



Quality Enhancement Plan

Office of the Vice President for Research

March 2025



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Introduction

The Office of the Vice-President for Research (OVPR) would like to reiterate our thanks to the Peer Review Group (PRG) and all the stakeholders, both internal and external to DCU, for their engagement and commitment to the Quality Review process.

As regards the approach taken to the development of the following Quality Enhancement Plan, the PRG report was subsequently considered in detail by all OVPR unit managers, particularly how the content informed the overall summary of commendations and recommendations. The VP and the Director of Research Support were briefed by the Director of Quality and Institutional Research on the process of developing the Quality Enhancement Plan (QuEP), and then undertook to respond to all recommendations with the input of the unit managers, representing the leadership team which is collectively responsible for the area reviewed.

The OVPR welcome all commendations made by the PRG, particularly around the University research strategy and the restructuring of research services to support the realisation of its objectives and KPIs. This is further recognition of the dedication of the staff within OVPR, and the highly collaborative nature in which they work towards the goals of the research strategy. We also welcome the recommendations in the report, many of which align with priorities identified in our self-assessment report.

Responses to the Recommendations in the Peer Review Group Report

In the PRG report, the recommendations were numbered per findings section. In order to clearly track our response and progress against each individual recommendation, we have renumbered the recommendations as one list, while still organising them within their relevant findings section.

The following notation is used in the recommendations for enhancement.

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

P2: An important recommendation, but it 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 indicates the level(s) of the University where action is required:

A: Area under review

U: University Senior Management

A/U: Action required at the Area and University level

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
			Planning and Effective Management of Resources		
1	P1	A	Review and refine the research proposal and project support services – in order to ensure that resource management pathways, communications and feedback processes function efficiently, equitably and transparently for all clients of these services.	<p>We will undertake to review our pre and post award support services, paying particular attention to support handovers between units and researcher feedback loops, to ensure that processes function efficiently, equitably and transparently for researchers. In terms of effective resource management, this aligns with our self-identified improvement to review our current staffing structure, considering staff remit, workload and what additional resources are required to meet the needs of researchers (both currently to achieve our strategic research goals and in response to external drivers in the research and innovation landscape). This will be undertaken in year 1.</p> <p>We also welcome the recommendation in the text of the full PRG report that “The PRG feels that the additional resources identified within the SAR are the minimum required..” and should be further reviewed as research income and research performance grows across the university (PRG report p.18). This was a proposal for year one recruitment of one additional Research Development Officer and one additional Research Support Officer for administrative support. Notwithstanding the current financial</p>	<p>SMG welcomes this recommendation and the response provided by OVPR. The review of research support services is welcomed and aligns with DCU’s ambitions to increase research income significantly.</p> <p>Given the sectoral funding pressures nationally, any additional resource requests need to be considered in this context. OVPR should engage with Finance and DCU People on this matter.</p>

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
				pressures, we believe these posts are crucial to deliver the necessary growth in external research income, and that the recent experience of the team indicates that a good return on investment would be achieved.	
2	P1	A/U	Proactively engage in risk analysis of implications of national funding curtailments, and consider corresponding impacts on resourcing and support, and for ambitions within the research strategy.	In year 1, we will undertake to conduct a risk analysis of research overhead income versus spend, linked to annual funding targets as informed by the faculty funding strategies. Quarterly meetings have commenced with the Finance Office to facilitate discussions regarding the implications of any decrease in national funding on resourcing and support, in addition to institutional and sectoral issues that require our collaboration to resolve. Regular updates to Finance on funding applications and award levels by key funders/schemes will provide information on accounting revenues and costs that will start to be realised in 2024/25.	SMG welcomes the progress made by OVPR since the review visit. DCU Finance welcomes the opportunity to work with OVPR on those issues identified by the area.
3	P1	A/U	Develop plan and mitigation strategy for maintenance, disposal and/ or replacement of ageing research equipment.	This recommendation aligns with our self-identified improvement of developing a DCU-wide research equipment priority investment plan, and a more proactive approach to maintaining and replacing equipment. In conjunction with the relevant Faculties and their technical officers, we will draw up a list of equipment priorities and corresponding costs during year 1. This	SMG recognised the challenges associated with ageing research equipment and infrastructure, particularly in the absence of a PRTL-type Government investment

