



OÉ Gaillimh
NUI Galway

STRATEGIC REVIEW

COLLEGE OF ARTS, SOCIAL SCIENCES & CELTIC STUDIES

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND GALWAY

29th June 2016

College of ASSCS Review Group

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Executive Summary

The College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies Review Group was commissioned by the Registrar's Office to carry out a root-and-branch review of College programmes and structures. The Review Group is mostly comprised of College members, including representatives from all six Schools (including five Heads of School), two Research Institutes, representation across academic ranks and support staff. Through data analysis, internal and external consultations and review, we have made strategic recommendations in four key areas: undergraduate programmes, postgraduate programmes, research, and structures and governance. All recommendations were made from a College perspective, so that broad strategic interests of the College took precedence over individual preferences. Our recommendations are grounded in a solid and transparent evidence base, and the Review Group recommends movement towards more rigorous data-driven, evidence-based decision-making processes in the future.

Our College's strengths lie in its diversity of disciplines and programmes, its strong international reputation for teaching and research excellence and its dedicated academic and support staff. Recent decreases in undergraduate numbers, current demographics of our traditional catchment area, a fragmented approach to our postgraduate programme, and cumbersome and inflexible decision-making structures threaten to weaken our standing both internally and externally. We see the Review Group as an opportunity to address these pressing issues and affect positive change. If our recommendations contained herein are implemented, we envisage a College that is internationally-renowned, with innovative research-led teaching that produces graduates who are knowledgeable, well-rounded global citizens, and which is well-equipped for robust and agile evidence-based forward planning. Implementation of recommendations over the short- to long-term will align our College with Vision 2020, and better position us to thrive in the near and distant future.

DATA, CONSULTATIONS AND REVIEW

Key data was compiled and analysed by Kilian Dooley, Secretary of the Review Group. Recent reports and surveys from NUIG and Ireland were also consulted, including the Millward Brown Report, CAO/Admission Officer Reports, BA Connect Progression Analysis, Decliners & Acceptors for Arts Surveys, AHECS Graduate Employability Surveys, GradIreland 15/16 Survey Results and past BA Reform documentation. The College Office compiled data on postgraduate programmes which was previously unavailable.

Throughout the review process, the Review Group has consulted widely with stakeholders from NUI Galway, Ireland and abroad. The Review Group has sought input from all College staff through School structures, and has consulted with all Heads of School in the College individually. We have consulted with key interests within the College, including Postgraduate Programme Directors and BA Connect Programme Directors, all College Office staff and the Dean of the College. We have also met with the President, Registrar, Academic Secretary, Director of Quality, VP for Innovation and Performance, Director of Student Services, University Librarian, Marketing and Communications Office and the Mature Students Officer, among other key stakeholders at NUI Galway.

Within Ireland, we met with the Head of College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences at University College Cork and the Dean of Arts, Celtic Studies and Philosophy at Maynooth University.

We hosted two External Reviewers who each visited with the Review Group in Galway and provided feedback on our recommendations: Prof Sarah Prescott, Director of the Institute for Literature, Language and Creative Art, Aberystwyth University; and Prof Robby Ó Maolalaigh Vice-Principal/Head of the College of Arts, University of Glasgow (see Appendix B).

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

A broad synopsis of recommendations follows, with more detailed analysis in the ensuing sections.

1. Undergraduate Programmes

Reduced undergraduate intake and subsequent lowering of CAO points has hurt the internal and external perception of the College. It is clear that a fundamental change in the structure of the undergraduate degree is needed (particularly GY101), and that any such developments require a heavily promoted re-launch, with GY101 as our flagship, signalling to the external world the scale of our commitment to re-energise our programme. The potential name of the degree has not yet been established, but there is agreement that it should be concise, carefully chosen and piloted with target groups in conjunction with Marketing & Communications.

Our recommendations aim to preserve the diverse range of large and small disciplines in the College, and to ensure that all of the proposed new configurations meet Teaching Council regulations.

Summary Recommendations:

- **The GY101 programme will have a core strand, or pillar, which extends through each year** whose primary purpose is the development of academic and transferrable skills which are not delineated by disciplinary boundaries. A Programme Director will oversee GY101 to assure programme coherence and assist in implementation.
 - **15 ECTS to be identified in Year 1** and allocated to a combination of Core Academic Skills Development, led by Personal Tutors, and a Thematic/Multi-disciplinary strand.
 - The acquisition of Academic Skills modules could be facilitated in a number of ways, integrating with existing provision in the Library, SUMS and the Academic Writing Centre, and using existing resources such as [skills4study online lessons](#), for example.
 - **10 ECTS, at a minimum, should be identified in each of years 2 and 3 for a combination of further ‘thematic’ options**, employability and communication skills development.
- **A substantial and robust system of personal tutors/mentoring for students in the College is essential.** The purpose of mentoring would be to develop transferable academic skills (10 ECTS in Year 1), and will help to partially address issues of first-year student engagement. Mentoring arrangements should be organised centrally by the College, and should be factored into existing workload planning.
- **Proliferation of 4-year denominated degrees should continue**, which will be high-performance and subject to rolling review. The College has made strides in increasing denominated 4-year opportunities with the development of both recent and emerging programmes. These programmes have demonstrated to attract high-calibre students and

potentially lower the burden on GY101. We should aim to build on recent successes, and continue to identify, develop and resource programmes that will be both attractive to students and build on existing and emerging areas of excellence.

- We have made a number of **recommendations to enhance graduate employability**, including: an optional Year 3 for work-based learning, professional internships and creativity pathways; transferrable skills and careers education within revised programmes or through the core/pillar structure; and the introduction of Diploma Supplements, where students acquire additional skills and experiences to earn a range of awards (volunteering, leadership, entrepreneurship, etc.).

2. Postgraduate Programmes

Our recommendations for postgraduate programmes will form the basis for a College-level strategy in supporting, coordinating and marketing the diverse range of programmes available across the College.

Summary Recommendations:

- **A CASSCS Graduate School, encompassing all taught postgraduate (PGT) and research postgraduate (PGR) programmes, should be formed.** The College urgently needs a structure for ensuring the best use of resources, coherence of programmes, strategic analysis and innovation, marketing and forward planning in relation to postgraduate programmes.
- The inclusion of both PGT and PGR in the Graduate School should be exploited to enhance the sense of a **graduate community**, driven by rigorous and systematic research activity.
- On the principles of shared and collective oversight, transparency, equality, and mutual support, the **Graduate School Executive (GSE), chaired by the Vice-/Associate Dean of Graduate Studies**, should offer strategic analysis of resources required, best practices, opportunities for innovation and efficiency. A fully functioning GSE will strengthen and advocate for postgraduate programmes across the College, promoting the principles of accountability and oversight.
- **Enhanced efficiency and recruitment for PGT programmes** can be accomplished through the proposed College Graduate School structures.
 - Review of programme efficiencies should take account of a programme's performance over more than one year and be based on the evidence of annual reports, including number of students, MA to PhD conversion and the number of students registered on shared modules.
 - Recruitment will be enhanced through targeted fees reductions for returning JYA students, strategic reductions in fees for select programmes in School of LLC, promotion of online and blended learning modules/programmes, and development of clear MA-PhD pathways, among other initiatives.
- **PhD recruitment can be enhanced** through Structured PhD Pathway programmes (MA to PhD), development and promotion of part-time programmes, coherent marketing of non-residential/distance doctoral degrees, promotion of article-based and practice-based PhDs and the introduction of fees-only scholarships, among other initiatives.

3. Research

Given the diversity of interests, collaborations and research leadership across the College, strategic research coordination is vital.

Summary Recommendations:

- The **Vice-/Associate Dean for Research** role should be revised to focus on strategic coordination and promotion of a College-wide research agenda. This role must include advocacy and representation of all research interests across the College. The role also must supply 'added value' to activities currently conducted within various Research Institutes, Centres and individually.
- **The College Research Committee should be reinstated** to spearhead strategic research leadership and foster a good flow of communication. As part of its remit, the College Research Committee (to include representatives from all affiliated Research Institutes and Schools) should devise a College research strategy.
- A better and more rigorous system for measuring research outputs must be agreed as a matter of urgency. Currently, the range of excellent research activity and production across the College is often invisible to the wider University community and externally. This situation disadvantages the College as a whole, as well as promotion and mobility prospects for individual academics, and cannot be perpetuated. We recommend a series of steps to **develop relevant research metrics for the College and enhance support structures**, with the goal of improving the College's research prosperity and quality accreditation (p. 25).

4. Structures and Governance

Strategies for structures and governance were formulated with the core principles of flexibility, collegiality, diversity (of academic expertise) and informed decision-making.

Summary Recommendations:

- There is a need for **more efficient forms of decision-making and better communication of information through university structures**. To this end, we recommend the following:
 - That the university centrally involve Deans in decision-making at UMT level.
 - That the College have three new Vice-/Associate Dean roles: Vice-/Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Vice-/Associate Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Vice-/Associate Dean for Research.
 - That the creation of a new College Executive which would comprise the Dean, the three Vice-/Associate Deans and the six heads of School.
- Currently, support services and academic structures are poorly integrated. While this lies outside the remit of the Review Group, **a working group should be established to better integrate support services personnel into the College's strategic planning**, including the appropriate representatives from HR, marketing, the library, the International Office and other relevant units.
 - We note a **special concern with the number of students in distress** who present themselves for assistance to the College Office for assistance, and make recommendations herein.
 - It is clear that **information support for planning and business intelligence** is lacking at the College level.
- The transition from departments to Schools has had mixed levels of success. Uneven School sizes have also raised issues of equity at the College level. **A working group should be established to explore optimal School configuration**. While it is clear that there is no pressing need for a broad reconfiguration of the Schools, minor re-arrangements should not be ruled out.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In order to effectively implement the recommendations herein, strategic resource allocation will be required. Required resources include:

- a) **2-year resource allocation to develop an effective marketing strategy**, coordinate and promote the re-launch of the College's undergraduate programmes.
- b) **Education Developer (3-year full-time post)** to design, coordinate and implement the Core Academic Skills programme for first-year CASSCS students.
- c) **Work-Placement Officer for CASSCS (permanent full-time post)** to facilitate our renewed emphasis on graduate employability and coordinate expanded workplace learning offerings.
- d) **Erasmus and International Exchange Support for CASSCS (permanent full-time post)** to facilitate expanded Erasmus and international placements through new programmes.
- e) **Full teaching buyout for the three new Vice-/Associate Deanships** (in Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies and Research) for the first three years of each post.
- f) **Establishment of a 'Common Room' for CASSCS graduate students** to encourage interdisciplinary relationships and collaborations.

The proposed implementation plan highlights short- and medium-term implementation goals to enable the College to thrive in the near and distant future. *A projected timeline for resource allocation and implementation of key recommendations is presented in Section 5.2.*

SWOT Analysis

MISSION: To foster the creation of new knowledge in a research-led College that actively promotes critical thinking, societal engagement, and the creation of graduates who are well-rounded, socially aware, knowledgeable, and highly skilled citizens of the world.

