Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement

Internal Quality Review Programme

2010-2016

Quality Improvement Plan
(Final)

ISS – Information Systems & Services

10 December 2013

Contents

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

ISS wish to thank the Peer Review Group (PRG) and all of the university representatives that met with the PRG during their visit in May of this year. Everyone was very gracious in taking the time to assist with the process, leading to a report which provides a detailed analysis of the department and its role within DCU.

Having read and considered the Peer Review Group Report, a Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) Working Group has been charged with developing the QuIP for ISS. The final QuIP, presented here, represents the deliberations of the Working Group in response to the recommendations of the PRG.

2.   **RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PEER REVIEW GROUP REPORT**

ISS are very happy with the outcome of the Quality Review and concur with the recommendations included in PRG Report. The Quality Review process for the department is very timely. The new DCU strategy, *Transforming Lives and Societies*, includes the development of the 'Digital Campus', underpinned by an IT Transformation programme. A procurement process to select a Strategic Technology Partner to assist DCU with the IT Transformation programme is already underway. The Review process has also provided a wonderful opportunity to collect feedback and information from ISS customers which is providing a basis for improvements to the services we deliver. The undertaking of a SWOC analysis provided an overall view of the strengths and weaknesses of ISS that has fed into the new draft department strategy.

The strengths and weaknesses identified by the PRG are broadly in line with those identified in the SWOC, and their recommendations, based on these findings, are very appropriate at this stage of the Department's development The QUIP Working Group have responded to the various recommendations and in many cases have identified actions/initiatives which are already underway.

2 Recommendations for Improvements in AREA (ISS)

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 on-going 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	Addressee	Priority	PRG Recommendation (Provided in PRG Report)	ISS Response	University Response
			Organisation and Management		
1	U	P1	Develop and introduce a robust IT Governance Structure for the university that provides oversight and work prioritization and informs investment decisions on the ISS service portfolio. Include in the governance structure the establishment of a Programme Management Office (PMO), with clear mechanisms for tracking the realisation of potential and actual benefits. The work of the PMO should be incorporated into all project plans for major IT / IS projects including the Digital Campus. The establishment of an IT governance structure is deemed of critical importance by the PRG to ensure, among other benefits, promised return on investment is delivered by real and quantifiable cash savings. The governance structure should be in place before the commencement of the Digital Campus initiative.	ISS fully supports the introduction of a robust IT Governance Structure for the University. An IT Governance Committee has already been established and includes representatives from across the University. ISS would agree with the establishment of a Programme Management Office and recognise the importance of achieving benefits from all IS/IT investments (ROI), particularly in respect of the forthcoming IT Transformation programme. A new Programme/Project Management and Governance function approved by Executive has now been advertised with a view to having the function established within ISS early in Q1 2014.	The IS Governance Committee has been established and reports directly to the University Executive. In the context of the planned IT Transformation investment programme, the appointment of a staff member to lead the newly established Programme/Project Management function has been approved by the Executive Committee to help ensure the efficient and effective long-term management of the investment programme.