Rec	Priority	Addressee	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
				will allow us to proactively prepare and engage in forthcoming research infrastructure calls (e.g. HEA Higher Education Research Equipment Grant, Research Ireland Research Infrastructure programme). It will also inform how we manage internal maintenance support going forward.	programme. A prioritised equipment investment programme is welcome, however, it will be limited to the funding that can be provided through the faculties, OVPR and central University capital budgets.
4	P1	U	Provide targeted support on immigration-related matters for prospective International doctoral students, and post-doctoral researchers.	This is a P1 recommendation for University Senior Management, which DCU People have agreed to take the lead on. It should be progressed as soon as the required resource is made available. On the OVPR's part, we will contribute evidence-based scenarios regarding previous student and researcher experiences, which will inform the necessary targeted support.	A new Immigration Officer post, which will be shared between Student Support & Development and DCU People, has been approved by the University. This role will provide immigration advice and support for potential international doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers.
5	P1	A/U	Ensure transparency in terms of distribution of resources and overheads distribution policy.	This recommendation aligns with our self-identified improvement to provide a higher level of visibility to Deans, Heads of School, Centre Directors and PI's on the current distribution of earned	SMG welcomes this recommendation and the plans by OVPR to progress this work

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
				overheads. This will reiterate the service benefits that are supported through effective overhead recovery, and the expectations of funders as to their use. It will also inform senior management discussion regarding the best future model for overhead distribution. Initial information on current distribution breakdown has been presented for discussion at Research Strategy Committee, and we will take this forward in year 1.	via the Research Strategy Committee, which has broad representation from across the University.
6	P1	A	Provide alternative post-award support model across the research base (in particular, those who cannot pay for RPA services).	<p>Widening the supports that are freely available across the research base (beyond the current budget build service) cannot be achieved in the short-term with the current staffing in RPA.</p> <p>In the short term, we will assist researchers to build such costs into budgets at the grant application stage, so they can avail of RPA support if successful, but also more appropriately reflect the real cost of funded research projects.</p> <p>In addition, in year 1, we will undertake to explore the post-award support aspects that raise the most issues for researchers and identify the best ways of supporting researchers with those. This would inform a priority list of services outside the paid model, which we can then consider as part of our resource management discussions with the wider university.</p>	SMG recognises the importance of post-award support for researchers. SMG also acknowledges the current financial constraints, which are a barrier to extending these supports across the research base in the short to medium term. In this context, SMG welcomes initial plans by the area to explore the post-award activities that are most burdensome for researchers.

Rec	Priority	Addressee	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
7	P3	A/U	Further enhance and promote the external communication strategy which highlights good practice, case studies and proactively engages with stakeholders.	This recommendation aligns with our self identified improvement of an external facing online directory of DCU expertise and research infrastructure, along with proactive marketing and complementary printed material. This will support increased industry engagement, commercial income and wider research collaboration. This will be progressed in the context of the current Research Communications plan which will be reviewed and revised in year 1	<p>This recommendation aligns closely with DCU's strategic ambition to maximise the potential impact of our research.</p> <p>Communications, Marketing and Events (CME) and the dedicated Research Communications Officer within the Department have made good progress in this regard and will continue with the agreed communications plan with the Vice-President for Research.</p>
8	P2	A	Consider diversifying the sources of funding of research – given the changing internal and external landscape and risks.	We will address this recommendation in conjunction with assisting in the development of the faculty research funding strategies. It will also be facilitated through our rollout of Pivot-RP (online database of research funding opportunities) allowing for identification of a wider volume of funding sources specific to research interest, career stage or activity type.	This is a welcomed and timely recommendation that aligns closely with DCU's ambitions to develop a more cohesive and appropriate strategy for high-profile, competitive research

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
					awards from a wide range of funders.
			Effectiveness of Activities and Processes		
9	P1	A	Develop and implement an integrated feedback system to regularly capture internal and external stakeholder experiences and insights and put in place a clear system of response.	In year 1, we will map out our key stakeholders and agree the points at which we would seek to regularly capture their input. We will also seek out best practice in this regard from peer institutions, including the mechanism used to capture and collate stakeholder input and how best to channel our response back to them. We will look to adopt a consistent approach to this across all OVPR units, and pilot the approach in the first instance.	Stakeholder engagement and feedback are core aspects of DCU's approach to ongoing quality enhancement. SMG endorses the recommendation that feedback mechanisms be embedded into routine practice within OVPR.
10	P3	A/U	Foster a community of practice to allow research support staff from OVPR and Research Centres to share experiences, insights and practices.	Although this is a P3 priority, we would look to commence preparatory activity during year 1, as it will facilitate the progress of some of our higher priority recommendations relating to provision of research support services. We will confirm a listing of relevant research support staff, and then convene a workshop on the proposed focus of the community of practice and frequency of its meetings. The previous research centre experience of our new Head of Research Development and Support will also inform the initial support areas to focus shared discussions on.	SMG welcomes the recommendation to establish a cross-institution community of practice. Strengthening the links between the OVPR and Research Centres will facilitate the sharing of good practices and enhance our collective efforts to deliver on the university's overarching research agenda.