STRENGTHS

- Commitment to teaching and research in a broad and diverse range of subject areas.
- A strong research culture with high numbers of postgraduate students; staff involvement in vibrant research institutes (Moore, Whitaker, ILAS, Ryan); success in securing international funding; and many high quality monographs, articles and other publications.
- A commitment to teaching excellence and student engagement across the College.
- Many successful denominated degree programmes, attracting students with high points from within and beyond the traditional catchment area.
- A strong tradition of engaging in research-led activities that have a measurable social, cultural, political and/or community impact.
- Home to some of the university's highest-ranked academic units (i.e. QS Rankings).
- Commitment to the provision of teaching and research in the Irish language, together with world-leading expertise in Irish subjects across multiple academic disciplines.
- Dedicated Humanities Research building, with major archives in literature, theatre, law, business, history, geography and many other areas.
- A 170-year-old university, located in a multicultural and multilinguistic city with a rich history that has a strong international reputation for excellence in the arts, and is situated in a region of internationally renowned natural and cultural landscapes and heritage.

WEAKNESSES

- Collapse in interest in GY101, as manifested in falling points and lower enrolments, with a decline in applications persisting even as other universities' enrolment levels have recovered.
- The historic overdependence of the university on high ASSCS numbers relative to the ratios in other universities nationally.
- Excessively complex governance structures make decision-making opaque, and place multiple layers between decision-makers and staff.
- Lack of succession planning; lack of incentivisation, reward and training to encourage staff to take up leadership and management positions.
- Absence of a promotion scheme for administrative staff.
- Use by the University of cumbersome and inflexible systems – added to an excessive growth of bureaucratisation within and beyond the College – significantly inhibit innovation, speedy response to external challenges and positive change.
- Historically our research achievements have lacked visibility in the community and university.
- Accommodation crisis in Galway.
- Difficulty of measuring impact of many AHSS research activities through, for example, citation indices.
- School structure has yet to deliver promised efficiencies in every case; many units remain academic departments in all but name.

- Demographics in the traditional catchment area place NUI Galway at a disadvantage nationally.
- Abolition of the higher education grant for postgraduate courses has disproportionately affected NUI Galway: close to half of our undergraduate students are on grants, as compared with TCD where less than one in five are on grants.

OPPORTUNITIES

- The decrease in numbers on GY101 may allow the College to offer even more new courses that will be distinctive, innovative, and driven by measurable student demand.
- There is also an opportunity to completely re-imagine GY101 itself, offering a distinctive set of subject offerings with a focus on employability, academic excellence, social awareness, responsible citizenship, and the creation of well-rounded graduates. Such a programme needs to be guided by a carefully researched understanding of student need, staff expertise and international best practice.
- There is scope for increased recruitment of PhD students.
- Many achievements in the area of teaching excellence have been insufficiently publicised, both internally and externally. There are opportunities to promote the College as a leading location for research-led and student-centred teaching.
- Projected population growth suggests that there will be need to provide HE places for up to 45,000 extra students in Ireland during the next decade. While most of these students will live outside our traditional catchment areas, there are opportunities for recruitment here.
- New national infrastructure (esp. motorways) has greatly reduced the travel time to and from Galway, opening up the possibility of the expansion of our catchment area.
- The growth of creative industries in the west of Ireland (projected to create 8,000 new jobs by 2020) can be led by NUI Galway; the possibility of the city being named European Capital of Culture for 2020 also has huge potential for the university.
- Expansion of postgraduate programmes and modules, including flexible ways of building qualifications (e.g. modularised MA programmes, blended learning, etc) can be rolled out.
- International recruitment is an area of potential growth, owing to Galway's lower cost of living, the increase of fees in the UK, etc.
- Movement towards a more rigorous evidence-based decision-making process in the College.

THREATS

- The decrease in enrolment to GY101 has had a major impact in budgetary and reputational terms. The evidence shows that this decrease cannot be explained as a cyclical decline that will inevitably be reversed.
- The ongoing problem of gender inequality is a major threat to reputation and morale.
- University budget controls and lack of multi-annual financial planning make planning difficult.
- Government prioritisation of STEM subjects can manifest itself as hostility to Arts and Humanities subjects; more leadership and cooperation at national level is needed.
- Galway faces long-term problems in relation to demographics and funding that will require planning beyond the traditional five-year strategic cycle.

1. Undergraduate Programmes

1.1 CURRICULAR STRUCTURE AND CORE VALUES

Over the past decade many universities around the world have engaged in curricular reform, either on a radical scale or on a re-packaging and refreshing of offerings. In Ireland, Maynooth University has adopted a shift towards a broad, liberal arts & sciences model, others have introduced additional broad theme strands, or widened the scope for options in each year.

In the face of this broadening of choice for potential students and the issues facing the College in terms of the external perception of its current offerings, the issue of a fundamental change in the structure of the undergraduate degree (particularly GY101) should be at the top of the agenda. The recent shift from 4 to 3 subjects in first year and the promotion of Joint Honours by bundling popular subject choices has not yet led to a turnaround in the pattern of recruitment. Numbers are down and CAO points have been reduced to the lowest amongst the universities. This latter issue of course has had repercussions in terms of student attainment and performance.

There are a number of options available to us, each having its strengths and weaknesses, but College needs to achieve consensus on curricular reform on our flagship programme, GY101. A number of possible reconfigurations, from radical to modest, are summarised in the appended document:

1. A four-year programme with (possible) advanced entry.
2. A collective, combined approach to first year (multi-disciplinary, foundation modules).
3. Adaptation of existing model but with delineated new strand or pillar running through each year.
4. Possible BA/MA enrolment option.

It is clear from consultations and discussions, however, that there is **broad support for two distinct aspects of the architecture of any new degree:**

- That there is a concentrated focus on the development of academic skills in the first year and the explicit development of key transferable/employment skills in subsequent years. Provision of relevant skills for future employment is shown to be the most important factor influencing higher education institution choice in Ireland.¹
- That there is an appetite for the inclusion of a strand offering multi/inter-disciplinary 'themes' around which colleagues can collaboratively design new, innovative courses which address key issues, global themes or core cultural enrichment.²

It is also clear that any such developments require a major, heavily promoted re-launch, signalling to the external world the scale of our commitment to re-energise our programmes and extol the virtues of a broad and rich arts, humanities and social science education, arguing convincingly that this provides an excellent start in life both in terms of intellectual and cultural engagement as well as scope for employment and active citizenship. The relaunch must define the Galway BA degree as

¹ Walsh S, Cullinan J (2017) Student Preferences for Higher Education Institution Attributes, in Cullinan J, Flannery D (Eds.), Economic Insights on Higher Education Policy in Ireland, forthcoming, Palgrave MacMillan.

² Eg Aberdeen Model: <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/enhanced-study-options-1518.php> and the 'Grand Challenges' approach in UCL, linking teaching and research interest: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/global-citizenship/programme/grand-challenges>.

a distinctive offering. The name of the degree should be concise, carefully chosen and piloted with target groups in conjunction with Marketing & Communications.

The relationship between any adopted structure and the other programmes in the College's portfolio (including the BA Connect (see section 4.3) and the new Social Sciences degree) will no doubt need further consideration and refinement.

Recommendations:

- The College's undergraduate portfolio will comprise:
 - (1) a flagship³ broad honours programme (GY101) spanning the humanities and social sciences, with a redefined identity & enhanced functionality. The College should work collectively to promote its virtues;
 - (2) a number of denominated, specialist degrees which will be high-performance and subject to rolling review, to include joint honours offerings in high-demand subjects including major-minor options and the BA International programme.
- UG programme portfolio management will be informed by statistical evidence and strategically managed by the Dean working with the College Executive.
- The GY101 programme have a core strand, or pillar, which extends through each year whose primary purpose is the development of academic and transferrable skills (in line also with the University's newly approved Graduate Attributes Statements) including engagement with key issues or themes that provide opportunities to apply skills and knowledge to areas which are not delineated by disciplinary boundaries.
- Education should be explored as an option/additional pathway in Undergraduate Programmes given the large number of graduates who express interest in Initial Teacher Education.
 - A 4+1 model would facilitate UG students taking education modules throughout their 4 year degree and provide automatic entry into a 1 year PG programme should they wish to qualify as a post-primary teacher. The 4+1 model of ITE provision would strengthen links between UG and PG recruitment. Also, the 4+1 module is a cheaper and more attractive option than the 3/4+2 that currently exists for students and guarantees direct entry into an ITE programme. Providing module-based registration and fees would assist graduates who wish to add to their subject registration with the Teaching Council.
- Given the decline in Mature & Access student participation in the College, the changes to external policy on student financing & the socio-economic profile of such students in the University's catchment area the College should consider:
 - Highlighting the employability aspects of CASSCS programmes in general.
 - Whether the current MSAP process should be reviewed as an entry mechanism.
 - Augmenting specific financial support for C-category students throughout their programme

³ Recognising that the BA Omnibus is currently the major programme in terms of student numbers, but that it requires significant renewal, rebranding and promotion through which the College and the University can assert the genuine benefits of a broad education whilst reassuring on matters of employability, 'relevance', and intellectual achievement.

1.2 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

We recognise the pivotal importance of GY101 to the identity of the College and believe that with effective leadership, agreed core values and efficient organisation, it can play a galvanizing role in nurturing trans-disciplinary collaboration, exchange of ideas and a means of connecting students to the research and scholarly dimensions of advanced study.

Recommendations:

- It is crucial to clarify the leadership and ‘ownership’ of GY101. A Programme Director of GY101 (potentially the Vice-/Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies) should be appointed on a fixed-term basis. The Director will play an important role in promoting the programme, ensure coherence, appropriate resourcing and be visible, supportive and encouraging to students, particularly in year 1.
- The GY101 Programme Director will work with the Dean, College Executive and College Office and will ensure co-ordination with programme offerings across the range of the College’s entire programme portfolio.
- Effective timetabling for the efficient operation of large scale programmes such as GY101 is clearly required. A central function to operate timetabling should be introduced, using the appropriate resources.
- The portfolio of programmes offered by the College be subject to regular monitoring and review and informed by a data-rich decision support system which harvests appropriate data and information and ensures that the College is responsive to a diverse, international and changing student population.

1.3 TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Regardless of the particular curricular structures adopted, there is considerable scope to address the issue of students’ academic engagement with their programme of study by examining approaches to teaching, the modes of learning which are supported and also the particular role of forms of assessment.

Identified issues:

- Core academic skills need to be developed to ensure that all students are able to fulfill their academic potential. Whilst it has long been recognised that embedding such skills within the context of students’ chosen disciplines is possible, it is clear that many students require such development to be more overtly highlighted and that clearer measures of students’ individual progress are essential to properly identify retention risks. Early identification of students who may require targeted support should be prioritised in Semester 1.
- Student withdrawal and intervention processes in Year 1 require combined effort, clear communication between University offices and timely interventions in mid-Semester 1 and at the beginning of Semester 2.
- Students can often feel alienated in large enrolment classes, and those with limited confidence may be unwilling (or not know how) to seek help and support. Formal advisor programmes which only consider the issue of module selection and the bureaucracy of enrolment do not address the wider issues of student belonging, progress monitoring and the development of academic resilience.

- Providing a simple 'portal' or profile page on the university website that allows students to identify the options available to them will encourage student engagement. The value of feedback to a student's progress and use of progressive assessments to encourage individual performance improvement should also be considered and developed in a coordinated approach among disciplines.
- A student learning support service will be required to augment and co-ordinate existing resources and supports in the areas of:
 - Writing skills and academic/information literacies
 - Study skills and peer support
 - Learning from feedback and developing learner autonomy and resilience
 - The appropriate use of technologies
- Teaching large lecture sessions is demanding and the pressure of an unfavourable staff-student ratio, the format of our teaching venues and the processes that generate the academic timetable often mitigate against 'traditional' exposition, despite research which highlights the advantage of more participatory forms of teaching & learning. Many colleagues do use imaginative approaches (and indeed demonstrate mastery of the expository model) but often at the level of individual initiative and with limited supporting resources or technologies.

