Enabling Success & Exerting Influence

A 5 YEAR PLAN FOR THE SCHOOL OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

2023 - 2028

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

School of Applied Psychology
Síceolaíocht Fheidhmeach

OVERVIEW

The School of Applied Psychology, founded in 1965, is one of ten Schools in the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences (CACSSS) at University College Cork. It is a distinctly applied school with internationally recognised research strengths in people and technology, mental health, child development and ageing, psychophysiology and health psychology, with high demand for its taught and professional training programmes, and deep commitment to community engagement. This new strategy is a critically reflective account of our existing strengths and challenges. Most importantly, however, it is a roadmap to our future. Together, we have formulated plans to amplify our research activities and profile, reimagine our curricula and reinvigorate a connected and inclusive School culture. Impact, influence, relevance and innovation, with respect to national and global challenges, are our touchstone goals for our educational and research endeavours.

A. OUR VISION AND VALUES

The *School of Applied Psychology*, at *University College Cork*, has a shared vision which we articulate as follows:

> An innovative community of Psychologists, students, and networks, who shape knowledge, inspire student success and engage together, to exert positive psychological influence for the good of an inclusive society and sustainable world

That vision is about shaping knowledge. Shaping the knowledge base through our research programmes. It is also about being a catalyst for knowledge, skills and values development in our students, which will enable them to join with us in exerting positive psychological influence in our society and wider world. Innovation is our ambition. Student success, community engagement and research impact are our indicators of innovative excellence. We want to attract students who share those ambitions for themselves and for the School community they will join. Underpinning this vision are values shared by our wider university community and named in our University Strategy (Securing our Future 2023-28) as *compassion, agility, integrity, respect, discovery, equity, accountability* and *sustainability*. These values are woven through the intent and actions outlined in this strategy.

As much as resources and income, our people, networks, relationships, diversity, and connected endeavours, are our key enablers. Thus, in our strategy they are an end in themselves. Connectivity is a theme which weaves itself throughout our strategy. Think of the neuron. This brain cell has, at its nucleus, the most astounding and innovative information, fine-tuned across millions of years of evolution. Yet, without its dendrites and synapses, its channels to communicate and connect with other neurons across the brain, this potential would be locked in and lost.
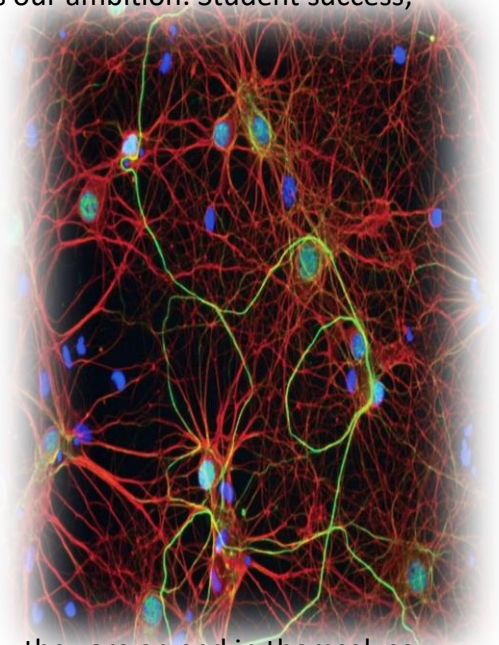
B. OUR SCHOOL CONTEXT

B.1 OUR STAFF AND STUDENTS

We embark on our new strategy from a space which has many strengths. Embracing "Securing Our Future", the UCC Strategic Plan for 2023 - 2028, the School's identity is clearly in and of the community, society and world in which we work, and endeavour to create innovative impact for.

Following a period of growth in both postgraduate student numbers and research income, by early 2024 we will have 28 permanent academic staff, 4 postdoctoral researchers (project linked), 3 teaching fellows (non-recurrent), 5 professional service staff, and 2 technical officers. In addition we currently have 3 Adjunct Professors and 9 Adjunct Lecturers and Adjunct Senior Lecturers. A number of part-time staff facilitate learning on specialist and practitioner areas of taught post-graduate programmes in particular. We have currently 46 placement provider partners from health, education, industry and other community organisations, who facilitated over 100 placements in the past year. We embrace the *National Strategy for Higher Education's* call for recruitment and engagement with practice professionals, external to traditional academic careers, in our staff base.

