# Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement

Internal Quality Review Programme

2015-16



# Quality Improvement Plan

**(DRAFT)**

**DCU Business School**

*May 2016*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The production of the quality improvement plan was coordinated by the Management Team in DCU Business School plus the Accreditation and Assurance Officer. This group consisted of:

Professor Anne Sinnott – Executive Dean;

Professor Barbara Flood – Deputy Dean;

Ms Ursula Baxter – Manager of Faculty Administration;

Professor Colm O’Gorman – Associate Dean for Research (ADR);

Dr Caroline McMullan – Associate Dean for Teaching & Learning (ADTL);

Ms Julie O’Donnell - Accreditation and Assurance Officer (AAO).

It was agreed the that Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) for DCU Business School would be produced after the School had completed the AACSB accreditation process as this would permit reflection on the recommendations from both the Peer Review Group Report and the AACSB Report.

1. **RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PEER REVIEW GROUP REPORT**

The response to each of the recommendations in the peer review group report is set out in the table below.

The following notation is used in the recommendations for improvement.

**P1**: A recommendation that is important *and* requires urgent action.

**P2**: A recommendation that is important, but can (or perhaps must) be addressed on a more extended time scale.

**P3**: A recommendation which merits serious consideration but which is not considered to be critical to the quality of the ongoing activities in the Area.

Additionally, the PRG indicate the level(s) of the University where action is required: A: Area under review U: University Senior Management