Rec	Priority	Addressee	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
11	P1	U	Provide targeted support on immigration-related matters for international post-doctoral researchers and research students.	This recommendation for University Senior Management has already been responded to in the preceding section (Planning and Effective Management of Resources Effectiveness of Activities and Processes – Rec 4)	See response to Recommendation 4.
			Communication and Provision of Information		
12	P1	A	Evaluate, enhance and implement with great urgency the internal communication processes within the OVPR as a whole, which will focus on distinct and different audiences, by faculty and by career stage or level of experience with funding agencies. This will include elements such as an extensive online personnel directory of OVPR staff integrated across all support services and units. The online directory should be integrated into the DCU Research Lifecycle resource online. Both the online directory and Research Lifecycle Resource need to be monitored and updated regularly by a dedicated team in each unit. Web analytics tools should be deployed.	<p>This recommendation aligns with our self identified improvement to develop a more proactive and targeted internal communications plan. We shall focus in year 1 on the online directory of services with specific contact points, and a full personnel index. A Research Lifecycle review group will undertake scheduled review and update of the resource, noting areas for further enhancement.</p> <p>We will then work with our Research Communications Officer to develop our messaging to a number of distinct and different audiences, and piloting our communications plan and associated feedback mechanism. Building dedicated internal communications capacity across units will be explored in the context of our strategic research priorities</p>	<p>SMG welcomes this recommendation and the clear roadmap and approach set out in the OVPR response.</p> <p>The CME Research Communications Officer can also assist by advising on messaging and strategy.</p>

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
			The review should explore dedicated internal communications capacity across units.		
13	P1	A	Proactively engage with staff and students prioritising in-person events across the OVPR and campuses to advise, guide and support on research matters. This could involve workshops, lunchtime sessions, open days, roadshows and induction meetings.	This recommendation aligns with our self-identified improvement to develop a more proactive and targeted internal communications plan. General consultation with the Heads of Schools has already commenced which will inform the design and implementation of these events. Initial feedback has shown that an in-person presentations as part of a school meeting agenda would be a useful starting point, with the focus on available research funding supports. This aligns well with the research funding strategy activity currently ongoing within the faculties, and will also increase researcher awareness of the existing supports on offer. This will also create an opportunity for dialogue with researchers re. the focus of further events (e.g. early career workshops). The initial school presentations will take place in year 1.	The engagement and consultation activities planned by OVPR are a timely and welcomed development.
14	P1	A	Given the ongoing changes and significant expansion of service provision in the OVPR to meet the DCU Research Strategy's targets, clear communication systems need to be embedded.	We will undertake a review of our existing in-person and digital communications channels in year 1, in the context of our targeted internal audiences. We will then use that feedback to modify and improve our communications accordingly.	SMG welcomes plans to develop clear communication processes to improve the collation and dissemination of OVPR-related information internally. CME is happy to

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
					provide advice based on the findings of the planned review.
15	P2	A/U	Consideration on how to achieve maximum benefit from the planned introduction of an internal communications platform in the University in the medium term - to benefit staff and researchers across the units of the OVPR.	We look forward to engaging with the Director of CME regarding this project. In the interim, we have already reviewed the design and content of the monthly Research Newsletter, and will continue to work with the Research Communications Officer to share research news, resources/services, events and funding successes with the DCU research community.	The introduction of an internal communications platform for DCU is currently under consideration and dependent on the financial viability of such a system. However, CME will continue to support OVPR through the work of the Research Communications Officer.
16	P3	A	Given the integration of innovation activities, support the implementation of a strategy that communicates the role, work, and ambition of INVENT across the OVPR and university.	Design of a new brand identity and communications strategy that (a) integrates DCU Invent, DCU Alpha, and DCU Centre for ICE under a single, unified identity and (b) clearly communicates the role and ambition of the innovation unit is underway and will be realised during year 1.	Work is already underway on this project which is being managed by the Head of Marketing for Invent.
			Ongoing Quality Enhancement		

