

Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement Programme



Peer Review Group Report for Secretary's Office

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Introduction

This Quality review has been 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). The model consists of a number of basic steps.

1. An internal team in the School/Faculty/Office/Centre being reviewed completes a detailed self-assessment report (SAR). It should be noted that this document is confidential to the School/Faculty/Office/Centre as well as the Review Panel and senior officers of the University.
2. This report is sent to a team of peer assessors, the Peer Review Group (PRG) – composed of members from outside DCU and from other areas of DCU – who then visit DCU and conduct discussions with a range of relevant staff, students and other stakeholders.
3. The PRG then writes its own report. The School/Faculty/Office/Centre is given the chance to correct possible factual errors before the Peer Group Report (PGR) is finalised.
4. The School/Faculty/Office/Centre produces a draft Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) in response to the various issues and findings of the SAR and PGR Reports.
5. The PGR and the draft QuIP are considered by the Quality Promotion Committee.
6. The draft QuIP is discussed in a meeting between the School/Faculty/Office/Centre, members of the Peer Group, the Director of Quality Promotion and members of Senior Management. The University's responses are written into the QuIP, and the result is the finalised QuIP.
7. A summary of the PRG Report, the QuIP including the University's response is sent to the Governing Authority of the University, who will approve publication in a manner that they see fit.

This document is the report referred to in Step 3 above.

Peer Review Group Report

1. Introduction and Overview

Location

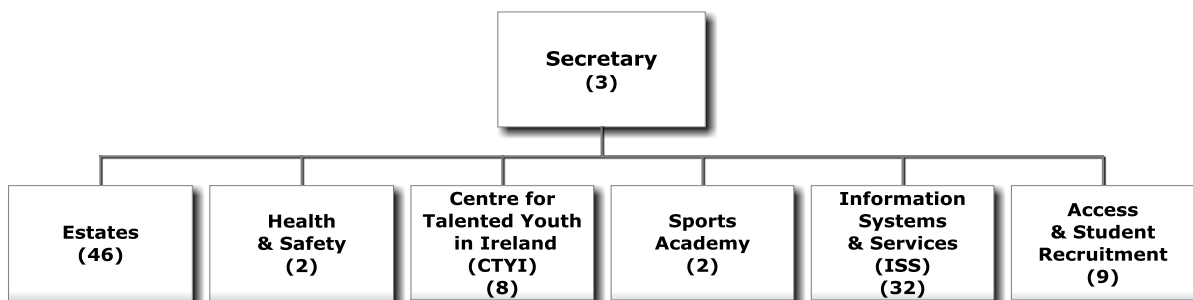
For the purposes of this review, the Secretary's Office comprises the administration of the office and the six units that have a direct reporting relationship to the Secretary. These units are the Estates Office, the Health & Safety Office, the Centre for Talented Youth in Ireland (CTYI), the DCU Sports Academy, the Information Systems & Services Department, and the Access & Student Recruitment Office.

The administrative aspect of the Secretary's Office consists of a small management and administration unit which is based in Room A201 on the second floor of the Albert College building in DCU. The units reporting to the Secretary vary considerably in size and in scope of activity. The two large units, Estates and Information Systems & Services have identifiable and distinct work areas; other smaller units reporting to the Secretary have offices and work spaces across the campus within buildings housing other University activities.

Staff

The administration office consists of the Secretary, and an Administrative Assistant and a Secretary III. Each of the latter two staff members works three days per week. Each of the reporting units is led by a Director or Head. The larger units, Estates and Information Systems and Services have further hierarchical management structures based on particular functions or responsibilities below the level of the Director, whereas staff in the smaller units have direct reports to the unit Head.

Figure 1: Units reporting to Secretary (staff numbers in parentheses)



Including all reporting units, and administrative staff, total staffing is 102 persons, eight of whom work on a part-time basis.

Product / Processes

The administrative office supports the Secretary in his key managerial roles within the University and its activities centre on the support of governance at the highest levels of the University.



The Secretary's Office staff provide assistance and support to the Secretary and liaise with the key stakeholders both internal and external. The Secretary is Secretary to Governing Authority and is a member of Governing Authority. He sits on the board of campus companies as a director and is the DCU representative on a number of external boards and committees. He is a member of the University's Senior Management Group and the University Executive and is responsible for all legal affairs of the University with the exception of HR issues.