| **Recommendation Number** | **Priority** | **Addressee** | **PRG Recommendation** | **DCU Business School Response** | **University Response** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | P1 | A | Make more explicit the thread of Assurance of Learning (AOL) throughout undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Ensure staff clearly understand and can articulate, that governance of AOL is at programme, not module level. | **Recommendations Already Implemented**  A range of initiatives were implemented:   * An “AoL at Award Level” map was produced to illustrate governance over the system; * An AoL Process Map was designed & distributed to all staff; * AoL training seminars were delivered by the ADTL & the AAO; * An AoL Checklist was produced for use by Programme Directors & the Admin Team; * Proformas for AoL Planning and Reporting were prepared for use by each Programme Board; * AoL is integrated into the DCU quality assurance process – e.g., AoL samples are drawn for each programme when Ext. Examiner samples are prepared.   The quality of the AoL system in DCU Business School was examined as part of the AACSB Accreditation process. The committee highlighted AoL as one of 6 key strengths:  *“A very well developed culture of AOL exists at DCU Business School. Faculty and staff are clearly committed to an AOL process that has resulted in improved curricula for all programs. Multiple checks exist in the system to ensure a strong, validated system of AOL.”* |  |
| 2 | P1 | A | Ensure that the Academic Promotion criteria are clear to all staff | A three step approach to meeting this recommendation was agreed.  1. At a School meeting for all staff, the Executive Dean presented an overview of the Academic Promotion Criteria. **(Already Implemented)**  2. The Faculty Workload Model mirrors the criteria for promotion and outlines the importance of all 3 domains: teaching; research and service. **(Already Implemented)**  3. A section of the new DCU Business School website will provide extensive guidance for all staff. **(Planned for delivery in 2016/17)** |  |
| 3 | P1 | U/A | Continue to monitor the financial model for externally generated revenue to ensure equity and sustainability. | To ensure that DCU Business School has the capacity to achieve its mission, the Dean oversees a robust system of financial management, which involves planning and managing the financial infrastructure, the allocation of resources to both strategic initiatives and operational delivery, and evaluation of actual expenditure. The Dean consults with Management Board regarding key financial strategies and works closely with the Manager of Faculty Administration to ensure that there is appropriate oversight of day-to-day financial management.  The funding streams, which are the bedrock of the financial infrastructure and provide DCU Business School with the necessary resources to deliver its mission, include:   * Government grant * Undergraduate tuition fees * Postgraduate tuition fees * Revenue from DCU Business School’s Centre for Executive and International Education * External research grants and DCU research grants * Other external funding to support specific initiatives.   In light of the reduced funding provided by the state for higher education, in 2011 DCU Business School set a strategic priority to increase the revenue earned from non-exchequer sources. The strategic decision was made to target new revenue streams in the international market. Strategic actions have resulted in the acquisition of contracts to deliver two of our undergraduate and one of our postgraduate awards at PNU in Riyadh and also the delivery in Dublin of bespoke education training programmes for the Malaysian Ministry for Higher Education. These strategic initiatives have generated a strong revenue stream for the School in recent years. Furthermore, we anticipate that as the economy recovers we will have the opportunity to reignite our engagement with organisations for the development and delivery of bespoke executive programmes. Furthermore, as the University refines its international strategy, we expect to attract increasing numbers of international students to both our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. **(Ongoing)** |  |
| 4 | P1 | A | Improve the promotion of engagement with industry. This is hugely impressive for DCU Business School but is not evident in the SAR. | This recommendation resulted in a complete review of how we present our engagement with industry and how we monitor and demonstrate achievement of one of our four strategic intents: “Industry engagement will be a hallmark of our activities”. We have:   * Appointed an Associate Dean for Industry Engagement & Innovation; **(Already Implemented)** * Undertook a complete rewrite of our “AACSB Self Evaluation Report” so that our Industry Engagement was evident through programme design; teaching and learning; research; and the wide range of service undertaken by faculty across the Business School. **(Already Implemented)**   The rewritten SAR and the panel visit during the AACSB accreditation process allowed DCU Business School to demonstrate achievements in this area and it was considered one of our key strengths: “*The teaching at DCU Business School is innovative and distinctive. It has excellent engagement with industry as evidenced in research projects, industry-led or co-developed business internships and consulting projects for Irish and international companies. Internally, the DICE, INTRA and Next Generation Management (NGM) modules offer strong support for student learning. For example, NGM students have excellent engagement with industry during the module and excellent employment statistics after graduation”.*  To ensure an ongoing focus on industry engagement, a section of our new DCU Business School website will focus on industry engagement and Management Board wish to promote further the industry links within the Business School by setting up an “Industry Engagement” space on the ground floor. **(Planned for delivery in 2016/17 – subject to funding)** |  |
| 5 | P1 | A | Continue to reach out across the University to engage in relevant activities and share good practice e.g. Alumni Office. | DCU Business School enjoys a positive relationship with central services. Demonstrating the level and quality of this internal engagement can be challenging. In order to capture the excellent work undertaken with the Alumni Office; the INTRA Office; the International Office etc. DCU Business School wish to use the new website and dedicated space in the Business School to highlight these activities. **(Planned for delivery in 2016/17 – subject to funding)** |  |
| 6 | P1 | A | Develop criteria for measuring the impact of teaching and learning on students, especially ‘global awareness’ and ‘transformation’. | DCU Business School has used AoL to track the impact of teaching and learning on all the graduate attributes. The data is collected at Programme Board level; Collated by the Faculty Teaching & Learning Committee; and reported to Management Board annually. **(Already Implemented)** |  |
| 7 | P1 | A | Develop a narrative around *Learning Analytics*, which should include the use of *Guru* and personal tutor interventions. | Since the PRG visit, the DCU Business School has prepared a narrative for inclusion in the updated SER. This focused, most especially, on “at risk” students – “Processes and Criteria for Evaluation, Identification and Intervention” with particular emphasis on how we make use of university generated data; GURU analytics; and the personal tutor system to ensure we deliver a student-centred, supportive, high quality learning experience for our students. **(Already Implemented)** |  |
| 8 | P1 | A | Clarify for staff the benefits of taking part in ‘revenue-generating’ activities to ensure continuous support for same. | The impact of revenue generating activities in the Business School has served to underline for all staff the importance of providing support for such projects. School meetings are used as a vehicle to provide regular updates on the impact which key projects such as PNU Programmes; the Enterprise Ireland- Management for Growth Programme; Invest NI- Leadership Team Programme are having on the delivery of our vision for the DCU Business School. Approximately 50% of faculty have contributed to revenue generating activities in 2015/16. **(Already Implemented)** |  |
| 9 | P2 | A | Explore the opportunities of the DCU Incorporation Programme for DCU Business School and examine the impact of this major university development on the School. | Incorporation of new colleagues in the area of education and the formation of the new Institute has allowed us to explore a deeper engagement with PNU in Saudi Arabia. We are in early stage negotiations regarding the delivery of a Masters in Early Education in Riyadh. **(3 year time frame for delivery)** |  |