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
17	P3	A/U	Integrate new 'differentiated' President's awards for research support staff based within OVPR, Faculties and Research Centres.	We look forward to engaging with the President's Office at the appropriate opportunity to discuss how this could form part of the suite of President's Awards, taking into account the existing President's Awards for Research and the Staff Recognition Awards.	A new suite of President's Awards was developed and implemented over the past year. While the President's Office is open to engaging with the OVPR regarding this recommendation, we would like to allow these new awards to become established before making decisions on future awards.
18	P2	A/U	Design and implement an enhancement of the research career framework for early career researchers and short contract assistant professors.	This recommendation aligns with our self identified improvement to advance a full review of the research career framework in conjunction with HR. This activity is currently underway at both Steering Group and Working Group levels, forming part of the EU HR Strategy for Researchers renewal process.	SMG welcomes this timely review of the Research Career Framework.
19	P2	A	The PRG recommends that dedicated staff from across the units of the OVPR will need to continuously monitor and update the DCU Research Lifecycle web resource to ensure its continued effectiveness.	In order to resource this task appropriately, it will be considered as part of an overall review of the workload allocation model within units. We can then ascertain the level of personnel resource required to deliver on this recommendation.	SMG endorses this recommendation. The Research Communications Officer is currently working with the web content editor in OVPR and will continue to support in

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					this regard, along with CME's Digital Communications team.
20	P2	A/U	Building on established relationships with HR, Finance, Library and DTS to enhance working relationships to support strategy delivery	This recommendation aligns with our self identified priorities to progress a more supportive environment collaborating with our fellow professional units to streamline shared processes for researchers. Our joint participation in existing groups and projects will also facilitate us in supporting strategy delivery (e.g. via the HR Strategy for Researchers steering and working groups, Open Research Steering Group and associated sub groups, Grant Management system process review project etc.)	SMG recognises the strong working relationships already in existence between OPVR and DCU People, Finance, Digital Technology Solutions (DTS) and the Library. SMG is fully supportive of plans to further develop these relationships, thus creating new and enhanced opportunities to collaborate, share good practices and work effectively and efficiently.
			Stakeholder Relationships		
21	P2	A/U	Develop and integrate an external stakeholders consultation plan, that identifies, supports and accelerates mutually beneficial research and innovation collaborations.	In consultation with the Office of the Executive Director of Engagement (OEDE), we will seek to conduct an external stakeholder analysis that allows us to assess the nature of each stakeholder's influence and importance, and then decide on how we monitor and manage those relationships effectively to facilitate research and innovation collaborations.	A high-level mapping exercise of DCU's key external stakeholders was carried out by CME and the Office of the Executive Director of External Engagement (OEDE) and

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
					<p>presented to DCU Governing Authority at the outset of the latest Strategic Plan.</p> <p>The OEDE has worked with key data professionals across the University, including OVPR, to collate engagement data records held in CRMs for integrated reporting, and to empower coordinated engagements with external partners. The first iteration of this work is complete.</p>
22	P2	A/U	Develop a more strategically aligned, systematic and criteria-guided process for deepening and broadening the engagement with a more diverse range of potential users such as organisations, policymakers, communities and the public. This will enable effective translation of research, allowing it to	We will explore how best to approach the development of this process in consultation with the OEDE. We have previously worked with OEDE in relation to demonstrating impact outside of academia (e.g. responding to IUA led impact initiatives, representing DCU in a DFHERIS Evidence for Policy unit workshop etc.). We will also utilise the experience of our Research Ireland funded centres in this regard.	Continued collaboration on the DFHERIS 'Evidence for Policy' work and the University's engagement with Government research networks is co-managed by OVPR and OEDE.

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Area Response	Senior Management Group (SMG) Response
			generate demonstrable 'impact' outside of academia		
23	P2	A/U	Ensure the OVPR feeds into the process of formulating the External Stakeholder Framework and is in a position to maximise external opportunities when it is completed. This would be facilitated by a clear model on how OVPR will interact and engage with the Office of the Executive Director of Engagement on this matter given the need to facilitate greater long term strategic collaborations with industry which has been highlighted as an important issue.	We will work with the OEDE on the formulation of the External Stakeholder Framework, and particularly how it will assist in facilitating greater long term strategic collaborations with industry.	Work is continuing to identify new opportunities for strategic partnerships and collaboration opportunities with industry partners, alongside other strategically valuable organisations in this sector. To this end, a new role of Business Development and Partnerships Lead has been co-developed by OVPR and OEDE to specifically respond to this challenge and the role has been approved in principle.