Recommendations:

- **A substantial and robust system of personal mentoring for students in the College is essential.**

The purpose of mentoring would be to develop transferable academic skills and to help the student meet the 'graduate attributes'. Mentoring should not be a process borne by individual subjects/disciplines, but organised centrally by the College. The mentoring system should not replace University counselling, pastoral care and student welfare systems.⁴

- **15 ECTS should be identified in Year 1 and allocated to a combination of Core Academic Skills Development and a Thematic/Multi-disciplinary strand.**

The acquisition of Academic Core Skills modules in Year 1 (15 ECTS) could be facilitated in a number of ways, integrating with existing provision in the Library, SUMS and the Academic Writing Centre, for example. Specific mention should be made of the openness of the Library to partnership with the College and the potential for more cohesive engagement & alignment of learning supports/digital literacies with College programmes, pedagogy, critical & academic skills.

A dedicated co-ordination post will be required to develop the curriculum, the learning activities and assessments as well as support the training of academic staff involved in delivery of the modules.⁵ The modules could be configured using a variety of resources:

- HE study skills, which would use existing resources such as [skills4study online lessons](#), currently available to all first years, which can be integrated into Blackboard and for

⁴ <http://www.aston.ac.uk/current-students/get-involved/mentoring-at-aston-university/>

⁵ An example is that of UL which is currently advertising for an "Educational Developer: Student Engagement & Success" (academic post with research dimension).

- which digital badges can be awarded indicating successful completion of each skill (i.e. note-making, critical thinking, writing skills, time management);
- A suite of Academic and Information Skills particularly suited to Humanities & Arts students is currently offered by the James Hardiman Library.
 - Key digital skills could also be included using 'All Aboard' national project resources.
 - Small-group teaching via an allocated Academic staff member as personal tutor – as many staff as possible across the College involved, not constrained/linked to discipline choice (since emphasising academic skills in general, indeed having a mixture of students/staff might also be an opportunity)
 - Structured to follow a coherent programme of activities for class and personal study, providing individual and peer-feedback on writing, presenting, etc.
 - These measures could also be linked with Céim, peer-support, if appropriate.

This pillar of Core Academic Skills could be enhanced by contextualising a number of specific skills, drawing on areas of recognized institutional research strength, and by considering seminars, guest presentations or archival materials aimed explicitly at Year 1 students. The packaging and naming of the module will also be important. These modules should be available in English and Irish.

The emphasis in the Thematic component will also be on building and underpinning skills such as finding and using information, constructing academic arguments/cases, essay writing and presentation skills. Students should be in relatively small groups for the academic core skills component and there should be considerable opportunity for feedback on work (including building towards peer-feedback and support).

- **10 ECTS, at a minimum, should be identified in each of years 2 and 3 for a combination of further 'thematic' options, employability and communication skills development.**⁶
 - The 'theme' will be used to motivate and encourage student engagement and students will be able to select from a small number of options.
 - Materials for these thematic components will be developed by a group of academic staff with particular interests in the topic and will foster collaboration in both the materials development and the teaching stages. Links with research interests may be particularly effective/valuable.⁷
 - Alternatively, such 'curricular space' may also be used to take modules in other Colleges/Disciplines, where such is possible (e.g. Introduction to Marketing, Management, Innovation, etc.)

Students would take one 10 ECTS module in Year 2 and one 10 ECTS module in Year 3 (Figure 1). Proposals are welcomed from colleagues for thematic modules on the basis of the following principles:

- The module is standalone, with no prerequisite or co-requisite modules;
- There is an emphasis on engagement with ideas, and active participation where possible, to build confidence and develop broader intellectual interests;

⁶ Similar to Aberdeen's 'Sixth Century Courses' or UCL's 'Grand Challenges'.

⁷ Materials may also form the basis of possible online, evening, public courses if the themes are sufficiently attractive and accessible.

- The module content explores beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries and brings multiple perspectives to bear, preferably on the basis of a multi-disciplinary collaboration/team teaching;
- The module will potentially address ‘big issues’ facing contemporary society, fundamental ideas that underpin culture and human enquiry, or research strengths in the university;
- The module will help to reinforce and refine key skills of information retrieval and analysis, written and spoken communication.

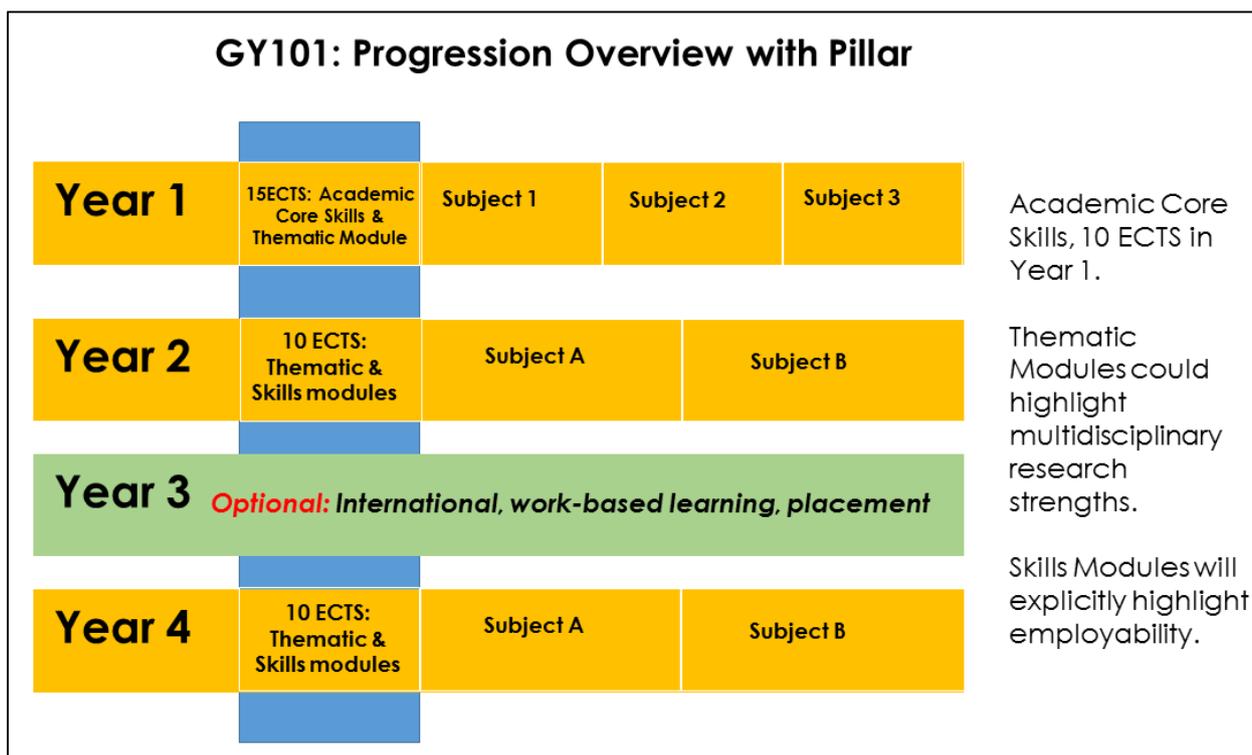


Figure 1 – GY101 progression overview with proposed core/pillar structure.

- Recognising the particular challenges of large class teaching, the College should develop a coherent and co-ordinated approach to first year teaching which should include expanding the use of participatory forms of learning including (for example) the use of clicker apps (as in Science and a small number of modules in CASSCS), more effective use of learning design principles and online tools such as Blackboard and its ancillary features.
- Academic staff across the College should be encouraged to engage in the *Partnerships for Teaching & Learning* scheme, which facilitates mutual teaching observation and review and aids the sharing of ideas and experience for its own sake rather than being associated with any sense of ‘performance metrics’, etc.
- A strong case must be made to ensure that learning supports are adequately resourced and that the College welcomes the University’s strategic commitment to providing ‘an outstanding teaching and learning environment’ and to ensuring that ‘those who teach and design our programmes are provided with professional training and development opportunities’.
- The importance of the Library facilities & infrastructure as a key learning space for undergraduates in the Arts & Humanities. The Library Strategy makes a compelling case for investment in UG facilities in the James Hardiman Library: ‘A reimagined learning space will

promote interaction & engagement, innovative ways of thinking, and opportunities for digital creativity and entrepreneurship’.

- The distinctiveness of NUI Galway archival resources and how these collections could set UG teaching apart from other Arts, Social Sciences & Humanities programmes in competitor universities.

1.4 PROMOTION AND LAUNCH

Recommendations:

- The ‘rebranding’ endeavour requires input and advice from the College in general, Marketing & Communications, potential applicants, students, parents and others to refine the approach taken to ensure that the message is attractive, consistent and clear. Collective support for the new identity of GY101 is critical for its success.
- The offerings need to be attractive to high quality candidates nationally, of high value and high status (both academically and in terms of employment prospects).
- The possibility of advertising a direct entry BA/MA be considered. Such a route may be appealing to high-points candidates. This would require a reduction in the MA fee in respect of this route of entry. The number of places may have to be restricted to account for such a subsidy. Progression to the final MA year should be subject to sustained high attainment over the initial years of the programme, years 2 & 3 in particular.
- Employment and postgraduate opportunities should be made more explicit to successful graduates from the College and should feature prominently on all general and discipline recruitment materials. Explicit constraints on subject/module selection that may apply for professionally accredited programmes such as the PME/MGO need to be clearly flagged.
- Promotional materials should emphasise the University’s international partnerships, listing the institutions within the Coimbra Group for example, and those with whom there are established links, with the intention of overcoming any notion of Galway being geographically peripheral.

1.5 EMPLOYABILITY

The issue of developing core academic skills is closely related to employability, as is the broader adoption of the idea of Graduate Attributes Statements – ensuring that students have ample opportunity to demonstrate their capacity for finding and interpreting information, for high quality writing, communication and digital skills.

Work placement opportunities are an important factor influencing higher education institution choice in Ireland.⁸ Formal work placements require supporting infrastructure and co-ordination to ensure that students have a high quality experience with appropriate oversight which does align with learning goals. Other institutions which provide such opportunities as core parts of their programmes have significant staffing and structures in place, in addition to a long-established network of contacts in the relevant sectors.

However, it may be possible to develop a model whereby students are facilitated in identifying and organizing their own placement (subject to strict criteria) and treating such in the same way as those

⁸ Walsh S, Cullinan J (2017) Student Preferences for Higher Education Institution Attributes, in Cullinan J, Flannery D (Eds.), Economic Insights on Higher Education Policy in Ireland, forthcoming, Palgrave MacMillan.

undertaking the 'International' programmes. In other words, Year 3 is available for either International study through Erasmus or similar, or through work or professional placements augmented by a reflective, developmental component.

To enhance overall graduate employability, a vision for work-based learning should be developed as an integrated component of 3/4 year programmes where appropriate. Disciplines and Schools should seek to develop universal access to placement options for students over time in tandem with other initiatives such as Erasmus, International Experience, Creativity & Entrepreneurship.

Recommendations:

- The optional Year 3 available to those on the International programme also be made available for work-based learning, professional internships and creativity pathways.
- The opportunity presented to students via the BA (International) route be promoted more widely, with emphasis on the opportunities for all students to undertake such study/experience through the medium of English rather than only for language students.
- Transferrable skills and Careers Education should be incorporated within the revised programmes, through the core/pillar or embedded within the disciplines.
- The Diploma Supplement should be promoted as a key feature of the NUI Galway degree experience – where students acquire and demonstrate additional skills, experiences and dispositions – aligning the Graduate Attributes work with the range of awards (volunteering, employability, leadership, entrepreneurship, etc.). In other words, that students not only graduate with a degree parchment but also with a detailed personal profile of additional achievements and skills (Figure 2).

