

Quality Assurance / Quality Improvement
Programme for Administrative Units
2003-2004



Quality Improvement Plan

For Human Resources Department

25 January 2005

Peer Review Group (PRG) visit	10 - 12 March 2004
Final PRG Report received	18 June 2004
Unit Quality Improvement Plan received	17 September 2004
Follow-up Meeting held	7 December 2004

Follow-up Process

- Following receipt of the finalised peer review group report on 18 June 2004, the Director of Quality Promotion sent copies to:
 - the Director of the Unit, who ensured that a copy was made available to all members of staff and informed the unit of the requirement to produce a unit response (in consultation, where necessary, with the reporting senior officer, the Secretary)
 - the President, other members of Executive and the Quality Promotion Committee
- The Director of the Unit sent the Unit Response to the Director of Quality Promotion on 15 September 2004.
- The Director of Quality Promotion convened a follow-up meeting on 7 December 2004 which involved the following participants:
 - *Representing the Quality Promotion Unit*
 - Dr Pdraig Walsh (Chair)
 - *Representing the Unit*
 - Ms Marian Burns (Head of Unit)
 - Mr Joe Maxwell
 - *Representing line-management*
 - Mr Martin Conry (Secretary)
 - *Representing Senior Management*
 - Prof. Albert Pratt (Deputy-President)
 - *Representing the Peer Review Group*
 - Mr Jim Duffy (Centre for Management and Organisation Development, Department of Finance, Dublin)
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- Following the above meeting, the Quality Improvement Plan was drafted and sent for consideration by Executive on 25 January 2005
- Following approval of the Quality Improvement Plan, the Director of Quality Promotion will prepare a summary report incorporating the Peer Review Group Report and the Quality Improvement Plan for consideration (and approval) by the Governing Authority on 10 February 2005
- The Peer Review Group Report, the Quality Improvement Plan and the Summary Report to Governing Authority will then be published on the university website.

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- 2.** Response To Recommendations in the Peer Review Group Report
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Appendix One

1. INTRODUCTION

This quality improvement plan was developed in response to the recommendations made by the Peer Review Group following their examination of our self-assessment report and visit to the Human Resources Department in March '04. The Peer Review Report was presented to the HR department in June '04 and contained wide ranging recommendations, many of which were endorsements of suggestions made by the HR department itself in the self-assessment report. The recommendations were categorised under seven broad themes as follows:

1. Communications
2. Information Systems
3. Recruitment & selection
4. Performance Management
5. Strategy
6. Training & Development
7. Work Life Balance

A sub group of HR staff consisting of the HR officers convened on 29th July to discuss the recommendations in the Peer Review Report, prioritise actions that would be required and identify areas where additional resources would be needed in order to carry out the recommendations included in the Peer Review Report. An initial draft was produced in mid August and circulated to all HR staff for further comment.

A meeting was convened by the Director of the Quality Promotion Unit, Dr. Pdraig Walsh on 7th December 2004 to allow discussion of the draft HR Quality Improvement Plan. In attendance were the Deputy President, Prof. Albert Pratt, Secretary, Mr. Martin Conry as representatives of the Senior Management Team, Mr. Jim Duffy member of the peer review group, together with the HR Director, Marian Burns and the HR Quality Review Co-ordinator, Joe Maxwell. The outcomes from this discussion have lead directly to the final HR Quality Improvement Plan as outlined below.

2. Recommendations for and *Responses to Quality Improvement*

The PRG report presented its recommendations using the following criteria:

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 timescale.

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

- U: Unit (Human Resources Department)
- ESM: University Executive/Senior Management

Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report (The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))	<i>Response in Quality Improvement Plan</i>
The PRG report presented recommendations for improvement under seven themes. These were further subdivided into recommendations identified by HR in their self-assessment report and endorsed by the PRG and additional recommendations as identified by the PRG. For the purposes of this Quality Improvement Plan it was deemed expedient in some cases to combine the two sets of recommendations in order to provide a coherent response under each theme.	

1. COMMUNICATIONS	
Identified by HR in SAR Report & endorsed by PRG.	
Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report (The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))	Response in Quality Improvement Plan
1. (P1) To continue to improve communications within HR department, exploring further what the potential problem areas may be and addressing these as quickly as possible through mechanisms such as internal team building and improved internal communication channels. (UNIT)	There have been a number of staff changes within HR in recent months and further team building exercises will take place early in 2005. All HR staff have been involved in the Performance Management System pilot project and this includes formal meetings with the Director of HR on a regular basis The <u>HR</u> staff continue to have weekly meetings which are extremely beneficial in terms of sharing information and work.planning. <i>Timeframe: 6-12 months</i>
2. (P2) There is a need to build on the fact that the HR Office has always been responsive to the needs of its customers. It will be necessary to emphasise the fact that as the University gets bigger and becomes more proceduralised, by definition there are times when the HR Office can be less accommodating and less flexible than hitherto. It will be important to address any impression that the department is becoming less responsive to customer needs. (UNIT)	<u>HR</u> are currently devising a set of service level agreements which will provide Heads of Unit/School and all staff with information on the nature and timeframes in which certain HR activities will be carried out.. The need to provide focussed support to the research community resulted in two additional HR posts being funded through Science Foundation Ireland. The Service Level agreements will be published on the HR website. <i>Timeframe: 6-12months</i>

1. COMMUNICATIONS	
<p>3. (P1) There is a need to address the need to communicate effectively with Heads, clearly outlining the Department's realistic capacity for development and responsiveness to change, while progressing Heads' development in relation to HR issues.</p> <p>(UNIT)</p>	<p><u>HR</u> sees this as a parallel process with the majority of the developmental projects designed to make the HR systems more dependable and accessible being completed within two years, while management development for Heads will also take place over the same time frame. The management development programme has been communicated to Heads and the schedule of courses has been published. There has been an increased uptake on these courses to date. The suite of courses has been designed to empower managers and enlighten them as to how the HR Department can support managers.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Timeframe 12 months.</i></p>