Summary of the One Year Plan

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
			Planning and Effective Management of Resources			
1	P1	A	Review and refine the research proposal and project support services – in order to ensure that resource management pathways, communications and feedback processes function efficiently, equitably and transparently for all clients of these services.	Review of pre and post award support services, paying particular attention to support handovers between units and researcher feedback loops Review current staffing structure, considering staff remit, workload and resourcing, and seek to progress recommended increases in staffing.	Q1 2025 Q2 – Q3 2025	OVPR (Research Development and Support, Research Project Administration) OVPR (Senior Management), Finance
2	P1	A/U	Proactively engage in risk analysis of implications of national funding curtailments, and consider corresponding impacts on resourcing and support, and for ambitions within the research strategy.	Conduct risk analysis of research overhead income versus spend, linked to annual funding targets as informed by the faculty funding strategies.	Q2 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), Finance
3	P1	A/U	Develop plan and mitigation strategy for maintenance, disposal and/ or replacement of ageing research equipment.	Draw up list of equipment priorities and corresponding costs Develop DCU-wide research equipment priority investment plan, and a more proactive approach to maintaining and replacing equipment.	Q4 2024 Q1 2025	OVPR (Research Infrastructures), Faculties OVPR, Finance, Estates, Faculties
4	P1	U	Provide targeted support on immigration-related matters for prospective International doctoral students, and post-doctoral researchers.	Required resource to be made available.	Q1 2025	DCU People

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
5	P1	A/U	Ensure transparency in terms of distribution of resources and overheads distribution policy.	<p>Prepare report on current distribution of earned overheads.</p> <p>Undertake a review of the overheads distribution policy and table for university senior management discussion</p>	<p>Q1 2025</p> <p>Q3 2025</p>	<p>OVPR (Senior Management), Finance</p> <p>OVPR (Senior Management), Research Strategy Committee</p>
6	P1	A	Provide alternative post-award support model across the research base (in particular, those who cannot pay for RPA services).	<p>Conduct staff survey on post-award support aspects that raise the most issues for researchers (needs analysis).</p> <p>Determine service priorities based on the post-award needs analysis</p>	<p>Q2 2025</p> <p>Q3 2025</p>	OVPR (Research Project Administration)
7	P3	A/U	Further enhance and promote the external communication strategy which highlights good practice, case studies and proactively engages with stakeholders.	<p>Review of the current Research Communications plan</p> <p>Improve the external facing online directory of DCU expertise and research infrastructure, along with proactive marketing and complementary printed material.</p>	<p>Q3 2025</p> <p>Q3 2025</p>	<p>OVPR (Senior Management), CME</p> <p>OVPR Research Infrastructures</p>
8	P2	A	Consider diversifying the sources of funding of research – given the changing internal and external landscape and risks.	<p>Assist in the development/review of the faculty research funding strategies.</p> <p>Rollout of Pivot-RP</p>	<p>Q1 2025</p> <p>Q1 2025</p>	OVPR (Research Development and Support), Faculties

Rec	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
						OVPR (Research Development and Support)
			Effectiveness of Activities and Processes			
9	P1	A	Develop and implement an integrated feedback system to regularly capture internal and external stakeholder experiences and insights and put in place a clear system of response.	Best practice consultation with peer institutions Stakeholder mapping and determining points at which we would seek to regularly capture their input. Pilot system with selected stakeholder groups	Q1 2025 Q2 2025 Q3 2025	OVPR (Senior Management) OVPR (cross team project group)
10	P3	A/U	Foster a community of practice to allow research support staff from OVPR and Research Centres to share experiences, insights and practices.	Confirm listing of relevant research support staff Organise workshop on the proposed focus of the community of practice and frequency of its meetings.	Q2 2025 Q3 2025	OVPR (Research Development and Support, Research Project Administration), Research Centres
11	P1	U	Provide targeted support on immigration-related matters for international post-doctoral researchers and research students.	Required resource to be made available (as per Rec 4)	Q1 2025	DCU People
			Communication and Provision of Information			
12	P1	A	Evaluate, enhance and implement with great urgency the internal communication processes within the OVPR as a whole, which will focus on distinct and different audiences, by faculty and by career stage or	Develop online directory as part of the Research Lifecycle resource	Q1 2025 Q4 2024 – Q1 2025	OVPR (Senior Management,