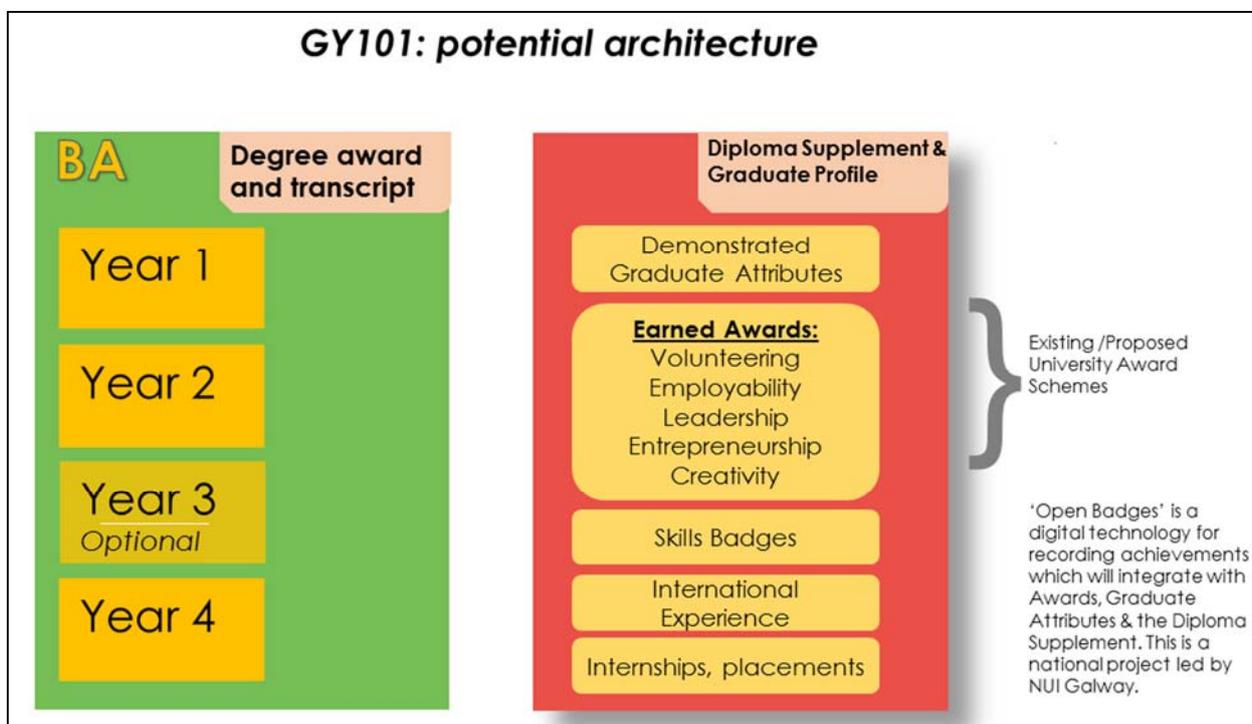


Figure 2 – Potential architecture for GY101 Diploma Supplements.

2. Postgraduate Programmes

The College runs 56 taught postgraduate programmes across all Schools, and 276 PhD students are currently registered.⁹ However, the existing fragmented structure means that much administrative work is duplicated and evidence-based strategy is severely hampered. The diversity of programmes is a real strength yet is not marketed on a collective, College-wide basis. This means lost opportunities, for example, in relation to the marketing of advanced facilities such as the MA study space in the Arts Millennium Building. Some taught postgraduate programmes have suffered significant decreases in enrolments since 2008.

The recommendations below stem from the urgent need to face such challenges from a College (rather than School or Discipline) perspective, that capitalises on the very many strengths of postgraduate provisions by driving and coordinating strategic oversight and analysis, firmly grounded in a solid and transparent evidence base, identifying and pre-empting risks to programmes and putting in place support mechanisms or, where necessary, structures enabling the discontinuation of programmes.

2.1 COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Recommendations:

- **A CASSCS Graduate School, encompassing all taught postgraduate (PGT) and research postgraduate (PGR) programmes, should be formed.** The College urgently needs a structure for ensuring the best use of resources, coherence of programmes, strategic analysis and innovation, and forward planning in relation to postgraduate programmes.
- The inclusion of both PGT and PGR in the Graduate School should be exploited to enhance the sense of a graduate community, driven by rigorous and systematic research activity. It will also allow for more coherent development of Structured PhD pathways and joint MA-PhD programmes (see below). Thirdly, it aligns with the reorganisation of the role of Vice-/Associate Dean for Graduate Studies to include both PGT and PGR (see below).
- The Graduate School should include a physical space (e.g. common room), encouraging interdisciplinary relationships and collaborations and significantly enhancing the graduate student experience.
- On the principles of shared and collective oversight, transparency, equality, and mutual support, the **Graduate School Executive (GSE)** should offer strategic analysis of resources required, best practices, opportunities for innovation and efficiency.
- Membership of the GSE should include: Vice-/Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, one MA programme director per School (representing the programmes run by that School), one PGR staff representative per School, one Postgraduate Admissions Officer.
- Composition of the Graduate School should include a forum that facilitates student participation and representation of student interests.

⁹ <http://www.nuigalway.ie/courses/taught-postgraduate-courses/#ColArts>. PhD numbers are for 2014-15, sourced from College of Arts data review produced by Kilian Dooley.

2.2 GRADUATE SCHOOL EXECUTIVE

Strategic Analysis and Oversight

A fully functioning GSE will strengthen and advocate for postgraduate programmes across the College, promoting the principles of accountability and oversight.

Recommendations:

- The GSE will be responsible for monitoring of all programmes. This should identify successful and struggling programmes, informed by the evidence base of annual reports (see below) submitted by each programme. Where programmes are oversubscribed, consideration should be given to expansion (dependent on additional resources from university). Where programmes are undersubscribed, pilot strategies for increasing recruitment should be implemented within set timeframes, at the end of which the success or otherwise of those strategies should be evaluated, with recommendation to discontinue or modify the programme accordingly.
- Any review must take into account a range of factors: one size does not fit all, and the complexity and diversity of the College postgraduate programmes is one of its strengths. Reviews should take account of a programme's performance over more than one year and be based on the evidence of annual reports. Criteria for evaluation should include success (via quantity and/or consistency) of MA to PhD conversion; and the number of students registered on shared modules. Reviews should also consider replacing or removing individual modules where any are undersubscribed for two consecutive years.
- The rationale for creating a new module should be a mandatory element in the College Curriculum Committee's consideration of all new modules. For example, a new module may be created on condition of removing an existing module to avoid proliferation of under-subscribed modules. There is a risk of the proliferation of MA modules, with overall numbers remaining the same, resulting in smaller numbers for each module and consequent resource inefficiencies.
- Innovation plans should include consideration of flexible, online, and blended learning modules and programmes, including MOOCs.

Reporting and Data Management

It has become starkly evident, through the course of the review group's work, that institutional information systems are failing to deliver the data required for evidence-based decision-making. Such data is crucial to any monitoring function. Therefore, we recommend that the kinds of data harvested and the reporting function be devolved to the GSE, who should take all of this information into account in the monitoring process.

Recommendations:

- Each MA programme must report annually to GSE.
- Template for annual report to include: number of places, number of applicants, number of offers made, number of acceptances, number of students arriving to register in September, modules that did not run due to no/low uptake, number of students registered on 'shared modules', conversion rate of PhD students, budgetary spending (e.g. visiting speakers).

- Each PhD programme must report annually on: number of applicants, number of offers made, number of acceptances, number of students arriving to register in September, funding source, composition of GRC, number of GRC one-to-one meetings and subsequent recommendations, retention, number of dissertation submissions, number of vivas, external/internal examiners, viva outcomes. (Currently, this latter data is only accessible by manual retrieval at the Office of Graduate Studies.)

PGT Admissions

The current system (whereby each individual programme director manages all bureaucracy) is highly inefficient and involves substantial duplication. Pressure on increasing PGT numbers means that most programmes now recruit at 2.2 level without consulting referees. Moreover, Academic Council's directive (AC 15 A5 IX.2, November 2015) has already imposed upon the Admissions Office the obligation for chasing up outstanding paperwork to render applications complete, and upon the College AO the obligation to intervene where an applicant has received no response within two weeks. It would be more efficient to centralise these staffing resources (Admissions and College Offices) into a College Graduate School structure in which postgraduate strategy is clearly articulated and pursued on the basis of sound evidence and overview of the College's provision and performance.

Recommendations:

- Admissions to graduate programmes should be centralised, thereby freeing up programme directors to manage personal contact with applicants, pastoral and academic direction. Where a programme (e.g. MA in Writing) is to be considered exceptional as requiring, for example, assessment of a writing portfolio, that programme director to work with GSE Admissions Officer to deliberate on applications.
- Programme Directors to be responsible for personal, pastoral engagement with individual applicants; also responsible for general academic direction and leadership.
- Clear definition of Programme Director's roles and responsibilities to follow from this reform.

Marketing

There is an urgent need to make the marketing of College programmes cohesive and coherent. Although there is a basic webpage listing all the postgraduate programmes offered by the College, these are links from the postgraduate prospectus rather than reflecting any concerted marketing effort.¹⁰ Valuable marketing opportunities include the MA study space in the Arts Millennium Building and the second floor of the Hardiman Research Building, as well as marketing of the College as a major hub of postgraduate activity.

Recommendation:

- The Vice-/Associate Dean for Graduate Studies should spearhead a marketing campaign (with specific target strategies for internal, national, and international constituencies) that

¹⁰ <http://www.nuigalway.ie/courses/research-postgraduate-programmes/structured-phd/#ColArts>;
<http://www.nuigalway.ie/courses/taught-postgraduate-courses/#ColArts>.

promotes the postgraduate opportunities and activities of the College as a whole. Marketing strategy must, of course, be informed by student focus groups and exit interviews.

MA Programme Budgets

The College's diversity of postgraduate programmes is adversely reflected in its highly variegated, idiosyncratic budget model. This is based on legacy negotiations for individual programmes (whereby some programmes are resourced only on the basis of FTE, some by specific Cúrsaí Breise budget lines, some by the allocation of a permanent staff member many years ago). Currently, the Dean of the College is the authority for allocation of budgets to Schools, and Heads of School allocate budgets to MA programmes. This may well prove the most effective means of MA budget management.

However, the sheer number of different budget models (across the university) severely hampers transparency and collegial understanding. Some programmes are more expensive to deliver than others. Nevertheless, allocation of resources cannot be defended on its current piecemeal basis if the College wishes to develop strategic policies to support, maintain and innovate graduate programmes.

2.3 PROGRAMME SUSTAINABILITY AND RECRUITMENT

Taught Postgraduate Programmes (PGT)

Recommendations:

- The promotion of 'shared modules', especially where Schools have small numbers registered on individual MA programmes.
- Where programmes are in high demand (e.g. Social Work, Applied Behaviour Analysis), a business case should be made for their growth (with projections), with concomitant resources supplied.
- Target JYA students with discounted PGT fees.
- Specific measures for School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures: Business case to be made for strategic reduction in fees, ring-fenced for specific LLC MA programmes, for pilot period, to compete with rival institutions. Case should include realistic target for increase in student numbers within pilot period. If pilot is unsuccessful and targets are not met, the viability of the programme(s) will be assessed. [Noted that specific requirements of language training can mitigate against successful cross-module sharing.]
- Rollout of existing successful models across the College, e.g. MA/Applied Behaviour Analysis and MA/Health Psychology, where the MA is also the first year of a denominated and defined Structured PhD pathway. Students are registered for the PhD (1+3 model) but may exit with the MA. [Note: this is predicated on denominated, rather than generic, programme of entry.]

