Quality Reviews 2013-2020

Quality Improvement Plan

Finance Office

28 November 2014

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1.0 Introduction

The Finance Office would like to thank the members of the Peer Review Group and all of the staff and students who engaged with the surveys and workshops undertaken as part of the quality review process and gave up their time to meet with the Peer Review Group during their visit. Thanks are also due to the Quality Promotion Office for their assistance in this process. In particular, a special thanks to all of the members of staff of the Finance Office not just for their active engagement and support for this Quality Review Process but also for their continued tremendous commitment to delivering quality services in the Finance Office and to the University as a whole.

2.0 Background

The Finance office Quality Review was conducted in accordance with a framework model developed and agreed through the Irish Universities Association Quality Committee and complies with the provisions of Section 35 of the Universities Act (1997) and the 2012 Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act.

The Finance Office preparation for the Quality Review visit commenced in January 2013. There followed a period of detailed review and reflection on the Finance Office. Surveys and focus groups formed key elements of the methodology utilised in the self-assessment review process and a broad range of views were obtained from stakeholders regarding the quality and range of services provided by the Finance Office.

The Finance Office welcomed the opportunity presented by the Quality Review process to take a step back and assess the Finance Office and ensure that it was continuing to provide the quality services required by the University and that its ongoing service improvements meet the needs of the University.

In accordance with the DCU the DCU Quality Assurance/ Quality Improvement Programme the Finance Office produced a Self-Assessment Report (SAR). The main elements of the SAR document included:
   • The Finance Office Strategic Plan.
   • The integration between the Finance Office strategic plan and the overall DCU strategic plan.
   • The record of continuous improvement delivered in the Finance Office during 2006- 2014.
   • The Quality Review processes and outcomes
   • The Finance Office conclusions on the Self-Assessment Process

The Peer Review Group Visit took place from 2 April 2014 and 4 April 2014. The review group comprised:
   • Ms. Sarah Randall-Paley, Director of Finance, Lancaster University, UK (Chairperson for the Group)
   • Ms Jennifer Cullinane, Finance Director, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
   • Mr. Michael Culhane, Director of Finance, An Garda Siochana
   • Dr. Rory O'Connor, Head, School of Computing, Dublin City University
   • Ms. Aisling McKenna, Research & Institutional Analysis Officer, Dublin City University

This Finance Office Quality Improvement Plan sets out some of the changes which have already taken place since the Peer Review Group visit, along with the Finance Office responses to the recommendations in the Peer Review Group report and resulting actions.

3.0 The New Finance Office Structure

At the time the SAR document was produced, the Finance Office was in the process of restructuring its organisation structure in line with the Finance Office Strategic Plan. The new structure was fully communicated to staff between the time of the production of the SAR and the Peer Review group visit. As a consequence the new Finance Office structure was not included in the SAR, but was presented to the quality review panel on their arrival.

The changes were required for two reasons, firstly to address the challenges identified in the Financer Office Strategic Plan and secondly to make provision for the significant role the Finance Office is undertaking in the DCU Incorporation Programme[1]. The new Finance Office structure is described as an "interim" structure recognising the fact that as the Incorporation Programme progress there will be a need to restructure once more as:

- There will be expanded Finance Office incorporating colleagues from St Patrick's College, the Mater Dei Institute of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education.
- The structure will have to be appropriate to meet the longer term Finance Office Strategic Goals.