Rec	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
			level of experience with funding agencies. This will include elements such as an extensive online personnel directory of OVPR staff integrated across all support services and units. The online directory should be integrated into the DCU Research Lifecycle resource online. Both the online directory and Research Lifecycle Resource need to be monitored and updated regularly by a dedicated team in each unit. Web analytics tools should be deployed. The review should explore dedicated internal communications capacity across units.	Undertake review and update of the Research Lifecycle resource, noting areas for further enhancement. Work with Research Communications Officer to develop messaging to a number of distinct and different audiences, then piloting our internal communications plan and associated feedback mechanism.	Q3 2025	OVPR cross team project group)
13	P1	A	Proactively engage with staff and students prioritising in-person events across the OVPR and campuses to advise, guide and support on research matters. This could involve workshops, lunchtime sessions, open days, roadshows and induction meetings.	Complete one-to-one meetings with Heads of School Pilot school presentation roadshow on research funding supports Rollout of school presentation roadshow on research funding supports Compiling revised portfolio of in-person events	Q4 2024 Q4 2024 Q1 2025- Q2 2025 Q3 2025	OVPR (Director of Research Support) OVPR (Research Support Services units)
14	P1	A	Given the ongoing changes and significant expansion of service provision in the OVPR to meet the DCU Research Strategy's targets, clear communication systems need to be embedded.	Undertake review of existing internal in-person and digital communications channels	Q1 2025	OVPR (Senior Management, OVPR cross team project group)

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
15	P2	A/U	Consideration on how to achieve maximum benefit from the planned introduction of an internal communications platform in the University in the medium term - to benefit staff and researchers across the units of the OVPR.	Engage with the Director of CME regarding this project.	In line with IC platform project plan	CME, OVPR
16	P3	A	Given the integration of innovation activities, support the implementation of a strategy that communicates the role, work, and ambition of INVENT across the OVPR and university.	Proposed brand identity will be presented to the VPR and Board of Directors of the DCU Educational Support Services DAC New brand identity will be launched (with PR campaign within and outside of the university to support its dissemination).	Q4 2024 Q1 2025	OVPR (Invent) OVPR (Invent)
			Ongoing Quality Enhancement			
17	P3	A/U	Integrate new 'differentiated' President's awards for research support staff based within OVPR, Faculties and Research Centres.	Engage with the President's Office regarding this project	Q3 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), President's Office
18	P2	A/U	Design and implement an enhancement of the research career framework for early career researchers and short contract assistant professors.	Continue to contribute at both Steering Group and Working Group levels	Q4 2024- Q1 2025	OVPR, DCU People
19	P2	A	The PRG recommends that dedicated staff from across the units of the OVPR will need to continuously monitor and update the DCU Research Lifecycle web resource to ensure its continued effectiveness.	Consider as part of the review of current staffing structure, considering staff remit, workload and resourcing	Q2 2025	OVPR (Senior Management)

Rec	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
20	P2	A/U	Building on established relationships with HR, Finance, Library and ISS to enhance working relationships to support strategy delivery	Schedule quarterly meetings to review progress on strategic actions	Q1 2025 (starting)	OVPR linking in with DCU People, Finance, Library and ISS
			Stakeholder Relationships			
21	P2	A/U	Develop and integrate an external stakeholders consultation plan, that identifies, supports and accelerates mutually beneficial research and innovation collaborations.	Conduct an external stakeholder analysis to inform the subsequent stakeholders consultation plan	Q3 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), OEDE
22	P2	A/U	Develop a more strategically aligned, systematic and criteria-guided process for deepening and broadening the engagement with a more diverse range of potential users such as organisations, policymakers, communities and the public. This will enable effective translation of research, allowing it to generate demonstrable 'impact' outside of academia	Consult with OEDE and externally funded Research Centres on developing this process	Q3 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), OEDE, Centres
23	P2	A/U	Ensure the OVPR feeds into the process of formulating the External Stakeholder Framework and is in a position to maximise external opportunities when it is completed. This would be facilitated by a clear model on how OVPR will interact and engage with the Office of the Executive Director of Engagement on this matter given the need to facilitate greater long term strategic	Work with the OEDE on the formulation of the External Stakeholder Framework, particularly as regards data management and research brokerage aspects	Q1 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), OEDE

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
			collaborations with industry which has been highlighted as an important issue.			