Estates and Information Systems & Services are the largest two of the reporting units and are at the heart of planning and delivery of the University's infrastructure in terms of the physical environment of the University and its IT and information systems respectively. The Health & Safety Office provides advice and support to the DCU community on all aspects of occupational health and safety and plays a key role in assuring the University's good standing in relation to legislative and regulatory requirements in the area. CTYI has a national remit to identify and foster the development of high ability children aged 6 to 16 through Saturday courses and summer courses at both DCU and a range of locations around the country. The Sports Academy provides a range of supports to elite athletes and players to enable them to maximise both academic and sporting goals. The Access & Student Recruitment Office fulfils two complementary roles: the Access Service develops and manages the University's schemes to support participation in third level education by students from disadvantaged backgrounds and ethnic minorities; the Student Recruitment Office has a role to promote DCU to prospective students in designated geographical areas, in specific programmes and among under-represented groups.

2. The Self-Assessment Process

The Co-ordinating Committee

A number of separate coordinating committees were identified within the SAR. At the level of the Secretary's Office, the Quality Co-ordinating Committee comprised all the core staff of the Secretary's Office: Martin Conry, Secretary, Fina Akintola, Administrative Assistant and Gaye Crowley, Secretary III. At the level of the Units reporting to the Secretary coordinating committees were identified for the Sports Academy and for Access & Student Recruitment. These were: for the Sports Academy, Enda Fitzpatrick, Director of Athletics Academy and Michael Kennedy,

Director of the GAA Academy; and for Access & Student Recruitment, Ita Tobin, Director, Colette Keogh, Access Project Officer and Ross Munnely, Student Recruitment Officer. Those coordinating in other units were not explicitly identified.

Methodology adopted during process

The various Quality Co-ordinating Committees met through April to September 2011. Each of the seven elements – the Secretary’s Office and the six units which report to the Secretary – appear to have worked independently, each producing their own report, these reports then comprising chapters in the final Self Assessment Report (SAR).

To facilitate the process and receive feedback the units variously used online surveys, interviews and focus groups in the period April to August 2011. Use was made of survey and other data gathered by units for other purposes over the last two years. In the case of three of the units, Estates, the Health & Safety Office, and Information Systems & Services, the SAR identified recommendations made in previous reviews and responses to these recommendations.

3. The Peer Review Group Process

The Review Group

The Peer Review Group comprised the following members:

Mr. Michael Farrell, Corporate Secretary, University College Cork (Chair)
 Ms. Sue Paterson, Director of Legal Services/Deputy Secretary, Bristol University
 Mr. Paddy Hopkins, Secretary to the Board, Enterprise Ireland
 Prof. John Carroll, Faculty of Science and Health, Dublin City University
 Mr. Billy Kelly, DCU Business School, Dublin City University (Rapporteur)

Site Visit Programme

TIME	ACTIVITY	ATTENDEES
Wednesday 28 September 2011		
2.00-3.00pm	Peer Review Group briefing by Director of Quality Promotion.	PRG members, Dr. Sarah Ingle
3.00-4.00 pm	Meeting of members of Peer Review Group to select Chair of PRG, confirm suitability of review visit timetable and agree work schedule and assign tasks for the review visit.	PRG members