Interim Finance Office Structure – March 2014

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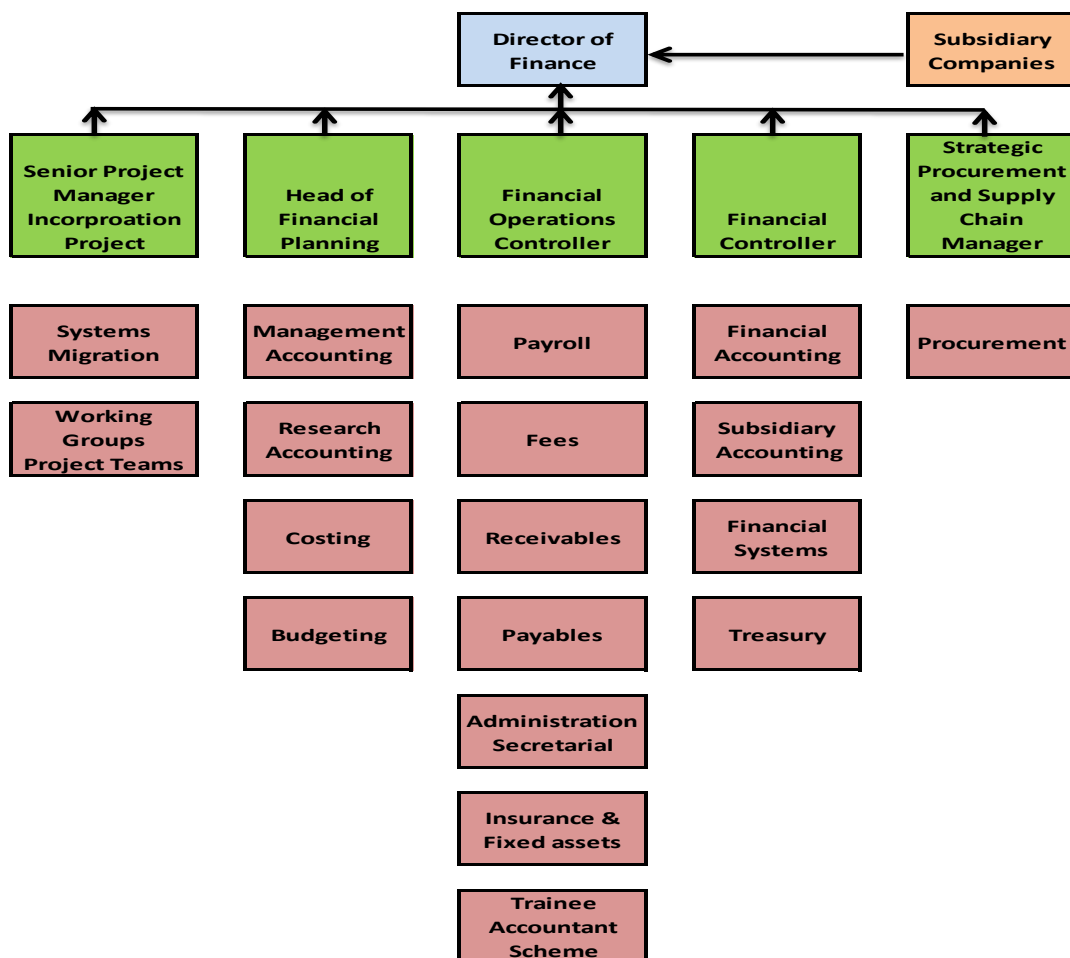
[1] The DCU Incorporation Programme is the planned coming together of St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Mater Dei Institute of Education and Church of Ireland College of Education with DCU.

4.0 Peer Review Group Recommendations

Following the quality review visit, the Peer Group Report was issued on 30 April 2014. The Finance Office welcomed the report particularly given that it

- affirmed that the existing Finance Office strategic plan was in line with the University strategic plan and that it encompassed the key actions required by the Finance Office to further improve the quality of its services.
- stated that the Self-Assessment Report was a comprehensive analysis on the activity of the Finance Office and noted the extensive engagement and work undertaken in its preparation.
- set out a range of commendations in relation to the Finance Office.

The commendations contained in the report included

- Clear and Appropriate Financial Leadership
- Alignment to the University Strategic Plan
- Quality and Visibility of Financial reporting (Agresso)
- Continuous improvement in systems usage and automation
- Centre of Excellence in the Purchase to Pay Cycle, Payroll Self Service and Fees On-Line Registration
- Procurement Savings and tenders processed
- Culture of Communication

4.1   Methodology in Responding to the Report

The report of the Peer Review Group was sent to all Finance Office Staff. In drafting the Finance office responses to the recommendations contained in the Peer Review Group Report, the Finance Office Quality Review Committee took the following into account:

- Content of the Peer Review Group Report itself
- Finance Office Strategic Plan
- Finance Office Self-Assessment Report and the conclusions therein
- The Finance Office ongoing change plan to improve procedures and processes and the actions already completed, in progress and planed
- The activities in the university sector under the auspices of the Irish University Association to collectively move towards best practice in various areas of operation

4.2   Resource and Budget Constraints

Similar to all other departments and faculties within DCU, the Finance Office operates under the significant constraints imposed by the Employment Control Framework (ECF) as well as on-going budget reductions. This may impact on the ability of the Finance Office to meet the challenging targets which it has set for itself in the Finance Office Strategic Plan, its ongoing change plan and the actions proposed in response to the Peer Review Report.

