
Para. 6.12	The School should intensify its cooperation with UCD Foundation to attract donations to support the growth of the School with regards to faculty, facilities and space.	3	While the School has liaised with UCD Foundation in relation to donations supporting student scholarships, awards and prizes, engagement on a larger scale to support larger scale infrastructure development has been accepted to be a College-level activity. The School, through its engagement in the College Development Committee, will explore the potential for leveraging external funding to support its strategic plan. This will be led by the Chair of the School Development Committee, aligned with the School Strategic Plan.	C
Para. 6.13	The School should work with UCD Estate Services to make more creative use of space across the School, and College aiming to enhance the student study and social environment in the Newstead Building (e.g., setting up study pods and shared study rooms, adding couches). This process should be informed by the School's infrastructural development plan.	3	The School has been using School funding sources to enhance the facilities within the Newstead Building, particularly in relation to reappointment of space to address accommodation of growing staff and student numbers, and the incorporation of shower and breast-feeding facilities (progress during the 2023/24 academic year). The School will continue to liaise with UCD Estates on the development of the building, with a focus on development of informal study and collaboration space for students (planning during the 2023/24 academic year, with associated construction/reappointment of space as necessary over the next 3 to 5 years).	C
			EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
Para. 7.9	The School should consider complementing the Industry Advisory Board with an Academic Advisory Board.	1	The School believes that a high level of academic feedback on curriculum development and review is provided through subject extern examiner and accreditation feedback. However, from November 2024, it is proposed that the School Head of Teaching and Learning, or the College Vice Principal for Teaching and Learning, will engage in the CESAER Learning and Teaching Task Force and ensure that the tenets of best practice in research, education and university leadership from CESAER are embedded in the School's core activities. CESAER is an association of 58 leading research-intensive universities of science and technology from 28 countries in Europe and beyond.	A
Para. 7.10	The School is encouraged to consider the potential contribution that external partners can make to the School's strategic development.	1, 3	The School will continue to work with its Industry Advisory Group, and other external partners, ensuring that these activities inform the strategic development of the School. Beginning in the Autumn trimester, 2023, the School Executive will develop an annual schedule of meetings/collaborative events with the Industry Advisory Group and wider industry partners, addressing aspects of research, teaching and learning and curriculum	A

			design. The first such event is an Industry showcase, scheduled for the 7th December, 2023, in which Industry partners and potential (targeted) Industry partners have been invited to the School to meet staff, observe facilities and research infrastructure, and explore research collaborations that can be developed going forward. Presentations on the School's research mission and some key projects will underpin this Industry engagement.	
Para. 7.11	The School is encouraged to explore the development of institutional connections, scaling up to enable research groups within the School to collaborate on large scale international initiatives in strategic areas.	1	From 2024, the School Centre Directors will seek to widen the membership of the School research centres, in a manner that promotes and enhances cross-disciplinary collaboration and research, and exploits the potential for large scale collaborative research funding proposals. Faculty engagement within the Earth Institute, NexSys, and iCRAG will continue and support the building of institutional networks that can have greater impact in winning large scale international research funding proposals in areas of strategic interest to the School.	B
Para. 7.12	Relations should be strengthened with key units that can support the School to tackle the increasing needs posed by the complexity of contemporary interdisciplinary research nationally and internationally, for instance by further promoting the participation in EU research consortia in response to EU funded research programmes.	1	In addition to widening the membership of School research centres, and engagement in institutes and centres within UCD, the School will encourage faculty engagement in European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) actions, and participation in EU and international research consortia. This will be addressed from 2024 as part of the development conversations which take place annually in the P4G process (by P4G Reviewers during annual P4G meetings).	C
Para. 7.13	The School should examine outreach and marketing activities, including community engagement and open days, to ensure that external groups understand the nuance of the differences in the career paths of Civil Engineers compared to other Engineering disciplines, with a goal of increasing the number of students coming to UCD to study with the School.	1	The School will continue to engage actively in outreach and marketing activities, through the College Marketing Committee, and will work closely with the College Senior Marketing Manager in respect of market analysis for new programmes, the improvement and annual updating of marketing materials and approaches in order to increase the number of students coming to study in the School. These activities will continue to involve the participation of School Faculty at the annual RDS Higher Options Career Fair (c. 30,000 second level students attending), the UCD annual Open Day (c. 15,000 second level students attending) and the annual Information Evening organised by the College of Engineering of Architecture (c. 350 second level students attending). School Faculty also engage in visits to second level schools and this work will continue. The Head of School will also continue to engage with the College Vice Principal for Internationalisation, and UCD Global on initiatives aimed at increasing market share.	A
Para. 7.14	The School should actively monitor the range of external activities that are carried out, to ensure that staff are recognised for the important work that they do in this area, and that this contribution is recognised in areas such as promotion.	1	The School will annually review the engagement of staff in activities (committees, working groups, etc) within the School, College, University and beyond the institution, in order to ensure balanced contribution, and support personal development. Internal and external contributions and activities will form part of the developmental discussions with staff annually as part of the P4G review process (by P4G Reviewers during annual P4G meetings).	C

3.   **Prioritised Resource Requirements**

1.   **Strategic Case for Full Professor post – salary funded centrally (Para. 2.24 & 4.16)**
The School is finalising the Job Description for a Full Professor post at present, which will be advertised in December. The School has planned to make a strategic case for the recruitment of a second Full Professor as part of its recruitment activities for 2023/24. The School at this time has no full-time professorial staff, with just one Full Professor on a 0.2FTE one-year Post-retirement contract. The School has budgeted for the salary of one Full Professor, and will provide start-up funds from its reserves.

2.   **Additional space requirements – informal study space and collaborative learning space, office space (Para. 4.20, 6.11, 6.12 & 6.13)**
The School has been considering options for informal study spaces in the atrium of the Newstead Building, including the use of peripheral high benching fixed to the wall to facilitate laptop usage on an individual basis. A further consideration is to facilitate informal group work through the use of movable pods. With the use of shared office space in Newstead, it has been noted that there is a need for more flexible meeting spaces, which could include the use of soundproof booths.

The overall costs of these works will depend on the level of services provided (sockets, lighting), and the number of spaces to be accommodated. At the lower end, the addition of benching in the atrium will cost in the region of €3,000. Movable group study pods will cost of the order of €8,000, and soundproof booths start at around €5,000. While the School has explored the addition of these approaches, and has looked at the costs, it considers that the design of an appropriate approach to the provision of these flexible options within the atrium of the building will require architectural advice.

3.   **Redesign of project rooms and computer laboratory (and office spaces) to provide flexibility for increased capacity (Para. 3.15, 3.20, 4.14, 6.11 & 6.13)**
The School has undertaken a number of minor works projects in the past two years to reappoint space to accommodate the increase in research staff, faculty and graduate research students. These minor works will continue, with the addition of a breast feeding and drying room, and storage space within the laboratories. It is however considered that further development of the building to provide flexibility for increased capacity requires the advice of an architect, as some of the requirements will require more major works.

Full costing for items 2 and 3 are not possible at this point.