1. **SUMMARY OF THE ONE-YEAR PLAN**

In order to deliver on the recommendations made by the Peer Review Team, DCU Business School have prioritised the following activities for implementation in the next 12 months:

1. The development of a DCU Business School website which will allow us *inter alia* to:

* Communicate with DCU Business School staff regarding career development; promotion criteria; training opportunities etc. (Recommendations 2, 8).
* Communicate with DCU staff across all campuses in order to: share good practice in teaching, research and service; highlight opportunities to assist with the design and delivery of new or ongoing revenue generating activities for the benefit of DCU etc. (Recommendations 5, 8, 9).
* Highlight to key stakeholders, such as industry and professional bodies, the level and type of activities currently undertaken in DCU Business School and to secure additional and/or enhanced activity in this vital area of our work (Recommendations 4, 6).
* Continue to attract high quality students and to ensure financial viability by promoting our taught programmes to potential students in the national and international marketplace (Recommendations 3, 4).

DCU Business School, working with the DCU Communications and Marketing Office and following the required tender process, has committed to spending €24,673 plus VAT 6,668.25 (total €31,341) with “Webfactory” to design and launch the new DCU Business School website. However, the current budget does not allow for the additional spend required to generate web based materials tailored for various stakeholders – for example taking research papers and highlighting the key message for industry. We would like to obtain match funding of €31,000 for this second strand of the project.

2. Develop an “Industry Engagement” area on the ground floor of the Business School. This would involve painting two walls on the ground floor and the design, delivery and installation of an industry board, graphics, photographs – which will be used to highlight industry links etc. The total cost of this project is €6,402 (Recommendations 4, 5, 6).

1. **SUMMARY OF THE THREE-YEAR PLAN**
2. DCU Business School will work with other faculties – especially taking into account the expanded range of specialisms now offered within the “new DCU” – to develop opportunities for externally generated in the Gulf States. Early indicators are that maths and education are of particular interest in this region (Recommendations 8, 9)
3. The maintenance of excellent data and evidence in relation to AoL; student performance, student retention etc. will be a key element of our work over the next three years. This data is vitally important to ongoing quality enhancement and will be critical to securing ongoing accreditation by AACSB (Recommendations 1, 7).

1. **APPENDICES**

**5.1 Quality Committee (for the Self-Assessment Report)**

Professor Anne Sinnott – Executive Dean

Professor Barbara Flood – Deputy Dean

Ms Ursula Baxter – Manager of Faculty Administration

Professor Colm O’Gorman – Associate Dean for Research

Dr Caroline McMullan – Associate Dean for Teaching & Learning

Ms Julie O’Donnell - Accreditation and Assurance Officer

Mr Jonathan Begg – Senior Administrator

Dr John McMackin – Director Executive & International Education

Professor Theo Lynn – Business Innovation Platform Director (now Associate Dean for Industry Engagement & Innovation)

Ms Rachael Weiss – Accreditation Senior Administrator

**5.2 Peer Review Group members**

Prof Mark Fenton-O’Creevy The Open University Business School

Prof James Fleck University of Edinburgh Business School

Dr Claire Bohan Director, Student Support & Development, DCU

Mr Martin Leavy Training & Development Manager, HR, DCU

**5.3 Quality Committee (for the Quality Improvement Plan)**

Professor Anne Sinnott – Executive Dean

Professor Barbara Flood – Deputy Dean

Ms Ursula Baxter – Manager of Faculty Administration

Professor Colm O’Gorman – Associate Dean for Research

Dr Caroline McMullan – Associate Dean for Teaching & Learning

Ms Julie O’Donnell - Accreditation and Assurance Officer

**5.4 Prioritised Resource Requirements**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project #** | **Project Title** | **Cost Estimate** |
| 1 | Redesign and upgrade of DCU Business School Website and Copy Writer | 62,341 |
| 2 | Develop an “Industry Engagement” area in Business School | 6,402 |
| 3 |  |  |