5.0 Peer Review Group Recommendations for Improvement

Indication of Priority:

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.

Level(s) of the University where action is required: A: Area under review   U: University Senior Management

Rec	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response (where applicable)
			Staffing and Accommodation		
1	P2	A	Conduct an evaluation of the current physical environment with the assistance of external expertise to achieve an optimal layout and usage of existing space.	The Finance Office will re-apply to the Space Management Committee (SPAM) for adjacent offices to the Fees Office to free up Office Space. Finance Office will engage expert support from the Estates office to review layout and options within the Finance office. The University has now re-allocated the rooms adjacent to the Fees Office to the Finance Office. Plans for the revision to the Fees area have been prepared with the Estates Office with the objective of having the area reorganised in January. The new layout will be rolled out to the rest of the Finance Office when the pilot project with the Fees area is completed. Following the success of the of the scanning of Expenditure Requisition Forms other documentation is being scanned and moved off site to free up other storage space.	Note: The University, through the Estates Office, will provide expert support where required. See also response to Recommendation #2 below.

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
2	P3	U/A	Undertake an analysis of the future space requirements of the Finance Office function staff, with particular emphasis on the impact of DCU Incorporation Programme and University strategic plan.	The review referred to in the response to Recommendation 1 will be addressed in relation to the short term requirements of the Finance Office. The medium to long term requirements of the Finance Office need to take into account the changes required by the proposals contained in the Finance office Strategy and the changes which will arise as a result of the Incorporation Programme. Interim provision may need to be made for the Finance Office post incorporation until such time as the new University Campus Development Plan is implemented, which will potentially give the Finance Office a new location on campus. The Finance Office will work closely with the Chief Operations Officer both in his role as the Co- Sponsor of the Campus and Services Workstream of the Incorporation Programme and the owner of the Campus Development Plan, to ensure that the interim and long term needs of the Finance Office are addressed. The reconfiguration of the current space available to the Finance Office will include providing three new rooms; one where the Fees Office can meet privately with students and two for staff meetings. The utilisation of new desks will free up floor space to cater for future requirements.	The location and future space requirements of the Finance Office will be determined as part of outputs from Workstream 4 'Campus Services' of the DCU Incorporation Project, in consultation with the Finance Office. It is worth noting that, with space at a premium within the University, allocation and re-allocation is always a current concern. Within the new Campus Development Plan and the Incorporation Programme, it is envisaged that additional space will be developed to address space pressures across the University.

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
			Finance Office Response To Strategic Challenges		
3	P1	U/A	Identify and quantify Finance Office resources required for the implementation of strategic projects for inclusion as part of routine costing of university wide strategic initiatives. Include a review of Finance Office staffing levels and skill base throughout the period of strategy implementation and organisational change as a result of the DCU Incorporation Programme, to ensure the function can respond effectively to financial support needs of the university.	The Finance Office Strategy and the Self- Assessment Report recognised the need for restructuring to enable the Finance Office to meet its strategic objectives. An interim restructuring has already been implemented.

A Management Accountant and a Cost Accountant have now also been recruited and a Financial Accountant is being recruited as part of a re-structuring of vacant positions.

As the Incorporation Programme progresses further restructuring of the Finance Office will take place to encompass our colleagues from the incorporating institutions and to meet the medium to longer term strategic objectives of the Finance Office. Under the auspices of the Incorporation Project HR workstream a process has already commenced to determine the structure and resourcing for the Finance Office post Incorporation. | The University supported the interim restructuring of the Finance Office and will support the further restructuring of the Finance Office as the DCU Incorporation Project progresses.

Due regard must be continue to be given to constraints such as the Employment Control Framework and the University's finances. |