TIME	ACTIVITY	ATTENDEES
4.00-5.15 pm	Consideration of Self Assessment Report with members of the Secretary's Office Quality Review Committee.	PRG members Mr. Martin Conry, Secretary Ms. Fina Akintola, PA to Secretary, Ms. Gaye Crowley, PA to Secretary, Mr. Mike Kelly, Director of Estates, Ms. Barbara McConalogue, Director of Information Systems & Services (ISS) Ms. Ita Tobin, Head of Access and Student Recruitment Dr. Colm O'Reilly, Director of the Centre for Talented Youth Ireland Ms. Eileen Tully, Head of Health & Safety Mr. Enda Fitzpatrick, Sports Academy Mr. Michael Kennedy, GAA Director
7.30pm	Dinner for members of PRG, staff of Quality Promotion Office and staff of Secretary's Office.	PRG members , Mr. Martin Conry, Dr. Sarah Ingle, Ms. Fiona Dwyer, Mr. Mike Kelly Ms. Barbara McConalogue, Ms. Ita Tobin Dr. Colm O'Reilly, Ms. Eileen Tully, Mr. Joe Maxwell
Thursday 29 September 2011		
8.30 -9.00am	PRG meeting with Chair of St Patrick's College Management Committee & Member of DCU's Governing Authority.	Dr Pauric Travers, President St Patrick's College Drumcondra (College of DCU)
9.00 – 10.00am	PRG meeting with Secretary	Mr. Martin Conry
10.00 – 10.40am	PRG meeting with Chair of DCU Audit Committee and a member of Governing Authority	Ms Margaret Sweeney, (Chair DCU Audit Committee) former Chief Executive of Postbank; Cllr Ciaran Byrne, Fingal County Council, Member of Governing Authority
10.40 – 11.05am	PRG meeting with administrative staff in Secretary's Office	Ms. Fina Akintola, Ms. Gaye Crowley
11.05am- 1.15pm	PRG meeting with Heads/Directors of offices reporting to Secretary's Office	11.05 am – Ms. Eileen Tully, Head of Health & Safety 11.30 am - Mr. Enda Fitzpatrick, Sports Academy , Mr. Michael Kennedy, GAA Director 12 noon – Dr. Colm O'Reilly, Director of the Centre for Talented Youth Ireland 12.30 pm – Mr. Joe Maxwell, Freedom of Information 12.45 am - Ms. Ita Tobin, Head of Access & Student Recruitment
1.15-2.15pm	PRG meeting separately with Directors of offices reporting to Secretary's Office that undertake individual office quality reviews.	1.15 pm - Mr. Mike Kelly, Director of Estates 1.45 pm - Ms. Barbara McConalogue, Director of Information Systems & Services (ISS)
2.15-2.45pm	PRG working lunch.	
2.45 – 3.15pm	PRG meeting with members of DCU Committees of which Secretary is also a member or Chairs.	Mr. Cillian Byrne, Deputy President of DCU Students Union, Member of Student Disciplinary Committee

TIME	ACTIVITY	ATTENDEES
3.15-4.15pm	PRG meeting with members of boards on which DCU Secretary is a Director.	Mr. Kieran Mulvey, Chief Executive, Labour Relations Commission & Member of DCU Commercial Board Mr. Joe Harford, Former President & CEO of Astellas Ireland, Chairman NIBRT
4.15-4.30pm	Break	
4.30-5.00pm	PRG meeting external members of DCU's Governing Authority.	Dr. Dermot Lane, President of Mater Dei Institute (College of DCU)
5.00-5.30pm	Meeting with staff members responding to open invitation to meet PRG	
5.30-6.30pm	PRG meeting to review and finalise remaining tasks.	
6.30pm +	PRG members work individually to complete interim tasks.	
Friday 30 September 2011		
8.30-9.00am	PRG meeting to review progress and prepare for later meetings	
9.00-10.00am	PRG meeting with members of Senior Management Group (SMG).	SMG Director of Quality Promotion.
10.00-10.30am	PRG meeting with DCU President	Prof. Brian MacCraith, President DCU
10.30-11.00am	Break	
11.00-12.00pm	PRG meeting with senior academic/administrative staff	Dr. Claire Bohan, Director of Student Support & Development Mr. Jim Dowling, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing Ms. Jane Neville, Assistant to the President, President's Office. Dr. Joe O' Hara, Head of School, Education Studies
12.00-12.30 pm	Preparation of PRG exit presentation.	Tour of facilities (Buildings Office)
12.30-12.45pm	PRG meeting with member of Space Management committee	Ms Phylomena McMorrow
12.45-2.00 pm	PRG working lunch.	
2.00-4.30 pm	Preparation of PRG exit presentation	
4.30-5.00pm	Exit presentation to staff of Secretary's Office to summarise PRG findings.	PRG, Director of Quality Promotion, Secretary and other staff of Secretary's Office.

Methodology

Members of the Peer Review Group (PRG) received the Self Assessment Report (SAR) in advance of the site visit and were briefed by the Director of Quality Promotion on arrival.

At its initial meeting, Mr Michael Farrell agreed to act as Chair of the Group and the Group then reviewed the draft schedule for the visit. In light of the initial briefing by the Director of Quality Promotion and the SAR, the PRG considered what its appropriate remit should be. While the SAR was structured around seven separate entities, the PRG wished to avoid as far as possible conducting what in essence might be seven separate reviews. Further, the PRG recognised that two of these entities, Estates and Information Systems & Services have individual quality reviews scheduled in the near future.