Research Postgraduate Programmes (PGR)

We recommend that the College embrace and market diverse models of doctoral education, to include:

- Structured PhD Pathway programmes, in which specific trajectories from MA to PhD are identified (e.g. Archaeology, Health Psychology).

- Integrated MA-PhD programmes.
- Development of part-time programmes, especially those specifically targeted at enhanced professional training.
- Coherent marketing of non-residential/distance doctoral education (possibly branded 'Global PhD'). These are in existence across the College; one successful model to ensure integration to the university community involves annual contributions by the non-residential student, such as writing a blog or attendance at one conference in Ireland per year. Such a programme could also exploit the Hardiman Library's digital archives and expertise in digital scholarship.
- Article-based PhD: Formal review required to evaluate current standards of equivalence and disciplinary norms (e.g. Geography requires 3 articles, whereas the College of Science requires only 2), authorship inputs (sole-authored vs. various models of multiple authorship).
- Practice-based PhD: Review of guidelines currently underway between Joe MacDonnacha, DTP and Huston.
- Marketing of article-based and practice-based PhD programmes (to follow from reviews).
- Review of Structured PhD programme and promotional material.
- Fees-only PhD scholarships: introduce a large number of fees-only PhD scholarships, with dedicated and ongoing budget line. A range of PhD scholarship packages are currently in operation across the College on a local and intermittent (i.e. budget-dependent and unstable) basis, e.g. Geography's teaching scholarships; Irish Studies package of fees-only scholarship plus Summer School payments; Humanities fees-only scholarships. Noted that UCD have recently advertised 150 fees-only scholarships as 'PhD Scholarship Initiative' – see <https://www.ucd.ie/graduatestudies/feesfundingandscholarships/scholarships/ucdphdscholarshipinitiative/>. The College of Science has already made a case for fees-only PhD scholarships to the University on a threefold basis: RGAM calculation means that benefit of PhD student accrues to the University regardless of whether fees are paid; strategic areas are targeted for fees-only scholarships; recipients contribute to teaching.

PhD Completion

There is a distinction between completion *times* and completion *rates*. Regarding PhD completion, we recommend the following:

- The College's part-time PhD programmes are successful in meeting the 6-year completion time target: this must be developed as a marketing tool.
- Calculation of completion times: There is widespread disquiet within the College about the methodology for calculating completion times. The University and College shifted from a three- to four-year doctoral model in order to accommodate the additional workload involved in Structured PhD programmes in 2009. Funding models also shifted to accommodate the new four-year model. To demand of students that they submit a softbound (i.e. pre-viva) copy of the thesis at 3.5 years, in order to complete viva plus revisions within a four-year timeframe contravenes both the original spirit of the change to Structured PhD programmes and the logic of four-year funding schemes (which operate internally and externally).
- Notwithstanding that the average submission of softbound dissertation is 4.8 years and therefore requiring remedial action, the College must insist on the full 48 months as the timeframe for submission of softbound doctoral dissertations.

- Strategies to improve completion times:
 - Mandatory enrolment on designated CELT module for all supervisors.
 - Mandatory Structured PhD session in August/September for all supervisors of incoming students.
 - Early GRC intervention to identify and pre-empt problems with timely completion, e.g. Year 2 GRC meeting should entail submission and evaluation of substantial draft of written work or appropriate policy/practice-based output, e.g. dissertation chapter. Failure to submit same should trigger early intervention.

3. Research

3.1 VICE-/ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR RESEARCH

Given the diversity of interests, collaborations and research leadership across the College, the role of Vice-/Associate Dean for Research is vital. It requires a joined-up strategy and policy-making approach that is grounded in current research activities and infrastructure across the College, in order to engage constructively with decision- and policy-making of other bodies within the university (such as ISS).

Recommendations:

- The Vice-/Associate Dean for Research must be an active researcher from the permanent academic staff. It is possible to envisage the role being filled by existing leaders of the various Research Institutes working with the College (see also below) or, of course, from the School Research Committees.
- This role must include advocacy and representation of all research interests across the College.
- The role must supply 'added value' to activities currently conducted within various Research Institutes, Centres and individually. For example, it should coordinate expertise from across the College in evaluating and submitting competitive funding bids. It should harness existing strengths in order that the College as a whole benefits from those currently made more visible via the various Research Institutes. See also 'Research Institutes' below.
- The term 'Vice-Dean' may warrant re-naming in order to convey the new energy, status and recompense it must now entail.
- Logistics relating to PGT and PGR programmes (e.g. Marks & Standards, GRC reporting) should be migrated to the Vice-/Associate Dean for Graduate Studies position.

3.2 RESEARCH INSTITUTES

The College enjoys particular institutional strengths that are not currently exploited nor capitalised upon. The Moore Institute is fully located within the College; half the executive committee of the Whitaker Institute are members of the College; ILAS is a great success of the College, having been founded from its Social Sciences disciplines; members of the College collaborate with the Ryan Institute.

The lack of cohesive structures, on a College basis, for harnessing these research strengths has led to underestimation of the College's research profile, both internally and externally.

Recommendations:

- **The College Research Committee should be reinstated** to spearhead strategic research leadership and foster a good flow of communication. It should be chaired by the Dean of the College, comprising the Vice-/Associate Dean for Research, leaders of each of the above Research Institutes, and chairs of the School Research Committees.
- The College Research Committee should devise a College research strategy. As the largest College of the University and enjoying great diversity of disciplines as well as many collaborations with other Colleges, any research strategy must necessarily be plural and inclusive. It may be that the previous University policy of 'clustering' is of little value to a

College that prizes individual scholarship as much as collaborative team scholarship. If so, an alternative strategy for highlighting and profiling the College's research, internally and externally, must be developed. The College research strategy should address impact and outreach, as well as more traditional research outputs.

- The Research Institutes must play a front-of-house role in showcasing, promoting, lobbying and advocating for all the research activities of the College.
- Review of research funding applications currently operates on an informal basis, usually via the Research Institutes; a more formal review service should be considered.

3.3 RESEARCH METRICS

There are well-known problems with evaluating research on the basis of metrics; these are particularly acute for Arts and Humanities subject areas, where the monograph remains the most prestigious research output, where publication may not be appropriate at all for creative industries, and which are poorly covered by Web of Science and Scopus. Moreover, crude metrics do not capture the spectrum of public engagement and outreach activities of the College. It is also noted that the ranking of outputs merely outsources the peer review mechanism, which is itself subject to transparency and trust concerns.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the range of excellent research activity and production across the College is often completely invisible to the wider University community as well as externally. This situation, whereby members' research is not adequately counted or credited, cannot be perpetuated.

The absence of a defined, transparent system (however flawed) is a barrier to promotion and performance evaluation. Where some academics may understand an unspoken hierarchy of publication outlets within their discipline, others (e.g. early career researchers) may not. The latter are likely to benefit from an explicit, agreed system that is self-reflexive about its limitations.

Access to international and national funding schemes is another important consideration; in order to be competitive, applicants need to understand the norms and expectations of successful research profiles. **The measures below are aimed at improving the College's research prosperity and quality accreditation.**

The principle of balance across the individual research profile must be paramount. Monographs take considerably longer to produce than an article or book chapter. A book chapter might be the building block of a monograph chapter. A case study might be more suited to publication in a themed journal or essay collection, where it would make greater impact. Digital and performance outputs can meet wider audiences and make greater impact than traditional publications. Policy reports pioneer and lead societal change in ways that are often more effective than traditional academic publications. Speedy dissemination may require less prestigious outlets (which often entail multiple-year waiting lists). Public dissemination is not captured by metrics.

It should also be noted that the impact of non-STEM publications can occur across a far longer period of time and often enjoys greater longevity of reputation. Authorship credit conventions vary across the College (and University); in the applied Social Sciences, multi-authored publications are the norm whereas in the Humanities, sole authorship is the norm. Equivalences in relation to

authorial input (within the College and across all disciplines of the University) should be clearly understood if comparative performance evaluation is to be credible.

Therefore, it is recommended that a system for measuring research outputs must be agreed as a matter of urgency. The following criteria should be noted:

- Each member of staff should be mentored and supported (e.g. via PMDS structure) in research performance.
- The current IRRP benchmark of three high-quality publications (or policy/practice-based outputs, where appropriate) across a five-year period should be considered the standard measurement cycle.
- For disciplines where peer-reviewed journal outputs are not the norm, it is recommended that at least one of these three outputs should be targeted at a peer-reviewed journal or top-ranked monograph publisher.
- Individual researchers should be aware of the various forms of peer review: double-blind (both author and reviewer anonymous), single-blind (reviewer anonymous), peer review (review conducted but both author and reviewer are identified), open peer review (public peer review, all identities publicly visible), non-peer reviewed (no formal process of critique involved prior to publication). Consideration might also be given to the number of reviewers' reports, e.g. whether two separate readers' reports are the norm for a publisher or journal.
- Individual researchers' profiles should aim to balance national and international outlets, in order to enhance both individual and university profile and reputation.
- Ranking of monograph publishers to be produced. [Responsibility: Vice-/Associate Dean for Research.]
- The difficulties in ranking Humanities journals across Europe are evidenced by the slow progress of the *European Reference Index for the Humanities* project (<http://www.esf.org/index.php?id=4813>). Nevertheless, this is the most advanced such project in Europe.
- List of all types of Humanities outputs to be produced, based on *Developing Key Performance Indicators for the Humanities* (RIA, 2009) and *Determining Faculty Productivity Metrics for Humanities Disciplines* (Hanover Research for NUIG, February 2016). [Responsibility: Vice-/Associate Dean for Research.]
- The College is particularly rich in public engagement and public scholarship. These outputs make a major impact beyond the Academy, and are therefore crucial to the university's wider reputation. Such outputs should be formally credited in all performance evaluation mechanisms.

4. Structures and Governance

In formulating this portion of the strategy, we have been mindful of the following values and principles:

- Flexibility – the need to produce systems that will allow for efficient and properly consultative decision-making to occur.
- Collegiality – the need to ensure that all colleagues (academic, administrative and technical) feel valued, and that they feel a sense of belonging to and responsibility for the College in its entirety.
- Diversity – the need to ensure that our College includes a mix of large and smaller disciplines, including areas of specialism and expertise that are unique to Galway.
- Informed decision-making – the need to ensure that decision-making is driven by the availability of accurate and relevant data.

4.1 DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES

There is a need for more efficient forms of decision-making and better communication of information through university structures.

We note that, more than a decade ago, the university predicted how the changing demographics in its catchment area would impact upon recruitment. Those predictions have proven largely correct.

Looking at the national picture, we also note that the Arts programmes that have most successfully navigated the period following the 2008 financial crisis were those that had put in place clear plans to overcome those problems by 2010.

These observations lead us to suggest that there is (a) a need for forward planning to be more fully embedded in the College's decision-making, beyond the period of the university's own strategic plan and paying special attention to long-term demographic trends and (b) that we need to have decision-making abilities that will allow for speedy and efficient (but also appropriately consultative) reactions to unexpected systemic shocks.