2	U	P1	Develop and implement a university-wide <u>Information Strategy</u> which is fully aligned with the university's strategic plan and the Digital Campus initiative. As part of the process, 'commodity' IT / IS functions and services, including business analysis, should be reviewed along with identification and optimisation of IT resources across the university. The overall aim should be consolidation, where appropriate, with central management and local delivery.	ISS fully supports the development and implementation of a university-wide Information Strategy which will define for DCU the general principles governing this strategic asset, and how it will be managed. ISS would recommend the engagement of external consultants to assist with this important work.	University management is fully supportive of the development of a university-wide Information Strategy. This strategy will be developed by the IS Governance Committee.
3	U/A	P2	Review the current positioning of ISS in the university with a view to establishing the department as a strategic business partner. In this context, also consider creating a permanent role for the Director of ISS on the university's Executive.	ISS welcomes the recognition by the PRG of the important role the department has to play in DCU as the facilitator for the provision of IS resources contributing to the achievement of the University's objectives. We welcome the opportunity of working with senior management to develop this important role.	The establishment of the IS Governance Committee is in direct response to the increased importance of the role of ISS and the broader IS infrastructure in the strategic development of the University.
			Staffing and Accommodation		
4	U/A	P1	Conduct, and document, a comprehensive inventory of IS skills, using a matrix or other means, both by individual and ISS grouping. This should be undertaken by the ISS senior management team and should incorporate the IS / IT staff that are currently assigned to Schools and other areas. The analysis should identify the skills that are currently needed and that are already in place to support the existing legacy systems and services (as-is); and also the skills required to develop and support future systems and services (to-be). The analysis should also include an indication of when existing legacy skills will no longer be required.	ISS agrees with this recommendation. The department has for some time recognised the requirements for new skills to enables us to make a significant contribution to the development of the new HE environment which in turn is enabled by developments in IT. In conjunction with HR Training & Development we have already commenced an exercise to develop a skills matrix (as-is & to-be) for the department based on an established profile of skills for IT professionals (SFIA Foundation). We would be happy to discuss with Senior Management how this exercise might be extended to include IS/IT staff in Schools and Units across the campus where appropriate.	With the planned adoption of blended learning across the majority of DCU programmes and the changing nature of education, it is recognised that there is a growing need for enhanced IT skills across the University. The University senior management team will work with ISS and the new Institute for Digital Learning to address identified skills needs.

| 5 | U/A | P1 | Consider introducing appropriate professional training for ISS management and staff and make plans to provide for any training needs identified.

As there are a number of other staffing areas that need to be addressed including workforce planning, the reshaping of central IT, succession planning, career development, and staff mentoring, it is suggested that engagement with DCU's Human Resources department takes place in the first instance, with a view to establishing a plan for improvement of training and other HR activities. Outside facilitation / consultancy may also be helpful for this work. | ISS agrees with this recommendation and is already in discussions with HR Training & Development to address these issues as outlined in response to previous recommendation. | The University, through Human Resources / Training and Development in the first instance, will support the Director of ISS to address this recommendation. |
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| | | | **Management of Financial and other Resources** | | |
| 6 | U/A | P1 | Working with the Director of ISS, the Chief Operations Officer should review the current ISS financial requirements with a view to establishing sustainable funding to meet the operational costs of providing 'business as usual services'. It should be a priority that all capital projects, including those in the Digital Campus initiative, have lifetime costs included in any budgetary allocations. | ISS welcomes this recommendation and will work closely with the Chief Operating Officers area on establishing an appropriate business model. | The Chief Operations Officer will review the current ISS budget model and the internal process for the appraisal of IS capital expenditure. |
| 7 | A | P1 | Develop and introduce an ISS departmental Communications Strategy. This should include an identification of stakeholders and communication 'touch points' into and out of ISS. The implementation of such a strategy should ensure an improved communication of ISS roles and responsibilities to staff and students. | ISS agrees on the need for a Communications Strategy for the Department. An internal group has already been established to examine how this can be achieved and an initial report has been presented to ISS Management. The Department is now moving ahead with a number of initiatives to improve communications which will include the development of a strategy, and initiatives to improve communications with the linked colleges. | Note: The University is fully supportive of this recommendation. |