The PRG decided that its primary remit should be the review of the Secretary's Office administration and its role in supporting University activities and in coordinating the activities of units that reported to it. Two of the units, Estates and Information Systems & Services (ISS) are considerably bigger than the other units but in the knowledge that these units are to have full reviews in the next two years, the PRG decided that its review of the activities of these units could be accomplished within a similar time frame to that of the other, smaller units.

Schedule of Activity

At its initial meeting on Wednesday, the PRG made some minor amendments to the draft schedule of meetings. However, on Thursday, the draft schedule which involved a series of 15 minute meetings proved unworkable, due in no small part to the enthusiasm and positive engagement of staff from the units involved with the process. As a consequence, the PRG re-scheduled and re-prioritised some meetings.

View of the Self-Assessment Report

The SAR was comprised of seven chapters, the first dealing with the administrative aspect of the Secretary's Office and the next six with each of the reporting units in turn. The reports of the individual units gave clear and comprehensive overviews of their activities and the units' assessment of their individual strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and concerns. The report for the Secretary's Office itself included more unprocessed comment/information than it might have done and while it clearly identified both positive and negative issues, it would have benefited from reflection on how best to consolidate on the positives and address the concerns raised in the review. Further, the structure adopted for the SAR precluded an overview and linking of themes across the units and the report eschewed an overarching reflection on the range of activities covered in the report.

The PRG reviewed the findings of the SAR with representatives from the constituent units and were able to verify findings in all substantive cases.

4. Findings of the Review Group

1. Background, Overview, Strategy, Context

This review of the Secretary's Office and reporting units is being undertaken at a time when staffing resources available to DCU and the wider university sector are

being substantially curtailed: the Employment Control Framework has meant that staff who leave or retire are, in many cases, not replaced and it falls to remaining staff to pick up the work previously undertaken by others. A common theme across all units reviewed was the tightening budgetary situation in the University and, in some cases, the consequent ‘thinning’ of services that can be provided.

At the same time, the University is renewing its strategic direction under a new President and this will bring new challenges and altered priorities.

2. Organisation and Management

This review involved consideration of a group of loosely connected units linked by a common reporting relationship to the University Secretary. The units generally operate independently and, appear to be seen by the University community as distinct entities without necessarily having common interests. Despite this, there are clear commonalities and opportunities for synergies between units, e.g., Student Recruitment, CTYI and the Sports Academy; Estates and Health & Safety Office. At present, it is not clear that these opportunities are fully exploited.

At present, the reporting arrangements encourage a vertical flow of information from units upwards and, to some extent, downwards. The PRG is of the view that more lateral exchange of information and practice between reporting units could yield significant benefits.

3. Staffing and Accommodation

The PRG was, above all, impressed by the universal commitment of staff to strive to maintain (and even improve) service levels in the face of diminished staffing and resources. The twin impacts of reductions in staffing and increasing demands on units has placed considerable pressures on staff in all units often requiring them to undertake additional duties and the effects can be particularly acute in smaller units. In some cases, it can also mean that individual staff may be required to operate at higher levels than indicated by their grade, e.g., administration in the H&S Office.

The PRG was very concerned at the extremely poor working conditions of staff in Estates: workshops and facilities are based in temporary accommodation that is not fit for purpose.

There is a general lack of appropriate space for storage and archiving of key documents in both the Secretary’s Office and in Estates.

4. Management of Financial and other Resources

Across all parts of the Secretary’s Office, it was clear that there was effective and efficient management of existing resources. It was also clear that reductions in available resources had required units to prioritise delivery of activities. Decisions as to this prioritisation were typically at the discretion of individual units rather than a set of priorities defined at a more senior level in the University. The PRG believes that this approach carries the danger that the priorities reached at the level of the unit may not accord with the priorities that the University might set.

5. Functions, Activities and Processes

The working environment in the Secretary's Office is a positive one and it is clear that the Office provides a very valuable input to the University. However there is a clear need for more extensive communication within the University, especially through the Office's webpage, of the range of work and activities of the Office.

There is a strong 'can do' approach and the staff of the office are seen as very supportive to staff and students but it is clear that the current staffing is fully stretched and would struggle to cope with any significant absence on the part of the Secretary. Further, as the demands on the Secretary's Office increase in relation to governance and compliance, the PRG is concerned with its capacity to provide an appropriate level of service.