2. INFORMATION SYSTEMS	
Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report	Response in Quality Improvement Plan
<p>(The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))</p>	
<p>4. (P1) Carry out an architectural review of the C-Docs system to ascertain whether it can be extended to provide the functionality required to meet the Unit's strategic objectives in relation to devolution, streamlining processes etc. (UNIT)</p> <p>5. (P1) There is a need, in conjunction with the Finance Office, to move towards an integrated payroll and HR system that will address systems interface issues as well as duplication of work. (UNIT, FINANCE)</p> <p>6. (P1) Ensure that data are gathered, analysed and utilised on each element of the HR system to provide decision makers, both inside and outside the department, with useful feedback on HR processes. (UNIT)</p>	<p>An additional HR officer has been employed to free up existing staff to work on a dedicated MIS project team for a period of 2 years. The team consists of a full time HR Officer, an additional part-time HR officer and a business development manager from the computer services department. The project will involve a process review and current systems analysis. The overall aim will be to arrive at an Integrated HR system with local end user controlled access.</p> <p>This review will include a gap analysis and identify process re-engineering opportunities (including the possibility of integration of payroll and HR systems) together with a cost benefit analysis of the work to be undertaken. The MIS project scope document has been adopted by the MIS project steering committee, which included primary and secondary objectives.</p> <p>In relation to analysis of HR data, it is planned that the data gathering and analysis will be facilitated by a much-improved HR MIS system. There are difficulties in generating useful reports from the current system and this will be addressed as part of the MIS project.</p> <p>The project has been divided into three phases. Phase 1 has been mapped out and consists of a process review, current systems evaluation and introduction of Discover Reporting Tool. Phase 1 is due for completion in March '05. Phase 2 will consist of the development of a request for tender and evaluation. Phase 3 will consist of implementation and integration with the overall aim at arriving at integrated HR systems.</p> <p>It is intended that the MIS system will enable HR to pro-actively analyse trends.</p>

2. INFORMATION SYSTEMS	
<p>7. (P2) Develop systems and processes for devolving aspects of leave and attendance, training, contracts etc. to Units. (UNIT)</p>	<p><i>Timeframe: 2 years</i></p>
<p>8. (P2) In the interests of streamlining information provision, with a view to consistency and management of activity levels, consider acquiring help desk software for the general office. (UNIT)</p>	<p>Helpdesk Software will be investigated for use within the general office. This is included under the MIS project scope and identified as a secondary objective. It is likely that the system chosen will be based on similar solutions used elsewhere on campus, most notably in the Computer Services Department. Work on this objective will commence in Jan '05 and is considered to be a 'quick win' opportunity. <i>Timeframe: 18 months</i></p>
<p>9. (P2) There is a need to develop a knowledge management system to capture knowledge from throughout the organisation on HR issues. This could be utilised to provide a resource for staff development or the dissemination of good practices throughout the University. (UNIT)</p>	<p>Information on SOP's, FAQ's and HR knowledge will be collated and placed on a dedicated information database accessible by <u>HR</u> via an intranet. SOP's and FAQ's to be made available to DCU community on HR website. This is included under the MIS project scope and identified as a secondary objective. The overall MIS project lifespan is 24 months.</p>
<p>10. (P1) In co-operation with Computer Services, implement the proposal to extensively use the Discover product from MIS purposes" (UNIT, CSD)</p>	<p><i>Discoverer</i> is seen as an interim solution to some reporting issued until the preliminary outcomes of the MIS project phase 1 are known.</p>

2. INFORMATION SYSTEMS

11. (P1)

The University should:

Make a commitment to prioritise the ICT development requirements of HR and to building the required cross-school/unit processes in this context. This should involve the acquisition of a fixed term dedicated ICT resource for a significant period of time to more speedily advance the required developments.

(ESM)

This has been implemented by the university. A Business Development Manager within CSD has been assigned to the HR MIS project team for a period of two years.

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	
Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report	<i>Response in Quality Improvement Plan</i>
<p>(The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))</p>	
<p>12. (P2) Consider the new Performance Management system as an opportunity for the HR Department to build the skills of Heads of Schools and Units within the University in managing HR issues. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The Performance Management Scheme is clearly an opportunity for the <u>HR</u> Department to build the skills of Heads of Schools and Units. This has already commenced with the provision of the two day 'Reviewer Training' course which deals with many of the key skills areas used by Managers and Heads of Department.</p> <p>In addition to this, the performance management and development process will give Heads of Department the opportunity to identify their own specific training needs going forward. This will be further complemented by the training needs analysis due to commence specifically for Heads of Department.</p> <p>Other information sessions similar to the SELF programme are also due to take place. As part of the pilot scheme, 58 Reviewers and 50 reviewees have been trained in the Performance Management system to date. This includes the majority of senior managers and a full rollout of the PM system is due to take place in early 2005.</p> <p>The system will be amended following consultation with focus groups of reviewers and reviewees scheduled to take place on 6/7/8 December 04.</p> <p>While the initial training in PM has been carried out by an external consultant, more recently, HR's own Training and Development Officer has co-facilitated the PM training with a view to undertaking the training in-house.</p> <p>An additional Training and Development Officer has joined the <u>HR</u> department to assist with training in performance management throughout 2005.</p>

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	
<p>13. (P1) <i>The HR Department should:</i> Be wary of over relying on the Performance Management scheme as providing the answer to current issues. Performance Management will be very resource intensive to implement in the early years and will create additional issues that will have to be tackled. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> Department acknowledges that performance management is not a panacea to solve all problems.</p> <p><u>HR</u> also recognises that the implementation of the scheme will be very resource intensive (particularly in the early years) and this has, in part, driven the recruitment an additional Training & Development Officer who will support the PMDS process (amongst other responsibilities).</p> <p>Without doubt, the introduction of the scheme will create additional issues, some of which are already known and some of which will not become apparent until the scheme is introduced. These issues will be identified from the pilot and from an on-going review thereafter facilitated by the External Training Consultant. Issues arising will be addressed by the HR Department in conjunction with the Performance Management & Development Scheme Subgroup.</p>
<p>14. <i>The University should:</i> Clearly drive Performance Management as a mechanism to improve organisational performance so that it does not become an overhead or an optional extra" (ESM)</p>	<p>This is already being addressed in the way in which the scheme has been designed and developed for the <u>university</u>. Central to the scheme is the idea of improving organisational performance (as well as individual and departmental performance) by aligning the developmental needs of the individual with organisational objectives.</p>