In 2023 we had 564 students, 373 undergraduate and 190 postgraduate, on programmes with a strong applied emphasis, some of which are unique in Ireland. Students on many of our courses enjoy placement opportunities in the HSE, the prison service, disability services, work and industry, community and voluntary organisations. In addition to developing applied and transferable skills, our students contribute to clinical and community services and shared research endeavours. All of our students have opportunities to develop strong research skills and to become active contributors to the research themes of the School and the Futures clusters of the wider university to which we are aligned.

We offer 3 undergraduate and 6 postgraduate courses, most of which are accredited by the *Psychological Society of Ireland*. Our core undergraduate degree **BA Applied Psychology** is accredited by the *Psychological Society of Ireland* as conferring essential knowledge and skills in the discipline of Psychology and which contains sufficient Psychology to enable graduates to pursue postgraduate study in the discipline. The **BA Psychology and Computing** is similarly accredited. This innovative pathway draws from core computing and psychology modules and is intended for students interested in understanding the ways in which interactive digital technologies and systems impact upon our lives, and in gaining the skills necessary to design, develop and evaluate those systems. The **BA Early Years and Childhood Studies** is a four-year pathway collaboratively delivered by the Schools of Education, Applied Social Studies, and Applied Psychology. This offers the opportunity to explore some of the most fundamental questions concerning children, young people and their families in contemporary society in Ireland and beyond. All of our undergraduate programmes are informed by employability and practice ambitions.
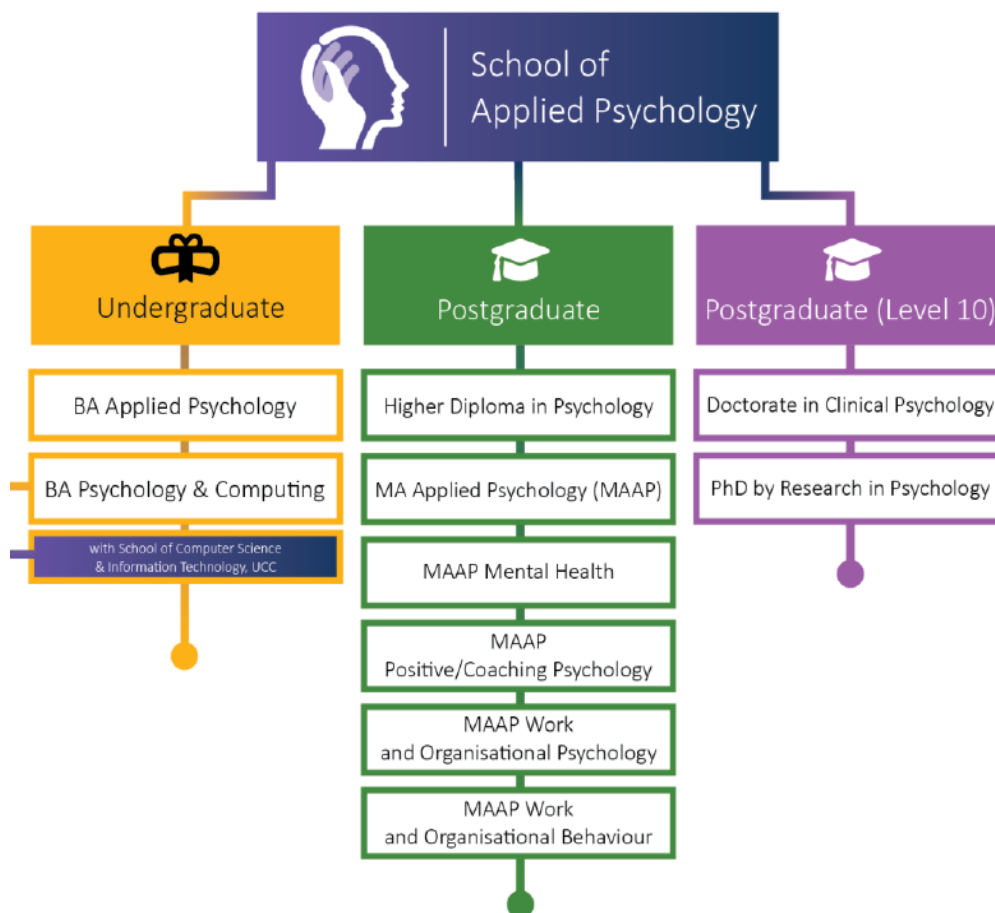
We have five masters programmes. The **MA Applied Psychology** and **MA Applied Psychology (Mental Health)** enable students to advance a critical understanding of Psychology in applied social, community and mental health settings. Both are often taken by students as platforms for further training and careers in professional psychology settings. The **MA Work and Organisational Psychology** and **MA Work and Organisational Behaviour** enable students to develop an advanced understanding of Psychology applied to the domains of work, organisations and industry. The two related, but distinct pathways, enable inclusion of those with and without a primary psychology degree. The former is accredited by the *Psychological Society of Ireland*. The **MA Applied Psychology (Positive and Coaching Psychology)** provides a postgraduate training in positive psychology and coaching skills, as well as the ability to conduct masters level research in this area, as common to all of our masters programmes.