The University's capacity to respond to emergencies and business continuity issues is hampered by the lack of a comprehensive plan developed by and involving all parts of the University. At present, functions related to business continuity are variously located in different parts of the University. In terms of this review, Estates and ISS are key components in a business continuity plan and while these units have engaged with such planning, there is an urgent need for the University to bring to completion a comprehensive DCU "Disaster Recovery Planning" exercise. In particular, the absence of a business continuity plan that addresses ISS operations raises the risk of a significant disruption to the University's activities and, in turn, poses significant reputational risks. The recent Risk Analysis Exercise undertaken for ISS has identified significant risks in the location, control systems and capacity of computer rooms housing key business systems and the absence of mirrored sites to address business continuity issues is a matter of concern.

6. Offices reporting to main Office

Despite reduction in staff (and absence of additional staff as originally approved by Executive), the commitment of the remaining staff in **Estates** has ensured that, by and large, services appear to have held up. However, the effectiveness of estate management functions is threatened by the continuing reductions in staff numbers.

The University's asset registers are distributed: Estates maintains the register for capital equipment; Finance maintains the register for office equipment; ISS for some computer equipment; individual Faculties for other assets.

While recognising the necessary distance between **Health & Safety** and Estates, the PRG believes that there are opportunities for greater cooperation and coordination of activities between H&S and Estates. Regular meetings involving the Health & Safety Office and Estates Office have been discontinued and the PRG believes that the Health & Safety Officer should attend Estates Management Committee meetings. The Fire Safety Officer is currently based in Estates but the PRG does not believe that this represents best practice: the Fire Safety Officer has a regulatory role and would, in future, be better placed in the H&S Office.

The **Centre for Talented Youth in Ireland** has a clear mission and is delivering impressively on that mission, expanding its activities in new discipline,

socioeconomic and geographical areas. However, CTYI should be careful not to create 'brand confusion' as it expands its range of schemes targeting different groups.

The centre supports a very wide range of activities at a low cost to DCU (€50,000). It has shown a steady increase in numbers, comfortably exceeding its own growth targets and with a very high satisfaction rate (95%+) from its clients. There is a strong academic advisory board but this could benefit from additional DCU representatives from the Faculties of Science & Health and Engineering & Computing.

The PRG believes that CTYI does not currently get sufficient recognition from the wider University for its contribution to DCU's mission. The good support that CTYI gets from Access & Recruitment, ISS, Estates, H&S, and other campus units and companies on the operational side is not matched by an equal level of support from academic units. For example, difficulties in accessing science and computer laboratories based in Faculties on Saturdays and during the summer are severely limiting the scope and scale of activities that could be undertaken by CTYI on the DCU campus.

The absence of two staff on long term sick leave places an increased burden on the centre and may impact on the capacity to fully deliver on its full range of activities. Separately, there is a need for one more full-time administrative member of staff.

The **Sports Academy** provides state of the art facilities in terms of training, support and the general preparation of elite sportspersons, in some cases uniquely so in Higher Education. The PRG found that the Sports Academy is led by highly-qualified and enthusiastic staff and is clearly delivering on its mission. However, uncertainty as to annual budgetary provision following the lack of follow-through on previously-provided pledges and the consequential reduction in financial provision may have a negative impact on services provided.

Notwithstanding its financial uncertainty, the Sports Academy has impressive student numbers and has been a good source of highly qualified and highly motivated students. Its success stories have the potential to play a significant part in the promotion of DCU to a wider range of potential students if fully exploited.

It is clear that increasing demands are being made of the services provided by **Information Systems and Services** (ISS) without a concomitant increase in resources. Despite this, ISS staff have demonstrated a willingness to adapt to deliver a high level of service to its stakeholders. The engagement of ISS with the recommendations of its 2005 Quality Review, especially in the absence of anticipated additional resources, is particularly commended.

The increased demands on ISS in the face of substantially diminished resources have meant that the function has, necessarily, become more reactive and the opportunities to plan and reflect on evolving and changing future needs and directions have been limited. ICT is a core enabler of the University's strategies and, as such, the development of an enabling ICT strategy is an urgent priority; its

development cannot await the review and completion of development of the overarching University strategic plan.

There are increasing demands on ISS to deliver on IT projects from different areas of the University that are competing for the same diminished resources: the University needs to put in place a clear system of prioritising (and establishing ownership of) substantial IT projects as they arise across the University.

The security of confidential data on university computers, especially laptops and mobile devices is a matter of concern. A 'voluntary' engagement with encryption, etc will not deliver on the required level of security of information.