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

<p>15. (P2) Encourage Heads of Schools and Units to take ownership of the Performance Management process and outcomes. (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>The scheme has been designed at developed by the <u>university</u> in a way that it puts full responsibility and ownership of the process on the Heads of Department at a local level and this is re-enforced through the training. Presently, the majority of Heads of Department have now attended the two day Reviewer Training Programme.</p> <p>By including the Heads of Department in the pilot scheme, the intention was to encourage Heads to take ownership of the scheme. This also ensured that they would have a better opportunity to feed-in to the further development of the scheme, a scheme that they would happy to own and to follow through on.</p> <p>The pilot scheme has been used as a mechanism to identify and clarify the concerns of Heads of Department in relation to the operation of Performance Management. The PMDS has been signed off by the University's Partnership Committee. The Performance Management Subgroup of the Partnership Forum are currently looking at other mechanisms that will help 'monitor' the process to ensure that the Heads of Department are taking ownership of the scheme as well as the outcomes.</p>
<p>16. (P2) To ensure effectiveness of the Performance Management system, include a mechanism for ensuring the accountability to Senior Management that goes beyond simply returning forms to HR. (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>The scheme provides for the fact that the Head of Department has full responsibility and ownership of the scheme at a local level and this is re-enforced through the training.</p> <p>However, to ensure that the scheme goes beyond an exercise of simply returning forms to <u>HR</u>, the scheme also requires the Head of Department to send through a brief summary report to the Training & Development Department outlining the key priorities and challenges for their department for the following 12-18 months. This purpose of the report is to facilitate a more structured and planned approach to meeting the development needs of staff in each department which is being driven by the Head of Department thus ensuring accountability.</p> <p>A continuous review of the scheme (which will include a quality review element)by both HR and external consultants, will also ensure that the scheme does not just become merely a 'paper exercise' by senior management. The recommendations forthcoming from the Pilot Scheme will be incorporated into the full scheme to be launched to all staff in 2005.</p>

3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

17. (P1)

Consider carefully the implications for training and development in relation to the developmental focus of the scheme and how this will be managed

(UNIT)

The PMDS process will result (particularly in the initial stages) in an increased demand for training and development and this clearly needs to be managed.

A number of things are in place to address these concerns;

The HR department has recruited an additional Training & Development Officer to help support the PMDS process (amongst other responsibilities).

The whole area of 'managing expectations' of both the Reviewer and Reviewee in terms of training & development is being addressed through the Performance Management Training Programme to ensure that staff have more realistic expectations.

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION	
Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report	Response in Quality Improvement Plan
<p>(The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))</p>	
<p>18. (P1) Use the Web more extensively for advertising, taking in application forms electronically, making training packs available, publishing relevant parts of standard operating procedures etc. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> Department evaluated a number of options from a variety of on-line advertising & recruitment agencies and has chosen <i>www.irishjobs.ie</i> as the preferred on-line agency for 2005. The results of using this method of recruitment in addition to traditional print media (which HR are obliged to use when advertising the majority of permanent DCU posts) will be evaluated in terms of added value and cost effectiveness after a 12 month period. <u>HR</u> believes that the added flexibility of using on-line recruitment agencies will enhance services to campus companies and research centres which often require rapid recruitment campaigns outside of the timeframes provided by the print media.</p> <p>Electronic Application Forms: Further investigation of receiving applications electronically. Application forms can currently be completed online. Information may be transferred to system from e-form, which should expedite process, eg. shortlisting, reduction of calls to general office. This is being investigated as part of the MIS project. <i>Timeframe: 1 Year</i></p> <p>Standard Operating Procedures: SOP's will be documented and all relevant procedures will be placed on web. <i>E.G. advertising form, advertising steps, timelines,</i> Work on the production of SOP's will commence during the process review stage in phase 1 of the MIS project. <i>Timeframe: Over 1 Year</i></p>

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

19. (P1)

Implement self-identified improvements. Within the Self Assessment report the HR Department have themselves identified a number of improvements including streamlining of the pre-advertising stage, reducing the length of time the process takes, more efficient working with Heads, review of the application form, extended web based advertising, implementation of internal deadlines, training in short listing, use of new recruitment screening forms, interview training, provision of information to candidates and publication of timelines. These should be implemented as quickly as possible.

(UNIT)

Streamlining the pre-advertising stage:

A dedicated HR advertising email address has been set up and this will be communicated to Heads for future adverts. Guidelines will be documented and placed on web including advertising form.

Reducing the duration of process:

Link advertising date with Budget/Executive decisions to limit time delay. This is in the process of being implemented, the idea being to proactively disseminate information to Heads so that they know in advance the likely timeframes that pertain to recruitment processes.

Working with Heads

To work through process from initial stages with Heads in line with forthcoming published SOP's
This will take place during the process review stage in phase 1 of the MIS project and will be due for completion at the end of March 2005.

Review of Application Form

The standard application form has been revised. Discussions have taken place with the Equality Director regarding the recording of equality data.

In order to comply with legislation, an equal opportunities form is being developed in addition to application form.

Timeframe: 6 months

Web based Advertising:

This has been covered in detail in the response to recommendation 18 above .

Internal Deadlines

A draft 'timeline' has already been developed. Heads will be consulted and, with any appropriate amendments, put into practice. The 'timeline' will be recorded with other SOP's.

Timeframe: 1 year

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Training in Shortlisting

Short-listing is included as part of the Interviewer Skills Training course. However, after reviewing the content of the course a specific module on short-listing will be delivered in addition to the aforementioned courses.

Timeframe: It is envisaged that these courses will continue to be offered on a regular basis as part of an on going cycle of management training. There has been a high uptake on these courses with the full suite of management development courses running from September '04 to June '05.

Recruitment Screening Forms

These have been developed and will be put into practice. It will also be recorded as an SOP.

Timeframe: Over 1 Year

Interviewer Training

This is currently provided. In line with University Requirements, e.g. New Heads, Executive Deans, Senior Faculty Administrators are being targeted.

As with training in shortlisting outlined above, these courses will continue to be offered on a regular basis.

Information to Candidates:

The following items have been implemented:

1. Interview Schedule is provided to candidates at earliest opportunity, normally when the HR officers contact the candidates to arrange interviews.
2. If process is delayed a standard letter is sent to candidates to inform them of status i.e. HR will continue to provide training to Heads of School/Unit to ensure feedback is carried out appropriately.
3. 'Timeline' will be placed on web providing candidates with expected duration of competitions.