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
4	P1	U/A	Evaluate, through a comprehensive audit, the effectiveness of processes and skills required to address the cross-organisational research support activities, to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.	The Finance Office in collaboration with the Office of Research and Innovation recently undertook a *Research Enhancing* performance review. This review was a comprehensive examination of the support structures and resources necessary to underpin research activity, particularly in the context of the strategic objective to double research activity over the period of the DCU Strategic Plan. A report arising from the performance review will be available shortly and Finance will act on its recommendations in order to more fully address this recommendation. Appropriate software options are also currently being reviewed and there is engagement between the Finance Office and the Office of Research and Innovation to identify an appropriate solution for implementation.	The University is supporting this comprehensive review by the Finance Office and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation, which has commenced. It will consider the outputs from that review and provide further support / resources where possible.
5	P3	U/A	Consider channels for enhanced communications with the wider DCU community, e.g. effective cascading of information from SMG and other senior managers, to all staff, information on financial matters to be included at institution-wide "town hall" events, where relevant	The budget process and the related reporting of financial information are being significantly enhanced as part of the current 2014/15 budget process. Budget holders have already been presented with a different reporting model that has moved from a 'HEA fund Accounting basis to a 'GAAP' accounting basis. These and related changes will present opportunities to improve the reporting of financial information throughout the University. In conjunction with this the information requirements of the key constituencies in the University will be reviewed.	The University has given its support to, and will engage with, the Finance Office in relation to the proposed changes in the financial reporting structure and the related information requirements.

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
6	P1	U/A	Develop appropriate protocols and processes to ensure the early involvement of Finance Office staff as a requirement for strategic initiatives across the organisation, as part of an increased "business partnership" approach to Finance Office supports.	The Finance Office is already heavily involved in many of the strategic initiatives being undertaken in relation to the current DCU Strategic Plan. The Finance Office will work with the University in the development of such protocols and processes to ensure the involvement of the Finance Office at an early stage in development of relevant strategic proposals across the University. Engagement with DCU campus companies in relation to these initiatives will also be undertaken.	The University is fully supportive of, and will expect, early stage engagement with the Finance Office by Faculties and Units across the University in the development of proposals that require a Finance Office input.
7	P1	A	Develop key performance indicators (KPI) and metrics based on the Finance Office strategy to be approved by the Executive.

These should include progress and impact measurement based on specific timelines and against targets, where appropriate | The revised budget planning process (ref. response to recommendation 5) will lay the basis for the development of some of the key performance indicators and metrics in the Finance Office. In addition, the commitments within the DCU compact with the Higher Education Authority in future years will require the tracking and amending where appropriate of the related financial KPIs. It will also be necessary to develop, where relevant, the related financial KPIs in support of the University's Unique Selling Points. Future reporting will be developed in line with these considerations.

As part of the developments in relation to Reporting Tools (IRIS), transactional statistics will be recorded and made available by management within the new Finance Office Structure to monitor performance. | Note: The University welcomes this initiative |

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
8	P2	A	Extend the implementation of the DCU and Finance Office strategies by translating strategic goals down to operational teams and individuals (where appropriate) to make the strategy relevant to all Finance Office staff.	A number of the strategic objectives have already been progressed. In support of further implementation, a department plan will be put in place to map out individual department objectives into the Finance Strategic plans. This will enable individual staff plans to be set out that maps into department plans. The quarterly communications briefing meeting with the Finance Office staff addresses the progression of the Finance Office Strategy at each meeting.	Note: The University recognises the contributions that the Finance Office has made to the DCU Strategic Plan objectives and has endorsed the Finance Office strategic plan.
			Functions Activities and Processes		
9	P1	A/U	Clarify roles and processes between Faculties/ Units and the Finance Office in relation to high-level financial support to Executive Deans and Unit Heads, with a particular focus on budgeting and year end reporting	The new budget process and related reporting (ref. response to recommendation 5) will provide the opportunity for Executive Deans and Unit Heads to have an input in budgeting and year end reporting. A process has also been put in place to ensure that Faculty Managers are also provided with all relevant information. Review meetings are held with Faculty Managers on a regular basis.	The University welcomes this initiative and will engage with the Finance Office in relation to the proposed changes in the financial reporting structure and the related information requirements.