The **Access Service** and the **Student Recruitment Office** demonstrate a most impressive 'can do' attitude despite loss of funding. There is evidence of a very deep commitment to Access and this has contributed to a significant reduction in drop-out rates through the activities of its staff. However, the lack of money, especially for support of students after second year, is a matter of concern. The creation of Access scholarships by engaging private funding is to be commended.

Student Recruitment has demonstrated ingenuity in its operations and development and there is very strong evidence of enthusiasm for helping DCU to fill courses. Support from academic colleagues in regard to student recruitment is not as extensive as it might be: greater involvement, particularly in School visits, could significantly enhance student recruitment effectiveness. The PRG learnt of the difficulties encountered in recruiting students from Northern Ireland due to timing issues relating to the issuing of competing offers from UCAS and the CAO.

Overall, there is a need for the University to bring clarity to the remit and priorities it sees for Access & Student Recruitment.

7. User/Customer/Supplier Perspective

Without exception, users of services provided by the Secretary's Office and the units reporting to the Secretary pronounced themselves satisfied with the current level of service being received. That said, suggestions for improvements were made in some areas and these are reflected in the recommendations below.

8. Staff Perspective

Staff within all units are being asked to perform at higher levels of activity in both scope and responsibility while facing reductions in resources available to them and in their pay. The dominant finding was of a 'can do' attitude, with staff seeking alternative and imaginative means of achieving required results in the face of reduced manpower and resources. The PRG found their enthusiasm and commitment to the broad mission of the University remarkable in these circumstances.

9. Overall Analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Concerns

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong 'can do' approach and enthusiastic staff ▪ Demonstrable commitment to DCU mission ▪ Responsiveness and customer satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication to external clients of range of activities undertaken by Secretary's Office ▪ Lack of clear ownership of IT projects ▪ Distribution of asset registers across varied units
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Concerns</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Synergies between units, e.g., Student Recruitment and Sports in student recruitment ▪ Engagement of Faculties with activities, e.g., with CTYI with the goal of (future) student recruitment ▪ Strengthening the governance and compliance role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capacity to maintain existing activity (and expand where necessary) in current financial climate ▪ Inadequate and inappropriate storage of key documents ▪ Lack of comprehensive business continuity plan ▪ Succession management in Secretary's Office

5. Recommendations for Improvement

PRG recommendations are listed below under a number of headings, both general and specific to units. To facilitate planning of quality improvement measures, each recommendation is qualified by an indication of priority as follows:

- 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.
- P 3: A recommendation which merits serious consideration but which is not considered to be critical to the quality of the ongoing activities in the Unit.

Additionally, the PRG has indicated the level(s) of the University where action is required:

- S: Secretary's Office
- A: Reporting Units – Estates, Health & Safety, Centre for Talented Youth in Ireland, Sports Academy, Information Systems & Services, Access & Student Recruitment.
- U: University Executive/Senior Management

Functions and processes

1. All governance aspects of Governing Authority and wholly owned companies should be taken on by the Secretary's Office. **(P1, S, U)**

2. The Secretary's Office should provide the corporate secretarial support for functioning subsidiaries and the Secretary or his nominee should act as company secretary. **(P1, U)**
3. Consideration should be given to appointing a deputy to the Secretary within the Secretary's Office to carry some of the ever increasing burden and to deal with compliance and to act as recording secretary to the Governing Authority. This would assist also with the issue of spreading institutional knowledge, succession planning and governance expertise within the University. **(P1, U)**
4. The PRG recommends the establishment of an IT projects committee, whose membership includes some members of the University's Senior Management, to be tasked with prioritising, resourcing and clarifying ownership of IT projects. **(P1, U)**
5. Greater emphasis is needed on informing the University of the work carried out by the Secretary's Office and of its "rationale, purpose and strategic objectives". **(P1, S)**
6. A major revamp of the Secretary's Office website is required covering all areas reporting in and functions and services under the Secretary's direction. **(P1, S)**
7. Greater horizontal communication between all of the heads of units would aid interaction and generate synergies between services. **(P1, A)**
8. The University should develop a Records Management Policy which should include Retention and Disposal Schedules for records which if properly implemented could free up space within the Secretary's Office. **(P1, S, U)**
9. In the context of Estates Office, it should instigate a document management review with a view to identifying significant documents that must be archived and those that are surplus to requirements. **(P1, S, U)**
10. An investigation of off-site and digital archiving of key documents in the Estates should be undertaken. **(P1, U, A)**
11. Put in place a cohesive project to develop comprehensive business continuity and emergency plans for the University. **(P1, U, S)**
12. A risk register for IT should be developed, in conjunction with a register for all other key areas of the campus. **(P1, U, A)**
13. We recommend that the University urgently adopt a policy in relation to the systematic encryption of sensitive or confidential information held by staff on computers and mobile devices, incorporating sanctions for non-compliance. **(P1, U, A)**
14. The very unsatisfactory accommodation and working conditions in the Estates Office need to be addressed either by providing new, appropriately located premises or by a significant upgrade of the existing premises. **(P1, U)**
15. For Governing Authority meetings, the agenda should indicate whether matters are for decision, discussion, noting, information, etc. **(P2, S)**
16. Agenda, papers, minutes etc for wholly-owned subsidiary companies should be co-ordinated and delivered from the Secretary's Office in order to achieve consistent standards of practice. **(P2, S)**
17. As secretary to the Audit Committee the Secretary should ensure co-ordination between the work of the Risk Manager, Strategic Planning, Internal Audit and Health & Safety given the close proximity and interaction of their respective functions. **(P2, U, S)**