Recommendations:

- We make more transparent the relationships between colleagues in the university structure. We need to implement meaningful processes for delegation and acting-up, so that the Dean has a stronger role in the management of the university, Heads of School a stronger role in the management of the College, and so on. These arrangements would improve collective responsibility and consultation, would support succession planning and improve information flows, and produce a better communication of information within the university (Figure 3).
- We note that the Colleges of Arts nationally that have best weathered the post-2008 challenges are headed by Deans who sit on their university's UMT. We recommend that the university centrally involve Deans in decision-making at UMT level.
- We recommend that the College have three new Vice-Dean/Director roles: Vice-Dean/Director for Undergraduate Studies, Vice-/Associate Dean for Postgraduate Studies and Vice-/Associate Dean for Research. These posts should be incentivised by the provision of teaching buyout. Vice-/Associate Deans should also take on some of the responsibilities currently carried out by the Dean.

- We recommend the creation of a new College Executive which would comprise the Dean, the three Vice-/Associate Deans, the six heads of School, and the College AO. This Executive should meet regularly, feeding in to School Board meetings and other administrative arrangements.
- Evidence from elsewhere in Ireland suggests that College meetings would be better attended and more meaningful if there was a clearer distinction between strategic and operational matters in the formulation of the agenda. At least one College meeting each semester could be dedicated exclusively to strategic matters; alternatively, at least one hour of every College meeting could be dedicated to the discussion of strategic matters, with operational matters taking up the remainder of the meeting.

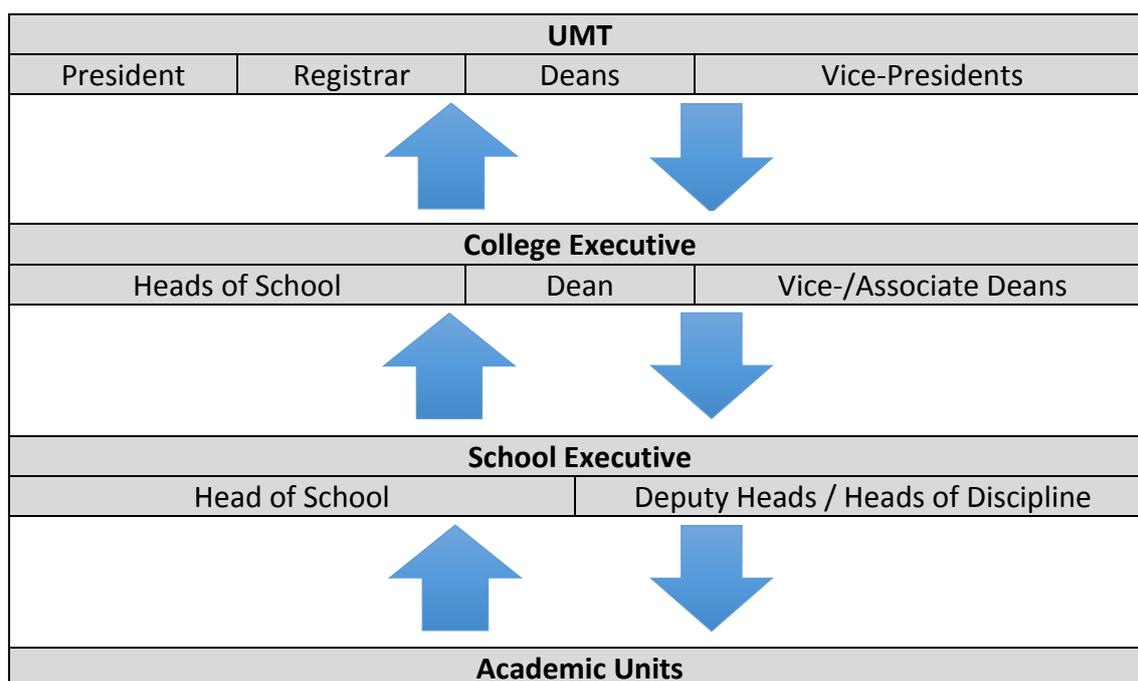


Figure 3 – Recommended organisational structure.

The Role of the Dean

In our consultations we encountered a wide variety of views – many of them conflicting – about the roles and responsibilities of the Dean, especially in relation to the balance between academic accomplishments and management skills. There was often disagreement about whether the role of the Dean is to represent the College to management, or to represent management to the College. Our recommendations above aim to ensure that the Dean fulfils both of those responsibilities.

It is evident that the role of the Dean can only be carried out by a person who has excellent management skills. It is also apparent that he/she must be able to provide strong academic leadership.

Recommendations:

- The university should provide senior staff with opportunities to engage in meaningful training in management, so that those staff who might wish to act as Head of School and/or Dean and/or Vice-/Associate Dean will be well equipped to take on the managerial tasks associated with the roles.

- There needs to be a clearer distinction between operational and strategic elements of the Dean's remit. Much of the Dean's work involves operational matters; this work can and should be delegated to Heads of School, Vice-/Associate Deans and/or administrative staff. The current process whereby all compliance activities are automatically sent to Deans and Heads of School for approval needs to be reviewed at university level.
- That procedures for the appointment of the Dean need to be the subject of a consultative review no less than one year before the conclusion of the term of office of the next Dean (i.e. the successor to Dr Herring).

4.2 ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Integration of Support Services

External reviewers and colleagues in other universities expressed surprise at the separation between the College and the support services that enable its activities to run smoothly. We note that other College Offices nationally locate such functions as HR, marketing and international recruitment within their own office.

The operation of support services lies outside the remit of this Review Group; we therefore recommend that:

- The incoming Dean convene a working group to establish how best to work with and integrate individuals from support services outside the College, including the appropriate representatives from HR, marketing, the library, the International Office, and other relevant units.

Technical Officers

Technical Officers (TOs) play a key role within the College, providing essential support for courses in multiple disciplines. They have extensive expertise in their own areas of specialism as well as broad knowledge of the institution generally, and play key roles in relation to procurement of equipment and other aspects of the College's work. This role needs to be more visible within the College, and it is also evident that many of the innovations proposed in this document will only be possible with the support of TOs.

Recommendations:

- The College should investigate the possibility of providing multi-annual rather than annual funding for the provision and maintenance of equipment. This would allow for forward planning and would produce efficiency and savings.
- TO staff should be listed on the College home page and/or on discipline/school homepages.
- The proposed working group for College support services should include Chief Technical Officers (or a representative of them).
- The proposed Graduate School Executive has room for input from CTOs, especially in relation to facilities.
- CTOs are members of the College but are not invited to CASSCS meetings (whereas in the College of Science and College of Engineering they are invited). We recommend that CTOs should be invited to attend CASSCS meetings.

The College Office

Our consultations showed the wide appreciation of all staff for the enthusiasm, hard work, and loyalty of the staff of the College of Arts Office. At a time when all staff in the university are being asked to do more with less, the College Office has a set of responsibilities that appear to be unsustainable. This is cause for serious concern.

Recommendations:

- The new Dean should, ideally within three months of appointment, work with College staff to devise new approaches to workload, communications, the sharing of information, and roles and responsibilities. Some of the College's work should be delegated to Schools; other aspects of it should be pushed back to relevant support services and administrative units.
- The creation of a role involving planning and business intelligence, dedicated to gathering and making widely available relevant data about student enrolment, retention, etc.

Students in Distress

We note with concern the major burden being placed on College staff and resources by the exceptionally high number of students in distress who present themselves for assistance. We were disturbed to learn of College staff being subjected to abusive and threatening behaviour in a small number of cases. It is not reasonable to expect colleagues who have not been trained in dealing with these situations to continue to take responsibility for them.

Recommendation:

- The university, through the office of the Vice-President for the Student Experience, engage in a review of provision of supports for students in distress. This review should look at practice across all Colleges within the university, and address resource shortfalls within current Student Counselling Services provisions. The situation in other Colleges of Arts nationally should also be considered: our consultations in Cork and Maynooth indicate that the problem of students in distress is nowhere near as acute in those institutions as is the case in Galway, for example. This area is beyond the remit and expertise of our Committee, but it needs urgent action.

4.3 SCHOOL AND PROGRAMME STRUCTURES

Schools

The transition from departments to Schools has had mixed levels of success. The Schools that function most effectively appear to be those that are formed of fewer disciplines. Evidence across the sector shows that Schools with large numbers of disciplines can face problems of cohesion.

Our consultations suggest that the majority of staff continue to identify with their home units rather than Schools or Colleges. This can lead to a dissipation of responsibility (such as in relation to the omnibus Arts degree GY101, which belongs to everybody and thus to nobody in particular). It can also result in situations whereby major changes can be impeded by the need to find common ground among a very large number of different disciplines. It also has an impact on the allocation of administrative responsibility within Schools.

We note the recommendation of the Huston School External Review Group that the university should consider the establishment of a School of English, Drama and Film. This suggestion should be investigated. While it is clear that there is no need for a broad reconfiguration of the Schools, minor re-arrangements should not be ruled out.

Recommendations:

- Since the university is committed to the continuing use of Schools, it needs to develop a College-wide plan for enhanced “School-ification”, using examples of good practice both from within the university and in other Irish universities.
- That Schools need to actively develop plans for enhanced cooperation at School level; these should be fully integrated into operational and strategic plans, with appropriate milestones and incentives.
- That new approaches be put in place for managing the problems encountered by particularly large Schools. We note in particular that staff in the School of Humanities have drawn attention to ongoing problems in this regard.

Fragmentation and Complexity

In order to reduce fragmentation and complexity, we recommend that:

- Where possible, budgets should be allocated by discipline rather than by programme. Many disciplines work across multiple budget codes with a variety of different funding models.
- In order to provide consistency of provision and reduce duplication, the role of programme director should be clearly defined, with appropriate indicators and objectives being made available.
- At present, curriculum matters are reviewed by disciplines, schools and the College. While the need for consistency is important, this triplication of effort is unnecessary. We recommend that this work be devolved fully to Schools.
- A complete audit of all compliance and administrative activities should be carried out within the College Offices and School administration offices, with a view to streamlining and reducing duplication of duties.

BA Connect programmes

The BA Connect programmes are widely perceived to be a success, bringing in excellent students on high points. Our consultations provided evidence of a more complex picture however. While student satisfaction is generally good in these programmes, a number of problems were identified, including inadequate staffing provision, isolation and overwork of programme directors, and student dissatisfaction with the amount of time they spend on their specialism. We also note that the crisis in falling student numbers in GY101 has meant that many of these programmes have taken on much larger numbers of students than was originally intended for them – a situation which is now reducing the attractiveness and viability of those programmes.

Recommendations:

- Academic units should be empowered to take on more responsibility for BA Connect courses, in order to better integrate them into Schools, ensuring continuity and consistency

of provision and boosting recruitment. BA Connect courses need to be perceived as a shared responsibility by all colleagues within a unit, and not as the sole responsibility of a programme director.

- The convening of a group in September 2016 that would review the structure and format of the BA Connect programmes, aiming to consider:
 - the possibility of changing some programmes into denominated degrees
 - increased provision of courses in the areas of the specialism in the second and fourth years of the programme
 - manageable structures for the operation of the third year of the programme.

Creative Arts

The College has particular expertise in the area of Creative Arts and Applied Writing. That expertise feeds into activities across the university, notably in the Arts in Action programme run by the College Office. We note that both Trinity College and University College Cork have recently appointed individuals with responsibility for embedding creativity across the university curriculum and consider that NUI Galway has the capacity to offer national and international leadership in this area.