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
10	P1	A	Extend the use of the technology already available within the Finance Office by more extensively using the Agresso financial system for monthly reporting of phased budget and actual information for both income and expenditure at a granular level.	The new budget process and related reporting (ref. response to recommendation 5) will provide a better basis for analysing and reporting monthly on budgeted and actual expenditures. An upgrade to the Agresso system is currently in progress. A workshop on Agresso Reporting will assess user requirements and assess additional capabilities in the new version of the system.	Note: The University welcomes this initiative
11	P1	A/U	Improve utilisation of the Finance Office systems team by university stakeholders to analyse and meet reporting requirements of budget holders through the development of Accelerator reports in Agresso where these do not already exist.	Actions relating to this recommendation have been highlighted in the Finance Office Strategy. A series of Agresso reporting workshops have been planned to address the reporting requirements along with addressing gaps where it is appropriate to utilise a qualified resource. 'Dashboard' type graphical displays will be introduced where possible.	The University welcomes this initiative and will encourage budget holders to engage with the Finance Office on reporting requirements and related areas.
12	P2	A	Conduct an evaluation of current standard operating procedures to ensure they are up to date with current systems and policies, with a focus on their ability to facilitate knowledge transfer and support contingency management in cases of staff change or staff absences within the Finance Office.	Staff succession planning is set out in the Finance Office Strategy and the new interim Finance Office Structure and resource recruitment will address single points of failure and support contingency issues. Current standard operating procedures are under constant review in the continuous change environment. In addition, a detailed dissemination of current standard operating procedures is taking place with the relevant institutions as part of the DCU Incorporation Programme to ensure that the standard operating procedures are understood.	Note: The University welcomes this initiative

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
13	P2	A	Consider the introduction of regular meetings between the Directors of Finance and ISS (in conjunction with other senior staff and stakeholders) to discuss and monitor progress on financial IT systems development.	A new Finance/ISS Steering Group made up of key individuals for both departments has already been established and has met to discuss current and future IT requirements and related projects. As part of this initiative a number of subgroups have met involving project managers and their ISS counterparts in relation to the upgrade of various systems in the context of the incorporation project. The Steering Group will continue to meet to discuss and monitor future progress.	Note: The University recognises the importance of this initiative and welcomes it.
14	P1	A	Develop project implementation processes and agreed protocols on consultation and stakeholder involvement of finance led systems and initiatives. As part of this, post-implementation reviews should take place to assess feedback and make adjustments as required.	A project implementation process and agreed protocols on consultation and stakeholder involvement of finance-led systems and initiatives will be agreed as part of the discussions at the Finance/ISS Steering Group. Work is also being undertaken with Faculty Managers to ensure they are aware of the relevant upgrades in systems including Agresso, Core and ITS.	Note: The University welcomes this initiative

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
15	P3	A	Process re-engineering to be carried out with the objective of simplifying processes, identification of efficiencies, the reduction of manual re-working and duplication of efforts, including the production of more concise training sheets and the development of standard operating procedures.	One of the commendations in the Finance Office Peer Review group for Finance related to the continuous improvement in financial systems usage and automation since the previous quality review in 2007. The Finance Office will continue to build on the continuous process re-engineering model and the Finance Office Strategy includes plans for the upgrade of the 3 key Finance System platforms. Examples of process improvements already introduced include: - Re-allocation of the matching of invoices to POs within the Campus Companies - Movement of sundry type payments to a supplier based model - Review and changes to certain aspects of the online registration process - Purchase and configuration of additional laptops for the student registration period - Improvements to sales order processsing	Note: The University welcomes this initiative

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
16	P2	A	Continue building on the working group model of wider stakeholder engagement for process changes, so that the potential impact on the wider DCU community can be considered at an early stage in the process.	This recommendation is being / will be addressed by actions already in progress /planned outlined in previous responses : • The new Finance/ISS Steering Group • The work being undertaken as part of the DCU Incorporation Programme • The on-going process engineering change programme already begun in the Finance Office • The development of project implementation processes and agreed protocols • Prepared RFP with HR for Contract generation process • Faculty managers review meeting to communicate developments • Working with Training to deliver a support programme for super users within the university • Preparation of specification with RIS for Research Administration model	Note: The University welcomes these initiatives

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
			Client Perspective		
17	P2	A/U	Review the value for money benefits and efficiency gains from centralised procurement, with a view to identifying and exploring further opportunities through this approach whilst ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements.	The Finance Office Strategy sets out the requirement to revise the procurement function in light of the role to be played by the Office of Government Procurement so that there is an even greater focus on achieving value for money in the University. A Strategic Procurement and Supply Chain Manager has recently been appointed who is already making an impact in addressing this recommendation and other relevant initiatives in relation to strategic procurement for the university.	The University is fully supportive of the continuous process improvement initiatives in this area within the Finance Office.
18	P2	A	Undertake a review of the current opening hours of the Fees Office, with a view to extended, regular opening hours, and alignment with other student-facing administrative and support services, such as Registry, for the benefit of the student experience.	The Fees Office is in the process of enhancing the information on the Finance Office web site to ensure that the information required can be easily located and accessed. As part of the preparation of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) the Finance Office engaged with our student and client groups to actively seek their feedback and ensure that we are meeting their expectations. Proposed actions and relevant changes are currently under discussion for implementation. One initiative introduced during registration related to streamlining the large volume of email queries by allocating a service ticket to emails from a single source.	Note: The University welcomes this initiative