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION	
<p>20. (P2) Direct resources freed up by the devolution of some HRM tasks and arising from a reduction in board competition activity to improving the skills of line managers in managing their own recruitment and selection processes. (UNIT)</p>	<p>As stated above, the <u>HR</u> department is working continuously to improve the skills of line managers by providing a suite of management development courses which include interviewer skills training. <u>HR</u> believes there is a distinct added value in having experienced HR practitioners as members of interview boards, particularly for all long term and permanent contracts given the long term costs involved if poor recruitment decisions are taken.</p> <p>The move to Faculty structures with devolution of decision making in some areas to the faculty board levels still taking place and <u>HR</u> will be fully involved in assisting senior university management to develop a policy on what devolution of decision making will mean in practice. <i>Timeframe: Over 1 Year</i></p>
<p>21. (P1) <i>The HR Department should:</i> Further establish the HR role in relation to manpower planning in the University and thereby eliminate the current ad-hoc nature of this process. (UNIT)</p>	<p><u>HR</u> accepts the need to address manpower planning issues including coaching. In the period since the peer review visit in March '04 work on a pilot competency framework was carried out with an external consultant. The results of this were unsatisfactory and a decision has subsequently been taken to explore the competency framework used by the Public Sector.</p> <p>Implementation of this model for non-academic grades in the first instance is due for completion by the end of 2005. This will provide a basis for focussed discussions with Heads on their Human Resource requirements when replacing or hiring additional staff. The competency framework will ultimately form a direct link with the performance management and development system. <i>Timeframe: Over 1 Year</i></p>
<p>22. (P2) Develop a service for career counselling for staff, particularly following the outcome of application for promotion. (UNIT)</p>	<p><u>HR</u> currently has a number of programmes in place to assist staff in developing their careers including the <i>Getting Started Programme</i> and <i>Mid Career Management</i>, which includes an individual 2 hour counselling session with an external consultant. These programmes take place on a number of occasions each year.</p> <p>The performance management system and associated competency framework will also provide mechanisms to inform and prepare staff for career development opportunities as they arise. Post interview feedback is provided to all unsuccessful candidates by the chairperson of the interview board and by <u>HR</u>.</p>

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION	
<p>23. (P1) In liaison with Schools and Units ensure that there is an appropriate induction process in place. As part of this, induction should be standardised and delivered to a regular schedule. (UNIT)</p>	<p>There is currently a <i>University Orientation</i> carried out by the HR training and development function on a regular basis but HR recognises that it may not be always possible to provide timely induction depending on when a new staff member joins the university during the training cycle. HR has re-emphasised the need for Heads to provide induction training for new staff in their own areas during the management development sessions.</p> <p>A project team to work on a staff handbook has been set up by HR and work on the handbook has commenced. The first draft will be completed at the end of February 2005. The handbook will contain sections dedicated to providing practical information to new staff members whilst also providing general information to staff at all stages of the employee lifecycle</p>
<p><i>The HR Department and the University Should:</i></p>	
<p>24. Review the proposed introduction of Competency Based Interviewing. It was not clear to the panel why this was being introduced and if it was necessary. (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>Both the Equality report and the Jemstone Report identified a need for the introduction of competency based interviewing. As stated in response to item 21 above, HR will introduce a competency framework to help inform decisions on the appropriate grade for filling vacant posts as they arise. The competency framework will be used to inform recruitment decisions though it does not necessarily follow that the <u>university</u> will go down the route of competency based interviewing along the lines adopted by the Civil Service.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Timeframe: Over 1 Year</i></p>
<p>25. (P2) Review recruitment procedures to identify those which might be streamlined. This would include areas such as the composition of promotion boards. (HR, ESM)</p>	<p>The review of recruitment procedures has commenced with many of the issues self-identified by HR having been addressed through changes in, and communication of procedures. Additional efficiencies in the recruitment process will be gained through the adoption of a new MIS system. The greatest opportunities for improving efficiency in the recruitment process rest with utilising technology (web/e-forms) to automate much of the early application stages and to streamline and reduce duplication in data entry to the HR database systems.</p>

4. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

These points have been covered in response to recommendation 19 above. Phase 1 of the MIS project will be completed in March 2005 resulting in a specification for a HR MIS system going to tender later this year. Full implementation will take place before the end of 2006.

Timeframe: 18-24 months

In addition to the efficiencies mentioned above, the identification and targeting of new talent will require the active involvement of Heads and Professors who are aware of the "brightest and the best" in their own particular fields. HR will work with the Heads and Professors to explore more proactive methods of recruitment including search committees and targeted head hunting for succession planning purposes.

5. STRATEGIC LEVEL	
Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report	Response in Quality Improvement Plan
<p>(The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))</p>	
<p>26. (P1) Ensure consistency in the application of HR policies throughout the organisation e.g. contracts, promotion processes etc. (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> Department has identified the need to address knowledge management within the department so as to ensure consistent application of policies and procedures. As part of the MIS project a database of decisions and precedents will be made available to HR staff and subsequently to <u>Heads and managers</u> via web access to the HR MIS system. Consistent application of HR policies is ensured through regular weekly meetings where current HR issues are discussed by all the HR Officers. HR staff training has also been put in place with regular testing of staff knowledge on policies and procedures. A further bulwark in terms of ensuring consistent application of HR policies is through education of all staff on HR policies and procedures through the <i>SELF programme</i> and of Heads through the <i>Management Development Programme</i>.</p>
<p>27. (P1) Develop standard operating procedures. There are problems with the department's capacity to retain and transfer of knowledge in a wide variety of areas. Pensions Management is of particular concern. (UNIT)</p>	<p>Pensions management is currently being addressed within the <u>HR</u> Department through a process of re-allocation of workloads.</p> <p>Secondly, the automation of pension administration processes is being investigated as part of the MIS project.</p>

5. STRATEGIC LEVEL

<p>28. (P1) Review on an ongoing basis and in line with process initiated in the Shape Report, the efficiency and effectiveness of existing policies and procedures. This will ensure that the profile of the HR department is perceived as efficient and effective. (UNIT)</p>	<p>As part of the MIS project, metrics will be developed for HR policies and procedures which will allow <u>HR</u> to measure their efficiency and effectiveness over time. These will include data on sick leave, attendance and associated costs.</p> <p>Due to the ever increasing body of employment legislation, <u>HR</u> policies and procedures are invariably under constant review. <u>HR</u> will measure the impact of legislative change on the university's HR procedures annually.</p> <p>It was always <u>HR</u>'s intention to conduct regular surveys of staff opinion and the <i>Shape</i> Report as a benchmark against which to measure HR trends within DCU. See response to recommendation 29 below.</p>
<p>29. (P2) In order to assess improvements in specific areas, maintain ongoing reviews through mechanisms such as staff surveys. (UNIT)</p>	<p>In 2002, the <u>HR</u> department initiated a staff survey, which resulted in the Shape report. This report indicated staff views on HR policies and procedures whilst testing the temperature of staff attitudes to university management more generally. The Shape Report together with the Equality audit of 2003 and the Jemstone Report on non-academic staff have been critical drivers in helping <u>HR</u> to focus its services to the needs of its clients, both staff and management. The <u>HR</u> department is committed to running a similar staff survey on a regular basis, the next one being scheduled for 2006.</p>
<p>30. Ensure that HR staff members remain knowledgeable and up to date on HR issues, in line with an effective department. (UNIT)</p>	<p><u>HR</u> staff continue to undertake further professional and educational development. <u>HR</u> staff attend IBEC sponsored programmes and other information sharing opportunities on an ongoing basis.</p>