Recommendations:

- The development of a new strategy for the development of Creative Arts across the university, which would include the Arts in Action programme and the university's partnerships with such organisations as the Abbey Theatre, Druid Theatre, and Galway International Arts Festival. This should be carried out in consultation with the university's Arts, Culture and Heritage Advisory group, and should feed into such activities as the university's contributions to the Galway 2020 bid for Capital of Culture.
- Following on from the recommendation of the Huston Review Group, the university should investigate how best to define the roles and responsibilities of creative practitioners who are currently on the staff of the College of Arts.
- That the College promote and expand its offerings in the area of practice-based research.

5. Implementation Plan

The proposed implementation plan highlights short- and medium-term implementation goals to enable the College to thrive in the near and distant future. For effective implementation, strategic resource allocation will be required as outlined below. While the recommended timeline is challenging, the Review Group feels that immediate action is needed on multiple fronts.

5.1 REQUIRED RESOURCES

- g) **Appropriate marketing resources** to develop an effective marketing strategy, coordinate and promote the re-launch of the College's undergraduate programmes. Tasks would include targeted market research with key stakeholders (especially prospective students and their parents) and a significant role in re-branding the College's undergraduate programmes. Marketing resources could be acquired through **re-deployment of existing staff or a new 2-year full-time staff member** in the Marketing and Communications Office, **or coordination with an external consultancy**. *[IN PLACE BY AUTUMN 2016]*
- h) **Education Developer** to design, coordinate and implement the Core Academic Skills programme for all first-year CASSCS students. This would be a **3-year full-time post** managed by the College and CELT. *[IN PLACE BY JANUARY 2017]*
- i) **Work Placement Officer for CASSCS** to facilitate our renewed emphasis on graduate employability and coordinate expanded workplace learning offerings. This would be a **permanent full-time post** managed by the College and the Careers Office. *[2017]*
- j) **Erasmus and International Exchange Support for CASSCS** to facilitate expanded Erasmus and international placements through new programmes (e.g. BA in International Languages) enhanced promotion within GY101. This would be a **permanent full-time post** managed by the College and the Internationalisation Office. *[2018]*
- k) **Full teaching buyout for the three new Vice-/Associate Deanships** in Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies and Research. Full teaching coverage is needed **for the first three years of each post** in order to effectively implement the considerable changes proposed by the Review Group, but may be reduced in subsequent years. Substantial teaching re-numeration would reinforce the importance of these posts and make them more attractive to prospective applicants. *[FAST-TRACKED APPOINTMENTS IN PLACE BY SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017]*
- l) **Establishment of a 'Common Room' for CASSCS graduate students**, additional to current desk space provision, to encourage interdisciplinary relationships and collaborations and significantly enhance the graduate student experience. *[EARLY 2017]*

5.2 PROPOSED TIMELINE

Undergraduate Programmes

The proposed implementation timeline for undergraduate programmes was formulated cognisant of the March deadline for alterations to the CAO Handbook, and a proposed re-launch of GY101 for September 2018.

- **September 2016 – Appointment of Vice-/Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies** to oversee redesign and coordination of GY101. *Recruitment should begin immediately.*
- **Autumn 2016 – Appropriate marketing resources in place.** Targeted market research with key stakeholders should begin as soon as possible.
- **Autumn 2016 – Five initial core strands for GY101 should be identified** after careful market research so that recruitment can commence. *A call for expressions of interest for core strands should be launched in summer 2016, with an emphasis on how these strands will strategically meet the College’s needs. The Review Group has already received casual and formal proposals for three such strands, and expressions of interest could potentially be formatted as indicated in Figure 4.*

Proposal for an “Explore” strand within GY101

We invite innovative proposals for modular strands that serve to define new pathway-dependent variations within the current omnibus degree GY101. These will complement the existing subject bases syllabi currently on offer and render individual streams visibly more specific, skills-based and potentially employment-orientated degrees available at NUI Galway. We require the following information to be submitted by [...]

1. Title: Arts/Humanities with [...]
2. Short description of the proposed strand inclusive of tentative learning outcomes and graduate attributes
3. Year One: 1 module; 5 ECTS
4. Year Two: 2 modules; 10 ECTS
5. Final Year: 2 modules; 10 ECTS
6. Current academic team comprising [...]

Figure 4 – Potential format for expressions of interest for core strands in GY101.

- **January 2017 – Appointment of Education Developer** for design, coordination and implementation of first-year Core Academic Skills programme.
- **2017 – Appointment of Work Placement Officer for CASSCS** to facilitate expanded work placement opportunities.
- **2018 – Appointment of Erasmus and International Exchange Support Officer for CASSCS** to facilitate expanded placements abroad.

Postgraduate Programmes

- **September 2016 – Appointment of Vice-/Associate Dean for Graduate Studies** so that the ambitious agenda of a College Graduate School and a more integrated and strategic PGT programme can be implemented quickly. *Recruitment should begin immediately.*

- **Spring 2017 – ‘Global PhD’** best practice should be established, and ‘Global PhD’ should be branded and launched.
- **Spring 2017 – College-wide norms for article-based and practice-based PhDs** should be established and subsequently marketed as attractive PhD options.
- **Spring 2017 – Fees-only PhD Scholarships for CASSCS** should be launched.
- **Early 2017 – Space** should be identified and construction commence on a **‘Common Room’ for CASSCS graduate students.**

Research

- **October 2017 – Appointment of Vice-/Associate Dean for Research** so that the College Research Committee can be re-instituted and a College-wide research agenda can be established quickly.
- **2016/17 Academic Year – Proposed metrics system should be incorporated into workload norms and workload models** across the College. The Quality Office should continue to explore ways to better represent College research outputs in University KPIs.

Structures and Governance

- **Summer 2016 – Serious consideration should be given to inviting Deans to serve on UMT.** This should lead to more efficient forms of decision-making and improved communication through university structures, and would better align NUI Galway governance structures with other Irish universities.
- **Autumn 2016 – A working group should be established to review BA Connect programmes** so that the College can adequately respond to student feedback in relation to these programmes, and also ensure the sustainability of programmes.
- **2016/2017 Academic Year – The incoming Dean should form the new College Executive and introduce new approaches to College meetings,** while engaging in a full audit of strategic/operational elements of the role in order to create more space for strategic work within his/her own role and the College generally.
- **2016/17 Academic Year – A working group should be established to explore existing School structures and optimal School configuration.** While it is clear that there is no pressing need for a broad reconfiguration of the Schools, re-arrangements should not be ruled out. The group should aim to report back before the end of 2016 so that changes may be in place before the roll-out of the new BA programme.
- **2017 – There are recommendations that the incoming Dean work with Support Staff** to: a) better integrate Support Services with College activities, b) better integrate Technical Officers within College structures, and c) work with College Office staff to devise new approaches to workload and communications.

Appendix A: Review Group Members

REVIEW GROUP CHAIR

Aaron Potito

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Dónall Ó Braonáin (Subcommittee Leader)

Brendan Flynn

Alison Forrestal

Iain MacLaren

Máire Ní Ríordáin

Kate Quinn

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES AND RESEARCH

Marie-Louise Coolahan (Subcommittee Leader)

Anne Byrne

John Canavan

Daniel Carey

Brian Hughes

Máire Áine Ní Mhainnín

Aaron Potito

STRUCTURES AND GOVERNANCE

Patrick Lonergan (Subcommittee Leader)

AnnMarie Groarke

Caroline Kennedy

Felix Ó Murchadha

Aaron Potito

Ulf Strohmayer

DATA ANALYSIS

Kilian Dooley

Appendix B: External Reviewer Reports

Two External Reviewers, each occupying a leadership position within their respective university, were nominated from within the Review Group. Draft strategic documents and background information were sent electronically to Reviewers on 13 May 2016. Each Reviewer offered direct feedback to our group and general feedback on efficient and effective university structures. While their feedback is non-binding, it has been incorporated into the Review Group's recommendations where possible. External Reviewers each visited separately with our group, with Prof Prescott visiting on 17 May and Prof Ó Maolalaigh visiting on 19-20 May. The External Reviewers' Reports follow below.

External Summary Report for the Arts Review Group, NUI Galway

Professor Sarah Prescott, Aberystwyth University

23/5/2016

Introduction:

As noted verbally during the external visit, from the documents I received it is apparent that the Review Group is undergoing not only a restructure of the BA Arts GY101 but also a review of the College structures and governance as well as the identity and future of the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities at NUIG. This is an exciting opportunity for the College to map its strategic direction and sustainability for the decades ahead and to ensure that the unique strengths of NUIG are maximised to their full potential. The College should work towards a clear strategic vision across its areas of activity, aligned to the ambitions of the University but also set in the context of the disciplines it represents. As a large College with a diverse set of disciplines it is imperative that the College has a clear and coherent sense of its identity and vision which underpins its research and its teaching, particularly the (currently underperforming) GY101 Arts BA. I have noted some specific areas/questions below which may be helpful to this process:

1. Identity and Brand

- Does the name of the College and its Schools accurately represent both activity and identity? The School of Humanities seems anomalous in size and name. Does 'Celtic Studies' have the same weight as 'Arts' and 'Social Science', as the name of the College suggests?
- Investigate ways in which the research excellence in Arts and Social Science (and the Institutes) can reinforce the unique elements of studying Arts at NUIG. Focus on research profiles of key staff who contribute to the degree.
- How will the College appeal to international students so as not to be over-reliant on home students?

2. GY101

- As a general Arts BA, GY101 is generically broad. Nevertheless, I recommend that the Review Group consider ways to strengthen the public identity of the degree: why study

BA Arts at Galway? What do you offer that is different and compelling? Some marketing advice may help here and a promotional film on the website (and beyond) which not only showcases the degree but also the University and Galway itself to illustrate the beautiful landscape and environs students will study in. Good for international impact.

- Endorse the recommendation to appoint a Director of GY101 as a matter of urgency. The role description should stress ownership of the scheme at all levels from marketing, recruitment, curriculum review, student satisfaction, employability, graduate attributes etc.
- To make clear to students the value of studying certain combinations. Most of the promotional material emphasises choice. While choice is clearly desirable, coherence is also important.
- Popular combinations could be highlighted with student comment as to why they fit well together and the advantages of studying a specific group of subjects. Clear advantages for employability.
- To stress why employers are attracted to the flexibility of the degree in the Arts and to emphasise the wide range of careers open to Arts students. Some market research may help again here.
- Student induction and experience are especially important for large schemes in which students can lose their way and sense of belonging. A robust and efficient personal tutor system would address some of the retention challenges of GY101.
- Although important for employability, there is a risk that generic skills modules can alienate students. I therefore endorse the Review Group's view that the value of such modules is made explicit. Linking skills to the specific research strengths of the College may be useful to avoid this (e.g. data analysis; digital humanities).
- 4 year degrees with an international dimension, an 'integrated Masters' year, and/or selective or student-led internships/placements (in the Creative Industries, for example) are all important areas worth pursuing.

3. Structure and Governance

- In order to achieve the above the College needs a strong College Executive Group working across and with the constituent Schools to communicate the strategic vision for Arts at NUIG and ensure its operation and success.
- To establish time bound and monitored operational targets which speak to the strategic vision.
- Endorse the recommendation that the College investigates the appointment of three Vice-Dean roles for: Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Research.
- To investigate ways to build a College research culture which transcends School identity while remaining respectful of disciplinary specificity and expertise.

4. PGT and PGR

- Excellent report. The diversity of the provision is noteworthy. However, recommend actions as in 1. above concerning brand, coherence and identity.