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
19	P3	A	Review the efficiency of the current co-location model adopted during Student Orientation and explore further opportunities for co-location of a student-facing enquiries function with Registry throughout the academic year.	A working group has been set up with members from the Finance office and Registry. This group plans to assess the student requirements during student orientation, registration and investigate options to ensure student queries are increasingly dealt with in a prompt and professional manner.	Note: The University welcomes this initiative

			Finance Office Staff Perspective		
20	P2	A	Consider the regular inclusion of team leaders within the weekly management meetings, with a view to improving formal communications between operational teams, and better cascading of information to individual team members.	Improving communications is an on-going issue for Finance in common with other DCU departments. The Finance Office Strategy highlighted the importance of communications and the objective is to set up a Finance Office communication group representing multiple functions within Finance to consider internal and external communication requirements and options, and implement relevant actions. The new structure to be put in place as a consequence of the Finance Office Strategy specifically deals with the need for engaging and developing our staff. In that context the optimum means of communicating with team leaders will be addressed once the new structure is in place. **Finance Strategy** 4.3 Engaging and Developing Our Staff 4.3.1 Carry out a detailed review of the structure within the Finance Office to an appropriate and properly resourced structure design to deliver on the Finance Office strategic plan. 4.3.2 Put in place a skills assessment and staff development plan. 4.3.3 Enhance staff communications. 4.3.4 Provide staff development through engagement on projects and availing of staff rotation opportunities. 4.3.5 Examine opportunities for succession management and talent management.	Note: The University is continuously endeavouring to improve communications both internally and externally and welcomes the Finance Office's plans. It will provide any possible assistance (technological, training, advice etc.) and will cooperate with Finance Office management and staff.

No.	Priority	Level	PRG Recommendation	Finance Office Response	University Response
21	P2	A	Establish a short-term working group within the Finance Office to consider further initiatives or fora to improve formal business communications between operational teams.	This recommendation will be addressed by the response to recommendation 20 above.	As above.
22	P2	A	Develop and include formal systems training of new staff as a crucial part of staff induction, and develop other initiatives to continually up-skill staff on systems used in the normal course of their job.	Staff development was set out in the Finance Office Strategy and Finance will formulate individual training requirements setting out induction training and annual training plans for staff. Initial discussions have been held with the Training and Development Unit regarding supporting staff within the wider university community on financial systems as well as training new and existing staff within the Finance Office.	Note: The University, through the Training and Development Unit within the HR Department, will support and assist the Finance Office training plans.

6.0 Summary of the One Year Quality Improvement Plan

No.	Action Item	Timeline	Lead
	Staffing and Accommodation		
1. P1 A	Engage with the Space Management Committee (SPAM) for adjacent Offices to the Fees Office to free up Office Space.	Q3 2014	Brendan Gillen
	Engage expert support from the Estates office to review layout and options within the Finance office with support from the Estates Office	Q4 2014	Brendan Gillen
	Finance Office Response to Strategic Challenges		
3 P3 U/A	Implement the Interim Finance Structure.	Q2 2014	Ciaran McGivern
	Complete Interim restructuring within Financial Operations	Q3 2014	Brendan Gillen
	Recruit backfill for DCU Incorporation Programme position	Q2 2014	Ciaran McGivern
	Recruitment to positions created within existing headcount: Recruit procurement position	Q3 2014	Ciaran McGivern
	Recruit Financial Planning and Management Accounting	Q3 2014	Anthony Feighan
	Recruit Financial Accounting position	Q1 2015	John Kilcoyne
4 P1 U/A	Undertake a comprehensive examination of the support structures and resources necessary to underpin research activity, particularly in the context of the strategic objective to double research activity over the period of the DCU Strategic Plan in conjunction with the Office of Research and Innovation.	Q4 2014	Eamonn Cuggy/ Anthony Feighan
5 P3 U/A	Revise the budget process and the related reporting of financial information as part of the 2014/15 budget process to enable effective cascading of Information.	Q3 2014	Anthony Feighan/ John Kilcoyne