Facilitating lifelong learning in psychology and reaching those who may have missed opportunities earlier in their development, will be important in the current strategy. Our **HDip Psychology** is a two-year conversion course designed for graduates with previous degrees and careers in disciplines other than psychology – to enable them to have the necessary core psychology knowledge and skills to pursue future training and learning therein. It is also accredited by the *Psychological Society of Ireland*.

B.3 OUR DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES

Embracing the national strategy call for diversifying doctoral training pathways, we offer Practitioner Doctorate and Structured PhD pathways. Our **Doctor of Clinical Psychology** is a full-time, three-year postgraduate professional course in Clinical Psychology, designed to train psychologists for appointment as Clinical Psychologists in the health and other services. Doctoral level research, however, is a key feature and output. It is organised and delivered in partnership between the University and the Health Services Executive (HSE) and is accredited by the *Psychological Society of Ireland*.

Our **Structured PhD** research programme enables students to join with the research clusters of our School and University, to gain a research skills training to doctoral level, but also to contribute to the knowledge bases that will exert positive psychological influence on our communities, society and world. Students get to engage with some taught modules related to a research training in the areas of interest, and to enjoy a close and sustaining supervisory relationship with two or more academics from the School (sometimes across Schools and units) as well as fieldwork collaborators. Our staff offer expertise in a diversity of research methodologies as well as specialism specific knowledge, with an excellent track record of attracting funding for students. The PhD community is a key part of the *School of Applied Psychology* and is well integrated into many School activities.

B.4 OUR RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

Aligned to the UCC *Futures* strategy for programmatic research, which speaks to the grand social challenges of our time, there are three overarching themes in our research activities.

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND AGEING

We look at the way our psychological and physical selves change and interact over the course of our life; we are particularly interested in discovering which physiological, behavioural, cognitive and lifestyle factors support healthy development across all ages and stages of life, including childhood, adolescence and adulthood. We study how biology may influence behaviour and VICE VERSA, and also the social, cultural and psychological factors that contribute how we think, feel and behave, as well as our health. Our research includes measures and models of perceptual sensitivity, perceptions of ageing, elder stereotypes, pubertal/adolescent development, socio-cultural influence on biobehavioural health, intergenerational transmission of trauma and psychobiological stress.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The importance of mental health and well-being for the social and economic health of the nation has grown in prominence in governmental strategic plans. The overarching focus in the School is twofold (a) to elucidate psychological processes underpinning risk and resilience and (b) to formulate and evaluate psychological interventions at both the clinical and community level. These aims find translation in foci related to trauma, family resilience, adverse experiences in childhood, childhood illness and disability, ASD, human sexuality, mental health difficulties, well-being in the workplace, infant and maternal mental health, reproductive issues, migrant populations, stress and coping, addictive behaviours, homelessness and therapeutic and training interventions. Partnerships with external collaborators from the HSE and related organisations, NGOs and community and service user groups, underpin our research and enables relevance and impact.

PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY

People and Technology (PAT) is a research group concerned with understanding and influencing the design of digital futures. The group is committed to experience-centred, participatory approaches to the design of technology. This is to help ensure that technological developments enhance people's lived experience and include people who too often are excluded. The PAT group increasingly finds further focus in working within projects related to our other themes of mental health and well-being and healthy development and ageing.

Our 2017-22 strategy provided an impetus to developing our strengths and building successes over the past 5 years. These have included:

- At the interface of arts, social science and health, we have capitalized on building partnerships across colleges and on securing funding across a wide range of funding streams. Our external partnerships also reflect this breadth of pedagogy.

- We have a signature portfolio of professionally accredited programmes, in high demand and with social engagement and impact.

- Our programmes have maintained PSI accreditation with commendations related to quality of teaching, student engagement, diversity of teaching methods, community and social engagement, research training and staff enthusiasm and expertise. The quality of our staff and programmes have been a perennial theme in external examiner reports and indeed in student feedback elicited both anonymously and through staff-student consultative fora.

- Our clinical, community and other work-based learning partnerships have grown significantly with the advent of new degree pathways (e.g. *BAP Psychology and Computing*, *Doctor of Clinical Psychology*), and such diversification in the breadth and depth of our external engagement is likely to continue as our programmes continue to grow.

- Our blended learning expertise was given significant impetus through COVID and we look forward to a more strategic refinement of this and with a view to universal design.

- Our postgraduate numbers – both taught and doctoral - have shown significant increases and, if we look only at students registered on our own degree pathways (-v- students from other programmes who take some of our undergraduate modules), then this now represents a 40% postgraduate School.

- Our research clusters – *People and Technology, Healthy Development and Ageing* and *Mental health and Well-Being*, speak to the societal challenges of our time, governmental priorities and sustainable development goals.

- Our research outputs – peer-reviewed publications, conference proceedings, books and outputs through other media, are flourishing. Moreover, impact analyses suggest influence and innovation in clinical settings, community organisations, educational and forensic settings, digital innovation, industry and other work settings, policy and practice and social influence through media engagement.

- ♦ Our generated research income is growing and our work increasingly shows the inter-disciplinarity that is recognised as crucial to tackling the grand social challenges of our time.

- ♦ We have champions who work across the university towards Open Science objectives, Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) in our research and alignment of same to UN Sustainability Goals.

- ♦ Our community engagement is also evident in our taught curriculum, with sessions, modules and programmes having elements of co-design and delivery by service user and other experts by experience.

- ♦ Diversity of staff including professional practice staff from clinical practice and work.

- ♦ Our people and the culture of our School provide fertile ground for all of our work. Our colleagues frequently get nominated for, and attain, staff excellence awards within the university. Over the past couple of years there has been significant success in academic staff promotions, which has recognised excellence therein. We are committed to a culture of diversity and inclusivity and in 2022 successfully attained the Athena Swan bronze award. We income generate to enable greater access through our scholarship scheme, to build our research infrastructure and resources and to seed fund staff research activities. From 2022 an *Equality Diversity and Inclusion* (EDI) strategy and thinking will be woven through all of our activities and decision-making bodies.

We have a vibrant, innovative, impactful and welcoming context for our people, our students and our diverse network of collaborators. Our new strategy aims to build on these strengths as a healthy platform for responding to the challenges ahead.

C. CHALLENGES AND EVOLUTION – A STRATEGY FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS

C.1 CHALLENGES AND CONTEXT

We are arguably at an evolutionary apex in Higher Education in Ireland. Our strategy for Applied Psychology has been informed by a number of challenges at the macro, regional and local levels.