5. STRATEGIC LEVEL

<p>31. (P1) At University level, the HR Department should: Leverage its strategic role through its place on the senior management team. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> department, by having the HR Director as a member of the senior management team has brought forward a number of initiatives that are having a strategic impact on how DCU operates. These include the Partnership Programme to foster a spirit of collaborative decision-making on a number of issues between management and staff. This has included recommendations for the introduction of flexitime, the review of job titles and new reward and recognition schemes. By championing the introduction of the Performance Management and Development System the <u>HR</u> Department has set in motion a process, which will have a profound effect on how performance of staff will be aligned with departmental and university strategic goals. The <u>HR</u> department is having a strategic impact on management processes within the University by putting in place a comprehensive management development programme.</p>
<p>32. (P2) The HR Department should revisit the HR strategic plan in order to identify clear themes that will engage both the department and the rest of the University in a clear sense of direction for HR activity. At present the plan is couched in quite static terms; refocusing the component elements to a more action-oriented approach would result in more engagement from its various stakeholders. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> Department does not accept that its strategic plan is static. The plan has been designed to take account of feedback from the Shape Report, Jemstone Report and the Quality Review. It emphasises modernisation and integration of processes through the extensive use of IT and is designed to support the implementation of Leading Change. There have been a number of iterations of the strategic plan but the overall thrust remains the same: Ensure dependable systems and processes, engage with clients' both managers and staff and develop pioneering solutions to the challenges posed to the University operating in a highly competitive environment. (See section 4: Summary of One-Year Plan). A comprehensive management development plan has been put in place and there has been a high uptake by managers on the courses provided to date. Additional staff have been recruited within <u>HR</u> to enable the department deliver a challenging programme of internal improvement while supporting line management, staff development and support for strategic initiatives including performance management, partnership programmes, work life balance initiatives such as flexitime and term time leave. <u>HR</u> staff have been given dedicated responsibility for the MIS project (2 years) and to Performance Management and Development.</p>

5. STRATEGIC LEVEL	
<p>33. (P1) In line with a revised, HR strategic plan, there should be a clear set of actions, critical success factors and performance metrics for each element of the plan, together with a timeline for delivery. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The current University Strategic Plan, <i>Leading Change</i> is due for completion at the end of 2005. Planning for the next phase of University development has already commenced. The HR strategy will be informed by the University's strategic objectives. This will enable the <u>HR</u> department to identify what it has to deliver in order to help the University attain its goals.</p>
<p>34. (P2) It would be useful to provide an employee version of the strategic plan that identifies how employees may benefit from a strategic approach to HRM. This could take in all stages of the employee life-cycle. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> Department agrees that this would be a useful document and intends to publish an employee version of the final plan when the current amendments are in place.</p>
<p>35. (P2) The HR department should work with others, including senior management, to map out new roles for HR in the future, especially in light of the expected devolution to managers of HR activities (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> department will work with <u>senior management</u> and relevant external bodies to examine best practice and to develop solutions to sectoral issues on that basis.</p>
<p><i>The HR Department should:</i></p>	
<p>36. (P1) Work to integrate the currently separate activities of the department into an effective and coherent HR system. (UNIT)</p>	<p>During phase 1 of the HR MIS project, the various processes within <u>HR</u> are being mapped out with a view to identifying process improvements and areas where processes can be rationalised. This will provide an opportunity to automate many of the HR processes and create real value by linking HR systems with payroll and other systems.</p>

5. STRATEGIC LEVEL

<p>37. (P2) Clarify the areas where the HR Department adds real value to DCU processes, as identified in the Self Assessment Report, and focus on developing these further. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The eight areas identified in the HR plan and Self Assessment report provide the framework for the process improvement projects which will be carried out in the coming months. These areas are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support for Senior & Line Management 2. Communications 3. Information Systems 4. Improving HR Administration including Pensions 5. Recruitment & Selection 6. Training & development 7. Performance Management 8. Welfare/Work-life Balance Initiatives
<p>38. (P2) Develop a system, with a set of metrics, for internal evaluation of the department and its processes. (UNIT)</p>	<p>Metrics for evaluation of internal HR processes are being developed as part of the MIS project</p>
<p>39. (P1) Review mechanisms for service provision to campus companies with a view to whether or not it would be appropriate to charge for advice and support (UNIT)</p>	<p>This review will be carried out in 2005.</p>

5. STRATEGIC LEVEL

<p>40. (P2) <i>The HR Department and the University should:</i> Consider the devolution of some recruitment and selection activities to Schools and Units, thus freeing up time for the HR officers to engage in a wider range of activities. (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>For contracts of a limited duration, e.g. one year, this process is devolved to the <u>unit</u> level. For permanent or long term contracts, it is important that all processes are managed consistently given the costs involved. As stated in response to recommendation 20 above, the <u>HR</u> department is working continuously to improve the skills of line managers by providing a suite of management development courses, which include interviewer skills training. <u>HR</u> believes there is a distinct added value in having experienced HR practitioners as members of interview boards, particularly for all long term and permanent contracts given the long term costs involved if poor recruitment decisions are taken.</p> <p>The move to Faculty structures with devolution of decision making in some areas to the faculty board levels still taking place and <u>HR</u> will be fully involved in assisting <u>senior university management</u> to develop a policy on what devolution of decision making will mean in practice. <i>Timeframe: Over 1 Year</i></p>
<p>41. Ensure that the planned training and development of Heads as part of the devolution of some HRM tasks is linked to suitable career and reward management structures for this group. Adding performance management tasks could make the role more unattractive, particularly to academics. (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>A sub group of the <u>Partnership forum</u> including representatives from <u>HR</u> has been working on a reward and recognition scheme for non-academic staff. It may be possible, subject to approval from <u>Executive</u>, to extend this concept to academic staff subject to agreed criteria being established. For example, it is possible to envisage various reward mechanisms for academic staff who take on the mantle of Head of School to include such possibilities as the awarding of sabbatical leave directly after a period of headship in order to catch up on research activity. The suite of management development courses on offer provide a framework on which staff in situ and who aspire to the role of Head may attain the skills required in that role.</p>

5. STRATEGIC LEVEL

42. (P1)

HR officers should themselves be developed further in order to be well equipped to develop Heads of Department in recruitment and selections skills.

(UNIT, ESM)

As per the response to recommendation 30 above, a number of HR staff continue to undertake further professional and educational development. The staff attend IBEC sponsored programmes and other information sharing opportunities on an ongoing basis. HR staff continue to receive specialist training in areas relevant to specific projects. This training includes project management skills, presentation skills, SQL and database skills. All new HR officers are required to attend standardised recruitment training facilitated by external consultants. Further development opportunities will be availed of in the areas of conflict resolution strategies, employment law, facilitation skills and investigator training for bullying and harassment cases.

6. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	
Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report	Response in Quality Improvement Plan
<p>(The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))</p>	
<p>43. (P1) Conduct a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis independent of Performance Management and crosscheck this assessment against the performance management findings (UNIT)</p>	<p>A method and approach has now been drafted by <u>Training & Development</u> with a view to implementation by December 2005. This will focus on Heads, Departmental and staff needs. This has been facilitated by the recent appointment of an additional training and development officer.</p>
<p>44. (P1) <i>The HR Department should:</i> Create a training calendar for each semester and publish this at least one month before start of each semester. (UNIT)</p>	<p>The full programme of events are now on the web and have been advertised by <u>HR</u> with more than one months notice. A composite of all training courses will be placed on the web as a pdf file by February 2005. It is planned to include some information on how staff should avail of development opportunities in the forthcoming staff handbook.</p>
<p>45. (P2) Define "HR training" as a separate entity from all other training. (UNIT)</p>	<p>Training courses with specific HR content have been designed and delivered as part of a management development programme. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Role of Heads in Managing University Policies • Managing Grievance and Disciplinary Issues • Managing the Probationary Process - <i>The First Year of Employment</i> • Managing the Recruitment Process - <i>From Advert to Interview</i>

6. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

46. (P1)

Ensure HR staff receive appropriate and ongoing training and development to equip them to take on new roles and responsibilities. While it is acknowledged that many staff within the HR department are undertaking qualification courses in HRM, there is a need to ensure that there is specific skill development provided in line with the direction taken by the Department.

(UNIT)

As per the response to recommendations 30 and 42 above, a number of HR staff continue to undertake further professional and educational development. The staff attend IBEC sponsored programmes and other information sharing opportunities on an ongoing basis. HR staff continue to receive specialist training in areas relevant to specific projects. This training includes project management skills, presentation skills, SQL and database skills.

Each member of the HR staff has participated in the pilot performance management and development system, which has a strong focus on identifying development needs and opportunities.

47. (P2)

Undertake extensive target audience analysis before a project or training class is conducted.

(UNIT)

See response under item 43

48. (P1)

Make as much use as possible of existing DCU resources including linkages with academic departments within DCU when developing new programmes.

(UNIT, Schools and Units)

HR has utilised internal resources through the 'Training for Trainers Programme' including expertise from Academic (Electronic Engineering, SALIS and the Business School) and administrative (Registry, Faculty Offices and the Equality Office) departments.

6. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	
<p>49. (P1) Develop and establish a defined method of programme/course creation. (UNIT)</p>	<p>Method used by <u>HR</u> to design programmes includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying the audience for the training • analysing their training needs • developing objectives for the training that are tailored to the needs of the audience • creating a mind map to highlight the areas for inclusion in the training • designing each of the areas within the mind map • piloting the programme to identify design changes required.
<p>50. (P1) Include mentoring as a key element of any staff development programme. (UNIT)</p>	<p><u>HR</u> is piloting a coaching and mentoring skills training programme for Heads of Schools and Units. The focus of this programme is to equip these Managers with a set of management skills and interpersonal techniques to effectively coach their staff. This is being offered as one of several management development modules.</p> <p>Piloting executive coaching is being developed by <u>HR</u> for newly appointed Deans/Heads of School to support them in their role as Managers of faculties and or schools/units.</p>
<p>51. (P1) Undertake regular monitoring and analysis of outcomes of training programmes, including the use of metrics, which must be established before courses begin and monitored for all courses and programmes. Recommendations for additional or future courses can be derived from this. (UNIT)</p>	<p>This is done with the analysis pre-course form and post-evaluation form. With the help of local management, <u>HR</u> intends to identify, where appropriate, changed and or new behaviours following completion of the training.</p>
<p>52. Use multiple mediums to communicate training schedule (UNIT)</p>	<p><u>HR</u> is currently using the web and direct email. Information on how to avail of training opportunities will be included in the staff handbook, which will be issued to all staff in 2005.</p>

6. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

<p>53. Ensure that when cross-campus or diagonal-slice meetings/focus groups are held in relation to the Strategic Plan, the Training and Development Officer attends with a view to ensuring that training can be put in place in time to facilitate change (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>With the current strategic plan coming to an end, the Director of HR will be actively involved in its design and implementation. The <u>Director of HR</u> will facilitate the full involvement of <u>Training and Development</u> in this process.</p>
<p>54. (P1) <i>The University should:</i> Develop and devote resources to a core training curriculum for staff to engender a culture of staff development. (UNIT, ESM)</p>	<p>The <u>university</u> has provided resources so that Specific management development programmes have been able to be launched together with programmes for all staff. These programmes will be evaluated in June in conjunction with the Training Needs Analysis. Please see the HR website www.dcu.ie/hr/index.shtml.</p>

7. WORK LIFE BALANCE	
Recommendation in Peer Review Group Report	Response in Quality Improvement Plan
<p>(The appropriate level of the response is given in brackets, be that at the level of the Unit (UNIT), or University Executive Senior Management (ESM))</p>	
<p>55. (P1) <i>The HR Department should:</i> Gather appropriate data, best practice information and research materials to outline the case to senior management for new initiatives in this area. (UNIT)</p>	<p>New initiatives in Work-Life Balance have been identified as part of work carried out through the Partnership Forum. These include policies on flexitime and term-time leave. Approval for implementation of these policies from <u>Executive</u> is expected during 2005.</p> <p>In addition to those mentioned above, Health Screening and Employee Assistance Programmes have also been identified as areas to be addressed under work life balance initiatives. However, constraints in funding will preclude implementation of these initiatives during 2005.</p>
<p>56. (P1) Work collaboratively with the Equality office to identify top three issues that cause "imbalance" and address those. (UNIT, Equality Office)</p>	<p>The <u>HR</u> Department is exploring ways of working collaboratively with the <u>Equality Office</u> to identify the top three issues that cause imbalance.</p>

3. **PRIORITISED RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

This section should only contain a list, prioritised by the Quality Implementation Committee, of resource requirements necessary to implement the recommendations outlined in the Self- Assessment and Peer Review Group Reports. Estimates of the cost involved should also be included.

Resources for Quality Improvement will be allocated by the University under 2 separate funds:

- A. The HEA Quality Assurance Programme (funded under the National Development Plan) has a sub measure for *Quality Improvement following Quality Review*. Each year, the HEA allocate a sum of money to the University to be used to fund some of the recommendations from Quality Review Reports. In total the University received €80K in both 2002 and 2003 for this purpose.
- B. In addition, the University sets aside a portion of its core Budget, under the sub-heading: *Quality Promotion and Strategic Development Fund*) to fund Quality Improvement measures arising from the recommendations in Quality Review Reports.