			Functions, Activities and Processes		
8	A	P1	Review the current ISS service catalogue with a view to capturing the total cost of ownership of all IS / IT activities. This should be compiled by the Director of ISS and her team. It should be reviewed annually and benchmarked against comparator HEIs as a key mechanism for identifying and eliminating duplication, feeding into the university's planning and budget process and continually improving the IT / IS provision. As part of this exercise, any sourcing decisions, particularly to outsource, should be made transparent to service users, with a seamless service provided. ISS and procurement should take full responsibility for supplier management and service level agreement compliance.	ISS welcomes this recommendation. The process to develop a service catalogue, with associated costing, is almost complete. The service costings have yet to be finalised. The Service Catalogue will be subject to an annual review and benchmarked against comparator HEIs. It will also feed into the IS / IT planning and Budget cycles as recommended by the PRG, and will include the expected Return on Investment where appropriate. ISS fully recognises the importance of seamless service provision, and of keeping stake-holders aware of decisions and any planned changes to service provision. The Department's Communications Strategy will make provision for this type of communications. ISS will work with DCU's Procurement to address issues relating to Supplier Management and compliance with Service Level Agreements.	Note: The University is fully supportive of this recommendation.
9	U/A	P1	Working with key stakeholders, develop an Enterprise Architecture approach that aligns IT Strategy with the core competencies of the university. The Enterprise Architecture should be the bridge between 'business' problems and technical solutions, and should address business process Improvement techniques underpinned by the replacement of legacy management information systems. Where possible, ISS should lead and drive the process towards simplifying and standardising IT platforms.	ISS agrees with this recommendation and appreciates the value of having an Enterprise Architecture (EA) which articulates how information and technology can be used by DCU in the context of the University strategy. The EA can potentially be developed by the university in conjunction with our Strategic Technology Partner. The Director of ISS is happy to discuss the matter further with senior management with a view to agreeing the appropriate approach.	The University's enterprise architecture should be reviewed a part of the initial assessment of existing IS infrastructure with the Strategic Technology Partner. There are much broader strategic implications for this recommendation in the context of delivering on Operational Excellence objectives in the University's Strategic Plan and the planned incorporation of St. Patrick's College Drumcondra, Mater Dei Institute of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education. The University will be addressing these in conjunction with ISS.

| 10 | A | P2 | Undertake renewed efforts to build customer relationships as part of a robust stakeholder engagement and communication plan. This should be underpinned by a continuous improvement process, with a clear system for managing change grounded in feedback obtained by means of formal stakeholder communications. | As always, ISS welcomes stake-holder engagement and works continuously to improve service delivery. An ad-hoc feed-back process is already in place and, as part of our Communications Strategy, ISS will implement a more formal feedback process. A formal Change Management process is currently being agreed across the Department with a view to implementation in Q1 2014. | Note: The University is fully supportive of this recommendation. |

3.   SUMMARY OF THE ONE-YEAR PLAN

#	Action	Timeline	Lead
1-A	Governance group established with on-going quarterly meetings. Establish objective for next 3 years. Review options for establishing a PMO.	Established June 2013 Q2, 2014 December 2013	Barbara McConalogue Barbara McConalogue Barbara McConalogue
2	Develop a university wide Information Strategy (Subject to Senior Management approval and available funding)	September 2014	Barbara McConalogue in conjunction with DCU's IS Governance Committee.
3	Review of ISS positioning.	March 2014	Barbara McConalogue
4	Develop a Skills Matrix (as-is and to-be) for staff within ISS and, subject to discussions with senior management, IS/It staff elsewhere across the university.	Meetings already held with HR to establish capabilities framework that align with PMDS & 3rd party SFIA workshop arranged June 2014	Justin Doyle
6	Work with the COO to development a sustainable funding model	June 2014	Barbara McConalogue
7	Develop an ISS Department Communications Strategy The communications of sourcing and service issues will be addressed as part of this exercise. (Recommendation 8)	May 2014	Avril Smyth / Ian Spillane
8	Complete the development of the ISS Service Catalogue and establish management and review process	Service Catalogue almost complete with costings to be concluded. March 2014	Ian Bell
10	Stakeholder engagement and communication plan	June 2014	Paul O'Connor / Ian Spillane
11	Change Management and Continuous Improvement – benchmarking against peers, ticket prioritising, publicly publish results	Dashboard of results setup internally – Nov. 2013 Publish publicly – Q2, 2014 Priorities updated June 2014	Fergus Donohue / Ian Spillane