♦ Profound social and environmental changes have impacted and will continue to impact on the society and world around us. Ways of working, ways of relating to one another, mental health and well-being, social movement, population dynamics, the increased traction of artificial intelligence, values and expectations are all in a state of evolution and flux. Yet unknown challenges mean that we have to plan within a context of potential flux, ambiguity, complexity and uncertainty. Flexibility and agility are required. However, in such a context psychological understandings and interventions have never been so needed or appreciated.

♦ Economic constraints, and shrinking allocations from the public purse to Higher Education, mean that we will need to forge other funding streams and think about income generation.

♦ Such constraints have amplified an ethos of "value for money" and targeted investments. This climate of accountability means performance metrics, impact and relevance of both our teaching and research are now crucial.

♦ Growing appreciations of the huge benefits of diversity, inclusion and the participation of all our peoples in our work have pushed us to review our working practices. Reaching out to include those too often excluded from higher education through disability, social disadvantage and other forces of marginalization, will push us to review and rethink our traditional practices from student inclusion and research participation through to the working environments of our staff.

♦ New ways of working and learning were foisted upon us through the pandemic. However, we learned much from this. Blended learning and working practices may be more deliberately harnessed to enrich and extend our teaching and research practices, to enhance universal design and work-related quality of life.

♦ All of these drivers for change have informed national strategies for higher education in Ireland as well as the new UCC strategy *Securing our Future*. These call for recalibration of our research, reimagination of our curricula, inclusivity throughout all our work and a greater emphasis on impact and innovation.

Other specific challenges which we must negotiate as a School include:

♦ Space challenges – as we have grown we are now challenged in our capacity to accommodate staff, increasing PhD and postdocs, teaching fellows and new research and innovation spaces. Classroom space is also a challenge and we have sometimes exceeded capacity for some modules.

♦ Increasing student demand for our programmes and increasing requests for professional training place commissioning.

♦ Challenges to placement capacity to support accreditation requirements and the distinctive opportunities which make our programmes attractive.

♦ Ensuring staff morale, engagement, well-being and collegiality remain an enabler in the context of increasing workload, accountability requirements and increasing opportunities for organisational and social influence. Whilst promotions have occurred for academic staff, our professional and administrative staff have not enjoyed such access with challenges evident in these promotional systems.

♦ We rely on PhD engagement with teaching for our labs and tutorial provision especially. Such has been recently challenged by the decoupling of teaching from studentships.

♦ New generations of students, in and of a changing world, challenge us to engage with perhaps different ways of learning and who have expectations which may be different from what we are familiar with.

♦ Similarly, employer needs in such a changing world demand that we rethink and reimagine our curricula to remain relevant for student success.

C.2 A FOUR PILLAR STRATEGY

Building on our strengths and engaging with the challenges outlined above, we have formulated a four pillar strategy as summarised in the table below. Key priorities are indicated, together with the indicative actions which will facilitate realization of these priorities in practice.

TABLE 1: SCHOOL OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2023 - 2028

Research with Impact		Educational Excellence		Equality, Inclusion and School Culture		Influence, Impact and Innovation	
1.1	Further grow our research identities, culture and activity in context of Futures strategy.	**2.1**	A reimagined Curriculum for relevance, innovation, impact and efficiency.	**3.1**	Create a School context which maximizes work-related quality of life	**4.1**	Enhance impact of our psychological knowledge and research on society.
1.2	Impact lens – outputs and broader dissemination	**2.2**	Stimulate student success for impact.	**3.2**	Advance a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion.	**4.2**	Global Engagement
1.3	Engaged and sustainable research – open science, PPI, SDGs	**2.3**	Engaged and inclusive education.				