18. As governance duties expand, the structure of the Secretary's Office should be examined in light of the recommendations in this report. **(P2, S)**
19. Consideration should be given to outsourcing records storage. **(P2, U, A)**
20. A University Liaison Officer should be appointed [possibly the Secretary or deputy if appointed] to work with the CEO of subsidiary companies to ensure co-operation and collaboration (where appropriate) between the subsidiary companies and University staff. **(P2, U)**
21. Consideration should be given to separating the reporting lines of the Secretary, i.e., as a member of the Executive to the President, and as Secretary of Governing Authority to the Governing Authority. **(P2, U)**
22. Risk Management should be closely coordinated with other related areas within the University, e.g., H&S and Internal Audit. **(P3, U)**

Offices reporting to the Secretary's Office

23. There is a need to improve the communication of strategic priorities downwards and from the functional units upwards. **(P1, A)**
24. Consideration should be given to assigning the Fire Safety Officer to the Health & Safety function. **(P2, S)**
25. The Health & Safety Officer should be invited to attend Estates Management Committee meetings. **(P1, S)**
26. There should be recognition of the work undertaken by admin staff in H&S Office through career development. **(P2, S)**
27. CTYI should demonstrate how it adds value to the University by bringing talented students to DCU and consider adding this to its mission. **(P1, A)**
28. The University should ensure that science and computer laboratories not in use for other activities are made available to CTYI on Saturdays and during the summer. **(P1, U)**
29. CTYI, Access and Sports should develop synergies in areas such as funding and outreach. **(P1, A)**
30. CTYI should work to strengthen its brand. **(P2, A)**
31. CTYI should recruit an additional administrator to deal with increasing participant numbers. **(P2, A)**
32. CTYI should consider expanding its advisory board, including key influencers in the Science & Health and Engineering & Computing Faculties. **(P2, A)**
33. The Sports Academy should launch a new webpage both for information provision (to collate all the Academy activities) and to advertise its expertise and achievements with wider dissemination of Academy success stories. **(P1, A, U)**
34. Generate more certainty as to the annual budget of the Sports Academy with more guaranteed funding streams (securing firm commitments from donors) as a means of ensuring stability of operation and facilities. **(P1, U)**
35. Consideration of new income streams (by the University), pledges or new sponsorship to continue to enhance the facilities (and provide winter training facilities, if possible). **(P2, U)**

36. Explore additional ways to market the Elite Sports programme, using the University's Public Affairs division. **(P3, U, A)**
37. The University should clarify recruitment priorities for Student Recruitment. **(P1, U)**
38. The University should clearly convey the expectation that academics engage in a substantive way with student recruitment. **(P1, U)**
39. The Registrar and Student Recruitment should work to find a solution to the problems in recruiting students from Northern Ireland (and the UK) posed by pattern of release of A-level results and subsequent UCAS offers vis-à-vis 1st Round offers. **(P2, U)**
40. Seek to explore and develop synergies between the Access Service and the Sports Academy in the areas of funding and sponsorship. **(P2, A)**
41. Explore where resources could be found to continue and expand the outreach liaison role of the Access Service. **(P2, U, A)**