Summary of the Three-Year Plan

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
			Planning and Effective Management of Resources			
1	P1	A	Review and refine the research proposal and project support services – in order to ensure that resource management pathways, communications and feedback processes function efficiently, equitably and transparently for all clients of these services.	Annual review of pre and post award support services, paying particular attention to support handovers between units and researcher feedback loops	Repeating annually	OVPR (Research Development and Support, Research Project Administration)
2	P1	A/U	Proactively engage in risk analysis of implications of national funding curtailments, and consider corresponding impacts on resourcing and support, and for ambitions within the research strategy.	Conduct risk analysis of research overhead income versus spend, linked to annual funding targets as informed by the faculty funding strategies.	Repeating annually	OVPR (Senior Management), Finance
3	P1	A/U	Develop plan and mitigation strategy for maintenance, disposal and/ or replacement of ageing research equipment.	Implementation of DCU wide research equipment priority investment plan	Q4 2025	OVPR, Finance, Estates, Faculties
4	P1	U	Provide targeted support on immigration-related matters for prospective International doctoral students, and post-doctoral researchers.	Liaising with DCU People resource as required and directing researcher requests to them.	Ongoing	DCU People
5	P1	A/U	Ensure transparency in terms of distribution of resources and overheads distribution policy.	Revised overhead distribution policy to be agreed and approved. Annual summary on distribution of earned overheads to be disseminated to Deans, Heads of School, Centre Directors and PI's	Q4 2025 Q4 2025	OVPR, University Senior Management OVPR, Finance

Rec	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
6	P1	A	Provide alternative post-award support model across the research base (in particular, those who cannot pay for RPA services).	Annual review of post-award support priorities against resource levels (with recommendations)	Repeating annually	OVPR (Research Project Administration)
7	P3	A/U	Further enhance and promote the external communication strategy which highlights good practice, case studies and proactively engages with stakeholders.	Determine annual objectives for the Research Communications plan	Q4 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), CME
8	P2	A	Consider diversifying the sources of funding of research – given the changing internal and external landscape and risks.	Continue to assist faculties in funding diversification activities	Ongoing	OVPR (Research Development and Support)
			Effectiveness of Activities and Processes			
9	P1	A	Develop and implement an integrated feedback system to regularly capture internal and external stakeholder experiences and insights and put in place a clear system of response.	Deploy piloted system across stakeholder groups	Q4 2025	OVPR (cross team project group)
10	P3	A/U	Foster a community of practice to allow research support staff from OVPR and Research Centres to share experiences, insights and practices.	Commence Community of Practice meetings	Q4 2025	OVPR (Research Development and Support, Research Project Administration), Research Centres
11	P1	U	Provide targeted support on immigration-related matters for international post-doctoral researchers and research students.	Liaising with DCU People resource as required and directing researcher requests to them (as per Rec 4)	Ongoing	DCU People

Rec	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
			Communication and Provision of Information			
12	P1	A	Evaluate, enhance and implement with great urgency the internal communication processes within the OVPR as a whole, which will focus on distinct and different audiences, by faculty and by career stage or level of experience with funding agencies. This will include elements such as an extensive online personnel directory of OVPR staff integrated across all support services and units. The online directory should be integrated into the DCU Research Lifecycle resource online. Both the online directory and Research Lifecycle Resource need to be monitored and updated regularly by a dedicated team in each unit. Web analytics tools should be deployed. The review should explore dedicated internal communications capacity across units.	Reviewing the internal communications plan to ensure it remains effective, and the associated resourcing of this activity. See also Rec 19	Repeating annually	OVPR (Senior Management, OVPR cross team project group)
13	P1	A	Proactively engage with staff and students prioritising in-person events across the OVPR and campuses to advise, guide and support on research matters. This could involve workshops, lunchtime sessions, open days, roadshows and induction meetings.	Review of in-person events portfolio (taking stakeholder feedback on board) and provision of indicative events timeframe for the academic year	Repeating annually	OVPR units
14	P1	A	Given the ongoing changes and significant expansion of service provision in the OVPR	Annual survey of existing internal in-person and digital communications channels	Repeating annually	OVPR units