No.	Action Item	Timeline	Lead
8 P2 A	Put in place a plan for each department to map out individual department objectives into the Finance Strategic plans.	Q1 2015	Ciaran McGivern
	Functions Activities and Processes		
9 P1 A/U	Act on recommendation 9: *Clarify roles and processes between Faculties/ Units and the Finance Office in relation to high-level financial support to Executive Deans and Unit Heads, with a particular focus on budgeting and year end reporting*	Q3 2015	Anthony Feighan
10 P1 A	Act on recommendation 10: *Extend the use of the technology already available within the Finance Office by more extensively using the Agresso financial system for monthly reporting of phased budget and actual information for both income and expenditure at a granular level.*	Q3 2015	Anthony Feighan
11 P1 A/U	Act on recommendation 11: *Improve utilisation of the Finance Office systems team by university stakeholders to analyse and meet reporting requirements of budget holders through the development of Accelerator reports in Agresso where these do not already exist.*	Q4 2015	Anthony Feighan /John Kilcoyne
12 P2 A	Act on recommendation 12: *Conduct an evaluation of current standard operating procedures to ensure they are up to date with current systems and policies.*		
	In relation to the above, facilitate knowledge transfer and support contingency management in cases of staff change or staff absences within the Finance Office. Staff succession planning is set out in the Finance Office Strategy and the new interim Finance Office Structure and resource recruitment will address single points of failure and support contingency issues.	See Implementation Of Finance Office Structure under Action 2 above	Ciaran McGivern
	Current standard operating procedures are also under constant review in the continuous change environment.	Q1 2016	Brendan Gillen
	In addition a detailed dissemination of current standard operating procedures is taking place as part of the Incorporation Programme with the other institutions to ensure that the DCU Finance Office standard operating procedures meet their requirements.	Q4 2015	Eamonn Cuggy

No.	Action Item	Timeline	Lead
13 P2 A	Establish a Finance Office / ISS Steering Committee for the planning and oversight of financial IT systems development. This has been completed.	Q3 2014	Ciaran McGivern
14 P1 A	Act on recommendation 14: *Develop project implementation processes and agreed protocols on consultation and stakeholder involvement of finance led systems and initiatives. As part of this, post-implementation reviews should take place to assess feedback and make adjustments as required.*	Q4 2015	Ciaran McGivern/ Brendan Gillen
15 P3 A	Undertake continuous improvement in financial systems usage and automation and the production of more concise training sheets and the development of standard operating procedures.	Q1 2015	Brendan Gillen/ John Kilcoyne
16 P2 A	Act on recommendation 16: *Continue building on the working group model of wider stakeholder engagement for process changes, so that the potential impact on the wider DCU community can be considered in at an early stage in the process.*	Addressed by responses to 12,13, 14 & 15 above	
	Client Perspective		
18 P2 A	Fees Office will enhance the information on the Finance Office web site to ensure that the information required can be easily located and accessed. As part of the preparation for the Self-Assessment Report the Finance Office engaged with our student and client groups to actively seek their feedback and ensure that we are meeting their expectations. Proposed changes will be reviewed and, where appropriate, implemented.	Q3 2014 Q3 2014	Brendan Gillen Brendan Gillen
19 P3 A	Act on recommendation 19: *Review the efficiency of the current co-location model adopted during Student Orientation. Explore further opportunities for co-location of a student-facing enquiries function with Registry throughout the academic year.*	Q3 2014	Brendan Gillen
	Finance Office Perspective		
20 P2 A	Set up a Finance Office communication group from multiple functions within Finance to consider internal and external communication requirements and options.	Q4 2014	John Kilcoyne / Brendan Gillen
21 P2 A	Act on recommendation 22: *Establish a short-term working group within the Finance Office to consider further initiatives or fora to improve formal business communications between operational teams.*	This recommendation will also be addressed by our response to recommendation 20 above.	John Kilcoyne / Brendan Gillen