3.1 **Information Systems**

One of the key areas to be addressed is the upgrading of our IT infrastructure to allow us to provide timely, accurate data to our stakeholders. An architectural review will be carried out on our existing systems to ascertain if they can be further developed to provide seamless transfer of information to other university systems and provide us with additional functionality in the areas of reporting and distributed access. If the outcome of this review results in a requirement for new software solutions then there may be a requirement for a substantial capital investment of the order of **€150,000**. This estimate is based on data provided by major software vendors who specialise in the area of HR systems. The benefits in terms of streamlined work flow through an integrated HR and payroll system should result in speedier access to key data. Time currently spent entering attendance data manually from records supplied by Schools and Units can be freed up by utilising the Core Time package for recording this information. This package is currently in use by units which operate flexitime and could be adopted for recording all leave types in other departments.

3.2 **Publishing & Communication Costs**

As part of our communications strategy, we have endeavoured to provide information to our line managers and staff via the Web and through seminars such as the SELF programme. The third pillar to this strategy is the provision of written information distributed throughout the work place in the form of staff handbooks and newsletters. The provision of written materials will require the investment of **€12,000** to cover production and printing costs.

3.3 Competency Framework

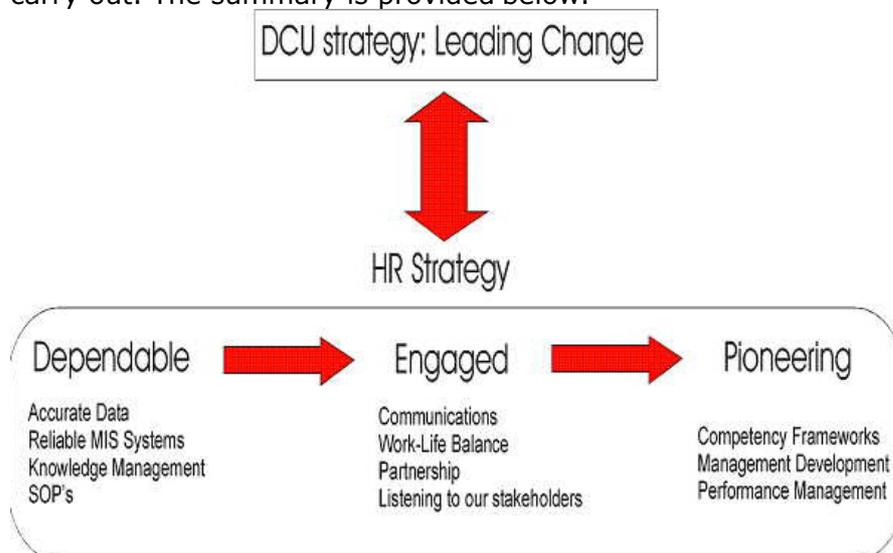
The development of a competency framework for the majority of grades within the university will have a profound effect on recruitment and selection processes, succession planning, training and development policies and management development within the organisation. A pilot programme has already been carried out with external consultants and the estimated cost of providing the competency framework 16-20 job types is **€40,000**.

3.4 HR Team Skills Development & Upgrade

The HR Team are undertaking an enormous amount of project development work in order to provide dependable IT systems, engagement with our stakeholders and innovative solutions to complex problems. While many of the skills to carry out these projects are present within the HR team, it will be necessary to provide additional training and skills development for HR staff in areas that have not been seen in the traditional HR skillset. These include project management skills, an appreciation of the technical complexities of electronic databases, techniques for knowledge management and courseware development. In addition, there is a requirement to have HR staff fully conversant in employment legislation, conflict resolution strategies, facilitation skills and investigator training for bullying and harassment cases. The estimated cost associated with such development is **€12,000**.

4. SUMMARY OF THE ONE-YEAR PLAN

The HR one-year plan consists of a number of activities that will allow us to support the University strategy, Leading Change by being Dependable, Engaged and Pioneering in terms of the functions we carry out. The summary is provided below.



The HR Strategic includes a further breakdown of our initiatives into eight main groups/areas:

- Support for Senior & Line Management
- Communications
- Information Systems
- Improving HR Administration including Pensions
- Recruitment & Selection
- Training & development
- Performance Management
- Welfare/Work-life Balance Initiatives

A summary of planned actions to be undertaken within the first year is outlined below. Further details can be found in the responses to the various recommendations above and in the overall HR plan as outlined in Section 5 Summary of the 5 Year Plan.

Support for Senior & Line Management

- Conduct a Training Needs Analysis for Heads
- Source and develop a suite of modular courses as part of a management development initiative.
- Develop a Competency Framework, which will provide data for manpower planning, recruitment, promotion, performance management and focussed individual development.

Communications

- Publish Staff Handbooks
- Further development of the HR website
- Publish pensions information for staff.
- Publish Service Level Agreements.

Information Systems

- Improve reporting functionality of current C-docs system by using Discover Reporting Tool.
- Define specification of IT requirements based on criteria such as on-line applications for recruitment, staff self-service access to personnel records, automated/devolved leave & attendance recording.
- Architectural Review of current C-docs system to evaluate if it can meet our future needs.

Improving HR Administration

- Initiate documentation of standard operating procedures within HR for all routine procedures and processes.
- Improvement Knowledge Management within HR by placing SOP's, FAQ's and precedents used in decision making on a searchable database within the HR intranet.

Recruitment & Selection

- Use data from Competency framework to develop job specification and person specification templates to assist Heads in job design. Specifications to include key result areas and deliverables so as to link with Performance Management System.
- Continue Recruitment Training for Heads/others involved
- Implement self-identified recommendations for improvement as outlined in the response to the PRG above.

Training & Development

- Conduct Training Needs Analysis for Heads.
- Publish Training Calendar.
- Continue to support the roll out of Performance Management to all staff.

Performance Management

- Manage the Pilot Performance Management Scheme and adjust roll-out of university wide PMDS accordingly.

Welfare/Work-life Balance Initiatives

- Launch campus wide initiative on flexitime to all staff.
- Launch campus wide initiative on Term-Time Leave to all staff.
- Improve managers' awareness of Work life balance issues and university policies through workshops and publications.

5. SUMMARY OF THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN

5.1 Introduction

DCU developed a comprehensive strategy for development for the period 2001-2005 entitled "Leading Change". This HR strategic plan is a downstream outcome of the university strategic plan and aims to put people at the heart of DCU. Our staff are our most valued resource. In monetary terms 70% of the university budget is allocated to staff costs but the real value lies in the intellectual abilities, the innovation and the dynamic approach of our staff.