- Endorse the recommendation of a College Graduate School and Director to provide this coherence on an operation and budgetary level as well as to avoid duplication of administrative work.
- Consider investigating launching 'flagship Masters' which become specifically associated with the research and teaching excellence at NUIG. The report mentions some programmes which are in high demand (e.g. Social Work) and these could be targeted in the first instance.
- Work towards an 'ecology' of Master and PhD provision which is coherent as well as diverse.
- Endorse the recommendation of a College Research Committee to focus strategic development and communication.

COLLEGE OF ARTS, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND CELTIC STUDIES REVIEW

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND GALWAY

Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh

31 May 2016

This brief report summarises the main observations made by Professor Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh, Vice Principal and Head of the College of Arts, University of Glasgow, following a 2-day visit to NUIG (19–20 May 2016) and based on summary documentation sent to him prior to his visit.

A: GENERAL

1. Each of the subgroups is to be commended for the thoroughness and candidness of their work. The documentation that was sent beforehand was very useful in getting to grips with the challenges and the suggested solutions put forward by the Arts Review Group (ARG). The discussion with members of ARG further enhanced my understanding of the suggested proposals.
2. In general, the proposals put forward by ARG are entirely sensible and reasonable.
3. The HE environment is complex and constantly evolving and in many respects the overall challenges faced by NUIG are not dissimilar to those faced by HEIs around the globe. In an increasingly competitive environment, universities are considering ways in which they can gain the competitive edge. One emergent trend is a focus on organisational culture, especially in the wake of major restructures. This recognises the importance of culture as a crucial driver in organisational performance – culture being described in terms of beliefs, processes, ownership, responsibility, empowerment, consistency, adaptability, nimbleness and leadership. Given the significant discretionary effort required from staff in the HEI context, engagement with the institutional strategy is key for effective delivery.
4. New central and local resources are suggested in a number of sections below. It is important to strike a balance between investments in academic and professional / administrative support posts as a means of supporting new developments.
5. Has sufficient thought been given to how the current and future University estate facilitates the University's overall strategy? See D 7 below.

B: GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURES

1. Given the overall size of the University, it is quite striking that NUIG has 5 Colleges. It is also striking that the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies has some Schools whose size are smaller than the size of disciplines contained within other Schools.
2. I concur wholeheartedly with the recommendation for clear paths of communication and decision making. It seems anomalous that the Dean of the College is not represented on UMT. Another new trend emerging in HEI to support communication and the relaying of important messages, consultations and decisions is investment in the infrastructure surrounding internal communications, e.g. internal communication managers, online newsletters, intranet, etc.
3. Robust business data is essential for informed decision making. At School level this could be provided by a suitably qualified Head of School Administration or other senior administrator. A

College business planning function which provides accurate and timely data analysis in addition to planning dashboards and which tracks performance against key KPIs would work well and is strongly recommended.

4. Some rejigging of roles to reflect the streamlining of relationships between Colleges and the Centre would help. However, the use of too many variables (President, Registrar, Dean +/- Deputy) would perhaps be overly complex and confusing. The move within UK universities is to use Dean for functional roles within Colleges such as Research, Teaching and Learning, Graduate Studies – thus signalling and acknowledging the strategic importance of such roles. Former Dean roles are increasingly designated as Vice Principal (reflecting the link to and membership of Senior Management Group) and Head of College. In Galway the equivalent might be Vice President and Head of College.
5. Clarity is needed around the expectations of the HoC, HoS, Dean, Vice-Dean roles and consideration given to incentives for taking up these roles, e.g. honorarium, admin support, backfill for teaching, guaranteed sabbatical leave, recognition of effective leadership performance (in the above roles and others, including Head of Subject) in promotion criteria. This will also support succession planning. (I note sabbatical leave of 1 year after 6 years of teaching. Has NUIG considered 1 semester of leave after 3 years of teaching, and longer if supported by external funds?)
6. The formalisation of Deanship (or Vice-Dean) roles for Research, Teaching and Learning, and Graduate / Postgraduate is strongly to be supported as a means of devolving operational matters from the Dean / Head of College. These should be 0.5 fte appointments with some backfill for teaching cover. Clear role descriptions should be created to provide clarity on expectations and as a means of attracting effective leaders to these roles.
7. The composition of the College Executive should include senior professional / administrative staff as well as the Head of College, Deans / Vice-Deans and Heads of Schools. My own College Management team includes Head of College Finance, Head of College HR, Chief Advisor of Studies within the College, Knowledge Exchange and Impact Manager. I realise the structures are different in our organisations: HR and Finance exist centrally and have representation within each of the Colleges, operating within a matrix structure. This works extremely well and I can recommend it especially in a context in which budgets are devolved to Colleges and where Colleges are expected to make a certain % contribution each year.
8. To some extent this is replicated at School level. School Management Groups have HoS, subject area / discipline heads, Convenors of R, T&L, GS, the Head of School Administration (HoSA) and a senior operational School officer / PA to HoS.
9. The incentivisation of Heads of Subjects / Disciplines is a challenge across the sector especially in restructured organisations and merits further thought. They are crucial to the success of HEI institutions.
10. ARG recommends training in management for senior staff aspiring to be HoS, Dean, etc. I would concur but it is important not to neglect leadership training, which operates (or should operate) at every level of the institution. Basic succession planning tools can help to inform pipelines for management and leadership training. In Glasgow we have developed a behavioural leadership framework which informs such training, promotion, recognition & reward, and recruitment.

11. I note the recommendation for a review of procedures for the appointment of Deans / Heads of Colleges. In the past we have appointed HoS at SL and Professorial level but have recently moved to Professors only

C: POSTGRADUATE AND RESEARCH

1. PGT programmes should be based on market demand rather than merely on local expertise.
2. When setting up and approving new PGT programmes, these should always be accompanied by some form of market assessment for the programme. This can usefully also include recommendations for names of programmes in order to maximise recruitment.
3. It seems that better co-ordination and oversight of PGT programmes is needed. PG committees in Schools, each with a Convenor and a College Graduate Studies Committee would help support this.
4. It would be helpful if the College had dedicated resource for Recruitment and Marketing of UG and PG programmes. It is worth making the case for the resource recommended here and in the previous section.
5. Graduate School Executive. If each School had a Convenor / Director of Graduate Studies, these School representatives would be the members to include rather than 'one' Director from each School. This assumes a School Graduate Studies Committee.
6. The University should ring fence dedicated funds for the development of blended and online learning initiatives to which Schools and Colleges could bid. Online learning resources, as well as alleviating pressures on campus, can be a powerful recruitment and marketing tool. The College might also consider investing in an e-Learning / Technology Officer post to support the development of such resources. A dedicated Vice-President, a member of UMT, with overall responsibility for teaching, learning and innovation would go a long way to ensuring oversight at the highest level of new strategic initiatives that would ensure the University delivers on its T&L strategy.
7. PG data (applications and registered students) should be held electronically in a central resource which can be easily accessed by Schools and Colleges. I understand a great deal of local 'archaeology' was required to be undertaken in order to gain data for the ARG.
8. Centralising PGT admissions is more effective, and if executed properly, can enhance recruitment.
9. The so-called hub and spoke model of PGT provision represents an efficient use of resources. However, it is important to ensure that this model and team-taught courses are incentivised appropriately, i.e. that finances track the point of delivery.
10. Internationalisation is increasingly key to the success of HEIs. Given the extraordinary attractiveness of Galway, there is much that could be done in this sphere. Although internationalisation is embedded in various operational plans within the College, I suspect that it needs to be more explicit and to have more explicit structures to reflect its importance. I would suggest that each School should have an International Convenor – each working to a College specific Strategic / Action Plan which articulates with the University's overall international strategy. This could include specific countries and partners to be targeted as well as the development of joint degrees with ambitious international partners.

11. Could the Development / Alumni / Foundation Office be doing more to develop scholarships in the Arts and Humanities? Once again, some dedicated A&H resource at the Centre could help greatly. Strategic scholarships & discounts can be extremely useful in driving up recruitment.
12. Has the University considered branding new PG Galway Excellence Scholarships that could attract the best PG students? I am aware of the Hardiman and Ryan scholarship scheme. A new scholarship scheme could be marketed as Alexander and Emily Anderson Scholarships (AEAS), for instance, to reflect historical / inherited / continuing excellence in leadership and scholarship at Galway while striking & signalling gender balance.
13. It is worth thinking more about reducing the completion rates for PhDs to 3 or 4 years depending on the programme. Better completion rates would be a plus in attracting the best students to NUIG.
14. More thought could be given to Summer Schools as a means of marketing the College's strengths and potentially attracting more international students to Galway.
15. Acknowledging the work of the Moore Institute in supporting research bids, the College might consider creating a structured mechanism for supporting staff in (a) making the academic case for research bids, (b) costing grants, (c) training for applying to specific research schemes & calls.
16. Has the College considered establishing research centres (as opposed to clusters) which are created on the basis of business plans? These are best built from the bottom up.
17. It is widely acknowledged that metrics and citations are problematic for Arts & Humanities. Although Irish universities do not have the dual model of research funding, a light-touch research assessment exercise could have its advantages – especially if there was some national benchmarking which could be useful for attracting prospective staff and students.
18. I note the College Research Committee is to be chaired by the Dean. That seems anomalous in relation to other possible committees, such as Teaching & Learning and Graduate Studies. Perhaps joint chair might be more empowering for the Vice-Dean(s) in question.
19. Given prioritisation of STEM by Government and funders, how can the College / University get the 'A' into STEM? STEAM is better! Need to actively seek closer links and collaborations with STEM subjects.
20. I can recall no specific mention of Digital Humanities. This is another way of strengthening Galway's position on the international map.
21. I note that Impact Case Studies are part of the ongoing research assessment exercise. As with internationalisation, I wonder if Knowledge Exchange and Impact needs more explicit recognition in roles, structures and responsibilities. Who currently has strategic oversight of KE&I activity at College and University level? This could come under the remit and purview of the Vice-Dean of Research.

D: UNDERGRADUATE

1. Given the challenges in UG recruitment, the various options developed by the UG Sub-Committee are to be welcomed and commended. Without seeing the detail of proposed programmes it is difficult to comment other than on the principle(s). Option 3 presents the least risk for the College, which if successful, could be subsequently developed incrementally to

encompass other options or elements thereof. It would be wise to develop as a pilot in the first instance and to robustly assess its effectiveness.

2. Concentration on employability and transferrable skills is important.
3. Consider some element of online delivery.
4. It will be important to consult with past, current and prospective students, parents and employers when devising the new strand(s) / programme(s).
5. Careful thought should be given to the use of employers and alumni in developing the content and delivery of such courses / programmes.
6. Careful thought will need to be given to the branding of GY101. Mention was made of the Galway Degree. Is this too local(ised)? If there were sufficient international elements to it, perhaps the Galway Global Degree could work?
7. It goes without saying that once created it will be important to invest appropriate resources in marketing the new programme.
8. I note the need for more active and participatory forms of learning. However, it seems that existing and even recent new builds and / or refurbishments have not been developed with this in mind. The University's estates' strategy should have enshrined within it basic principles which will guide future new buildings on campus to ensure that they are fit for purpose in the 21st century and facilitate new modes of teaching and learning.
9. As well as developing new strands it will be important to constantly review current offerings in denominated degrees.
10. Given Galway's excellent reputation for arts & culture, does the College / University collaborate as well as it might with Galway City Council in promoting Galway city as a destination for study and learning? Cf. accommodation crisis. Cf. European City of Culture in 2020.