Summary of Year Two and Year Three Quality Improvement Plan

No.	Action Item	Timeline	Lead
	Staffing and Accommodation		
2 P3 U/A	Anticipate new Finance Office staffing on completion of the Incorporation Programme. Develop proposal in conjunction with Chief Operations Officer for the Finance Office under the Campus Development Plan	Q4 2015 Q4 2015	Ciaran McGivern Ciaran McGivern
	Finance Office Response to Strategic Challenges		
3 P1 U/A	Include a review of Finance Office staffing levels and skill base throughout the period of strategy implementation and organisational change as a result of the Incorporation Programme. Further restructuring of the Finance Office will take place to encompass colleagues from the incorporating institutions and to meet the medium to longer term strategic objectives of the Finance Office	Q4 2015	Ciaran McGivern
4 P1 U/A	Review appropriate software options between the Finance Office and the Office of Research and Innovation to identify an appropriate solution for implementation.	Q2 2015	Anthony Feighan/ Eamonn Cuggy/ John Kilcoyne
5 P3 U/A	Changes made in the first year of the quality improvement plan will present opportunities to improve the reporting of financial information throughout the University. In conjunction with this the information requirements of the key constituencies in the University will be reviewed.	Q2 2015	Anthony Feighan/ John Kilcoyne
6 P1 U/A	Act on Recommendation 6: *Develop appropriate protocols and processes to ensure the early involvement of Finance Office staff as a requirement for strategic initiatives across the organisation, as part of an increased "business partnership" approach to Finance Office supports.*	Q3 2015	Ciaran McGivern
7 P1 A	The revised budget planning process (see response 5 above) will lay the basis for the development some of the key performance indicators and metrics. In addition the commitments in compact with the Higher Education Authority in future years will require the tracking of the related financial KPIs. It will also be necessary to develop, where relevant, the related financial KPI is support of the Universities Unique Selling Points. Reporting can be developed in line with these considerations.	Q3 2015	Anthony Feighan/ John Kilcoyne
15 P3 A	Continuing from the recommendation 15 under the one year quality improvement plan, process re-engineering will continue to be carried out with the objective of simplifying processes, identification of efficiencies, the reduction of manual re-working and duplication of efforts	Q2 2016	Brendan Gillen/ John Kilcoyne
No.	**Action Item**	**Timeline**	**Lead**
	Client Perspective		
17 P2 A/U	Revise the procurement function in light of the role to be played by the Office of Government Procurement so that there is an even greater focus on achieving value for money in the University.	Q3 2015	Ciaran McGivern/ Strategic Procurement & Supply Chain Head
22 P2 A	Develop and include formal systems training of new staff as a crucial part of staff induction, and develop other initiatives to continually up-skill staff on systems used in the normal course of their job.	Q2 2015	Brendan Gillen/ John Kilcoyne

7.0 Appendix 1 Committees for the Quality Review Process

7.1   Area Quality Committee (for the Self-Assessment Report)
- Ciaran McGivern, Director of Finance, (Chairperson)
- Brendan Gillen, Finance Operations, (Co-Ordinator)
- Eamonn Cuggy, Financial Controller
- Sheila Bridgeman, Payroll
- Eithne Mulligan, Campus Companies Reporting
- John Kilcoyne, Financial and Management Accounts
- Alan Floyd, Research Accounts
- Sorina Salveta, Fees Office
- Susan Woods, Accounts Payables
- Lisa Knowles, Finance Systems
- Siobhan Fitzgerald, Management Accounts

7.2   Peer Review Group members
- Ms Sarah Randall-Paley, Director of Finance, Lancaster University, UK (Chairperson)
- Ms. Jennifer Cullinane, Finance Director, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- Mr. Michael Culhane, Director of Finance, An Garda Siochana
- Dr. Rory O'Connor, Head, School of Computing, Dublin City University
- Ms. Aisling McKenna, Institutional Research & Analysis Officer, Dublin City University

7.3   Area Quality Committee (for the Quality Improvement Plan)
- Ciaran McGivern, Director of Finance, (Chairperson)
- Brendan Gillen, Finance Operations, (Co-Ordinator)
- Eamonn Cuggy, Financial Controller
- Sheila Bridgeman, Payroll
- Eithne Mulligan, Campus Companies Reporting
- John Kilcoyne, Financial and Management Accounts
- Alan Floyd, Research Accounts
- Sorina Salveta, Fees Office
- Lisa Knowles, Finance Systems
- Siobhan Fitzgerald, Management Accounts

8.0 Appendix 2 Prioritised Resource requirements

Project 1:	Finance Office Revamp	€20,000
Project 2:	OBIE Student Fees Reporting	€15,000
Project 3:	Agresso Reporting Development	€10,000
Project 4:	Business processing Re-engineering	€5,000
Project 5:	Finance Staff Training Programme	€5,000
Project 6:	Core Expense Document Management project	€7,000