4.   SUMMARY OF THE THREE-YEAR PLAN

#	Action	Timeline	Lead
5	Develop Training Plan for staff at all levels - to be agreed and delivery commenced in year 1 and run over 3 years Other issues such as workforce planning, succession planning, etc. will address, in conjunction with HR Training & Development as part of this process.	December 2016	Justin Doyle
8	Annual Review & Benchmarking of Service Catalogue as input to annual planning and budget processes.	November 2015	Ian Bell/Ian Spillane
9	Develop an Enterprise Architecture approach aligning IT Strategy to support the evolution of DCU as a Digital Campus	Will commence in year 1 and be developed over the next three years	Fergus Donohue

APPENDIX 1 ISS Quality Committee (for the Self-Assessment Report)

Barbara McConalogue	Director
Ian Spillane	Co-ordination and delivery of services (CS), Chairperson
Sebastian Dooris	Systems Administration (SCO-C)
Justin Doyle	Service desk Manager (AD1-C)
James Healy	Net-services Team Leader (AD1)
Maria Lyons	Senior Business Analyst (AP3)
Paul O'Connor	ICT Security (AP2)
Avril Smyth	Business Analyst (AP2-C)

APPENDIX 2   Peer Review Group Members

Mr. John Murphy, Director, Information Systems Services, Trinity College Dublin (Chair)
Mr. Dominic Byrne, Head of Information Technology, Fingal County Council
Mr. Hugh Lavery, Head of Development and Process, University of Leeds
Ms. Ursula Baxter (Rapporteur), Business School, Dublin City University
Dr. Mark Roantree, School of Computing, Dublin City University

APPENDIX 3 Area Quality Committee (for the Quality Improvement Plan)

Barbara McConalogue
Ian Spillane
Sebastian Dooris
Justin Doyle
Paul O'Connor
Avril Smyth

APPENDIX 4 Prioritised Resource Requirements

Project Title	Cost Estimate
Development of an Information Strategy – Consultancy Support	€45,000
Training and Development of staff	€25,000
Development of an Enterprise Architecture approach – Consultancy Support	€20,000

Full proposals for these resource requirements will be made to the Director of Quality Promotion.

APPENDIX 5 Glossary of Terms

Information Strategy – An information strategy provides a unified blueprint for a university in respect of the capture, integration, processing, delivery, and presentation of information in a clean, consistent, and timely manner. All information in a university should meet a certain standard for quality.

Specifically, an Information Strategy provides the mechanism which ensures that:

- any information that should be available for sharing is well defined and appropriately accessible (allowing for necessary safeguards);
- the quality of information is fit for its purpose (e.g. accuracy, currency, consistency, completeness - but only as far as necessary);
- all staff know, and exercise, their responsibilities towards information;
- priorities are clearly identified and then acted upon.

The information with which an Information Strategy is concerned should thus cover teaching and learning materials (in all media), research information and data and the management information needed to plan and monitor the delivery of teaching, learning and research. Such information may or may not be held on computers and may or may not be found in libraries.

IT Strategy - Technology strategy (Information Technology strategy or IT strategy, may also be referred to as Information Systems/IS strategy) is the overall plan which consists of objective(s), principles and tactics relating to use of the technologies within a particular organization. Such strategies primarily focus on the technologies themselves and in some cases the people who directly manage those technologies. An IT Strategy typically takes the form of a rolling program covering no more than three years, is based on broad strategic principles, and is managed and monitored (reviewed and renewed) through the governance machinery of an organisation.

Information Strategy V IT strategy: An IT strategy is a necessary component of an information strategy, and should be designed to facilitate the objectives and requirements of the information strategy.

Enterprise Architecture: Enterprise Architecture (EA) is a high level, strategic technique designed to help senior managers achieve business and organisational change (TechWatch 2009). Enterprise architecture describes how an organisation's information systems, processes, organisational units and people work as a whole. (FEAR 2007)