This plan aims to enhance and develop the services that the HR Department provides for the University community. DCU aims to ensure that top quality staff are attracted, supported, developed and retained by addressing their needs and aspirations. The department has both a strategic and service orientation.

The department is developing an ethos, which is enabling rather than controlling, allowing it to provide strategic advice and guidance throughout the University.

The department recognises that to be fully effective in helping to shape and support the strategic aims of the university it must be:

- **Dependable** – meaning totally reliable procedures and systems that allow us to carry out our functions quickly and effectively.
- **Engaged** – meaning actively listening to the senior management, line managers and staff and reacting positively and supportively to their concerns.
- **Pioneering** – Addressing issues faced by the University community with a creative and forward looking approach.

Each of the above stages is built upon the preceding one. If we do not have dependable systems and procedures then we will not be in a position to engage with our stakeholders and will lack credibility when suggesting strategic options. The HR strategic plan aims to address all of these issues and to place us in a position to actively engage with the development of the next university wide strategic plan.

5.2 Mission

Our Mission is to support the University strategic objectives as outlined in *Leading Change* by ensuring that all staff perform to their optimum level in a rewarding and supportive environment.

5.3 Planning Background

The Human Resources Department has been engaged in a number of consultative activities and development sessions over the past 18 months, all of which have provided input to our strategic plan. These activities have included:

- *ShaPe* report August 2002
- Focus Groups
- External consultants working with HR
- Team Building
- Strategic Plan Exercise
- Personal Development Planning
- *Jemstone* Consultancy Report on progression for non-academic staff.
- Interim Equality Audit Report September 03
- Report of the Quality Review-Peer Review Group, June 2004.

These activities have provided us with feedback on our performance and general perceptions about HR in the university community. This feedback, together with a desire to move from being a service provider to a more strategic consultative and supportive body, have formed the basis of this strategic plan.

Environmental Factors

A number of internal and external environmental factors are having an impact on how DCU conducts its business. These include:

- New legislative requirements such as the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term working) Act 2003, Protection of Employees (Part-time working) Act 2001.
- Demographic changes resulting in a drop in the number of 17-18 year olds looking for third level places with knock on effects in terms of funding for third level institutions.
- A drop in real terms in funding from central government.
- Uncertainty regarding future funding for research for which commitments have already been made.
- New management structures within the university as a result of *Leading Change*.
- The devolution of key decision making to Faculty level as a result of the appointment of Executive Deans.

All of these issues will have an impact on how we recruit and deploy staff among the various schools and units in the coming years.

5.4 Core Principles on which this plan is founded:

- **Fairness & Equity**

The Human Resources Department will approach all issues within our remit with a view to dealing with them fairly and equitably. This will mean providing clear information as to how decisions were made and a general openness regarding how procedures operate with a particular emphasis on recruitment and promotion practices.

DCU is, and will continue to be an equal opportunities employer in the truest sense of the term. The role of HR is to ensure that all recruitment and career progression of staff will take place free from discrimination under the nine grounds of gender, disability, race, religion, age, marital status, family status, sexual orientation or member of the travelling community.

- **Trust**

The Human Resources Department recognises Trust between managers and employees as a vital ingredient in providing an excellent working environment. The HR department will promote trust and co-operation between managers and their staff through the provision of a guiding framework for managers for dealing with staffing issues. The success of this framework will be evidenced by staff having a belief that DCU provides fair and equitable outcomes for issues raised. The Human Resources Department can be relied upon to abide by agreements entered into with the union and with individuals.

- **Maximising Employee Potential**

Human Resources through its Training and Development section is committed to the support and promotion of staff development and training. The overall purpose of Training and Development is to maximise the potential of staff by developing their knowledge, skills and attitudes through challenging development opportunities. This will enrich the careers of staff within DCU together with facilitating greater efficiency and effectiveness for the organisation as a whole.

- **Our Clients: Managers, Staff & Prospective Employees**

The Human Resources Department recognises that our clients are the senior and line managers with day to day responsibility for managing their staff effectively and the staff themselves who have an absolute right to be treated fairly with respect and courtesy at all times. Candidates for positions and promotions in DCU are also our clients and they can expect to be treated with courtesy, confidentiality and professionalism. The HR department strategic plan is built around improving the service to all our clients and providing them with timely and accurate information together with support and encouragement in their working life.

- **Communications**

The Human Resources Department recognises that effective communications with our clients is vital. We will improve communications to staff and managers through a three-pronged approach consisting of:

- Web based documentation,
- Hard copy policies and staff handbooks distributed to the work place.
- Group seminars and one to one consultations with staff.

- **Use of IT**

The core principle here is that we will use Information Technology to improve the flow of information to staff, provide staffing information on-line to managers and use technology to automate and enhance many of the current HR processes.

- **Evaluation & Follow Through**

The Human Resources Department will evaluate, monitor and review progress in implementing our strategic plan on a four monthly basis. The plan runs until the end of 2005 which coincides with the time frame for Leading Change and Sustaining Progress.

We have outlined key success indicators in relation to the projects listed. Many of these outcomes can only be measured by attitude surveys conducted with our staff. The Human Resources Department is committed to undertaking at least two more general staff surveys during the period of this strategic plan.

APPENDIX ONE

Members of the Unit Quality Committee (for the Self-Assessment Report)

Marian Burns, Director of HR.
Joe Maxwell, Quality Review Co-ordinator.
Martin Leavy/Sorcha Kelly, Training & Development.
Norma Wilkinson/Emer McMahon, HR Officers
Brenda Dempsey/Mary Donnelly, HR Officers.
Patricia Rochford/Elaine McGuirk, Secretarial Support.

Members of the Peer Review Group

Mr Jim Duffy, Assistant Secretary, Centre for Management & Organisation development, Department of Finance, Dublin (Chair)
Ms Paula E Zagora, Assistant Vice President Human Resources, University at Buffalo, New York, USA
Ms Margaret Ramsay, Head of Personnel, University College Dublin
Prof. Kathy Monks, Dublin City University Business School, DCU
Ms Margaret O'Flanagan, Education & Management Analysis, Registry, DCU (Rapporteur)

Members of the Unit Quality Committee (for the Quality Improvement Plan)

Marian Burns, Director of HR.
Joe Maxwell, Quality Review Co-ordinator.
Martin Leavy, Training & Development officer
Colette Walsh, HR Manager
Norma Wilkinson HR Officer
Emer McMahon, HR Officer
Brenda Dempsey, HR Officer.
Jennifer Butler, HR Officer
Dearbhla Cunningham, HR Officer