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
			to meet the DCU Research Strategy's targets, clear communication systems need to be embedded.			
15	P2	A/U	Consideration on how to achieve maximum benefit from the planned introduction of an internal communications platform in the University in the medium term - to benefit staff and researchers across the units of the OVPR.	Continued engagement with the Director of CME further to project rollout.	Ongoing	CME, OVPR
16	P3	A	Given the integration of innovation activities, support the implementation of a strategy that communicates the role, work, and ambition of INVENT across the OVPR and university.	Review of Innovation Strategy implementation as part of the annual Research Strategy review process	Annually	OVPR (Invent)
			Ongoing Quality Enhancement			
17	P3	A/U	Integrate new 'differentiated' President's awards for research support staff based within OVPR, Faculties and Research Centres.	In conjunction with the President's Office, raise awareness of the differentiated awards once implemented	Annually	OVPR (Senior Management), President's Office
18	P2	A/U	Design and implement an enhancement of the research career framework for early career researchers and short contract assistant professors.	In conjunction with DCU People, implement enhanced research career framework	In line with project timeline	OVPR, DCU People
19	P2	A	The PRG recommends that dedicated staff from across the units of the OVPR will need to continuously monitor and update the DCU Research Lifecycle web resource to ensure its continued effectiveness.	Embed this activity as part of designated staff workload	Ongoing	OVPR units

Rec	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
20	P2	A/U	Building on established relationships with HR, Finance, Library and ISS to enhance working relationships to support strategy delivery	Meetings to review progress on strategic actions, and to discuss emerging projects and associated resourcing.	Per quarter	OVPR linking in with DCU People, Finance, Library and ISS
			Stakeholder Relationships			
21	P2	A/U	Develop and integrate an external stakeholders consultation plan, that identifies, supports and accelerates mutually beneficial research and innovation collaborations.	Develop stakeholders consultation plan based on outcome of the stakeholder analysis activity	Q4 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), OEDE
22	P2	A/U	Develop a more strategically aligned, systematic and criteria-guided process for deepening and broadening the engagement with a more diverse range of potential users such as organisations, policymakers, communities and the public. This will enable effective translation of research, allowing it to generate demonstrable 'impact' outside of academia	Implement engagement process based on outcome of expert consultations	Q4 2025	OVPR (Senior Management), OEDE, Centres
23	P2	A/U	Ensure the OVPR feeds into the process of formulating the External Stakeholder Framework and is in a position to maximise external opportunities when it is completed. This would be facilitated by a clear model on how OVPR will interact and engage with the Office of the Executive Director of Engagement on this matter given the need to facilitate greater long term strategic	Engage with the OEDE re. strategic collaborations with industry, based on agreed model of interaction.	Ongoing	OVPR (Senior Management), OEDE

R e c	P r i o r i t y	A d d r e s s e e	PRG Recommendation	Action	Timeline	Responsibility
			collaborations with industry which has been highlighted as an important issue.			

Appendices

Quality Committee (for the Self-Assessment Report)

- Professor John Doyle (VPR), Chair
- Ronan Cunningham, Director DCU Invent
- Fiona Brennan (RS), Manager Research Support / Director of Research Support
- Jennifer Egan (RPA), Manager Research Project Administration
- Robbie Sinnott (RIU), Manager Research Infrastructure Unit
- Dara Dunican (RD), Manager Research Development (2018-24) / Senior Research Development Lead
- Leah Nolan (RIU)
- Avril Healy (RD)
- Anna Sapala, (RPA)
- Barbara Harvey Carroll, DCU Invent
- Sumona Mukherjee (RS)

Peer Review Group members

- Ms Martina Fitzgerald, CEO of Scale Ireland (Chair)
- Professor Deirdre Heenan, former PVC, Ulster University
- Dr Wendy McLoone, Director of Research, Queen's University Belfast
- Dr Paul Young, Head of School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Dublin City University
- Professor Charlotte Holland, Deputy Dean, Institute of Education, Dublin City University
- Mr Eoin Crossen, Vice President for Academic Life, Students' Union, Dublin City University

Quality Enhancement Plan Committee

- Professor John Doyle (VPR)
- Ronan Cunningham, Director DCU Invent
- Fiona Brennan (RS), Director of Research Support
- Jennifer Egan (RPA), Manager Research Project Administration
- Robbie Sinnott (RIU), Manager Research Infrastructure Unit
- Dr John Judge (RD&S), Manager Research Development and Support