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

5.1 Confirm key performance indicators across teaching, research, EDI and school culture

5.2 Byte sized training sessions – distilling, tailoring, sharing experience.

5.3 Financial Plan and income generation.

5.4 University influence and synergy.

5.5 Rationalisation of administrative processes

5.6 Space review

D. UNPACKING OUR STRATEGY

There are four pillars to our school strategy as outlined in Table 1. These relate to research, education, inclusion and culture and impact and innovation. All are aligned to the wider university strategy *Securing our Future* 2023-2028. Underpinning these pillars is our strategic base. Within this, priorities relate to the systems, processes and infrastructure which are common to all strategic priorities, and which will enable us to achieve our goals. Below we unpack these strategic priorities. We outline indicative actions which reflect our current thinking on strategic actions to realise these priorities. A number of indicative actions have overlap and synergy across the four pillars. These indicative actions are not meant to be prescriptive or exhaustive but do present a road map for the way ahead in the current contemporary context.

1. RESEARCH WITH IMPACT

1.1 FURTHER GROW OUR RESEARCH IDENTITIES, CULTURE AND ACTIVITY IN CONTEXT OF FUTURES

1.1.1. The new university *Futures* Research strategy, involving 10 university wide clusters of research excellence, is underpinning university practices going forward including resource allocation, infrastructure and recruitment. We will actively engage with and contribute to UCC Futures, identifying opportunities for enhancing and strengthening current research and for establishing new collaborations and synergies.

1.1.2. Our Research lead and committee will proactively champion research activities and enablers within the School. This inclusive group will ensure research is centred and affirmed through our multifarious School priorities.

1.1.3. Workload allocation – the HOS, in consultation with the Research Committee and wider School, will develop heuristics to ensure research activity is explicitly recognized in workload allocation, as far as can be achieved without undermining academic citizenship, participation in and quality of teaching and EDI principles.

1.1.4. We will look at ways to consolidate modules to reduce administration loads, rationalize content where appropriate and create administrative systems which better facilitate sabbaticals.

1.1.5.   We will continue to use our research overheads and other income generation to seed fund and equipment fund research. These opportunities will be made available to our research community of staff, including Postdocs, and PhD students and as aligned to local / institutional / national / international priorities. Such seed funding should supplement other seed funding sources from internal and external units and act as an enabler for applications for larger externally supported funding.

1.1.6.   Within our research partnerships, and across our School community, we will strive to increase / diversify our research income.

1.1.7.   Whilst supporting student interests and need to develop concept and design skills, we will seek to synergise student research activity and projects within our research themes and projects with established infrastructure and expertise. Processes to ensure publication outcomes and other impact will be developed.

1.1.8.   Sabbatical strategy – we will support research sabbaticals, with clear objectives aligned to the School and University strategy.

1.1.9.   PhD and postdoc community will join in our wider School supports for their research as outlined above. Additionally, we will seek to provide other opportunities - e.g. related to teaching, research supervision and academic citizenship to optimize their skills and experiences for future career opportunities.

1.2. IMPACT LENS – OUTPUT AND BROADER DISSEMINATION

1.2.1.   In order to appreciate and advance impact and influence, we will need to articulate key performance indicators. Whilst work has been completed here already, we will further operationalize and define these to represent the full range of research in the School including non-traditional outputs. A research "narrative" approach (considering impact on society, communities, healthcare, policies and other work-based practices) will be developed to supplement traditional output records.

1.2.2.   A systematic framework for the reporting of outputs / impact and dissemination activities will be advanced.

1.2.3.   Strategic publications and disseminations in high quality peer-reviewed journals and conferences will be shaped through training and other support initiatives.

1.2.4.   A social media and other media strategy will be supported to further stimulate public understanding and societal impact of our work.

1.2.5. We will continue to advance the partnerships and networks which sustain our research.

1.2.6. We will seek to maintain, and advance where possible, our success in growing PhD and professional doctorate students within resources and capacity available to support them in completion of studies and employability prospects.

1.3. ENGAGED AND SUSTAINABLE RESEARCH – OPEN SCIENCE, PPIs and SDGs

1.3.1. Our SDG champion will lead on further stimulating our shared understanding of the relevance, significance and opportunities presented by aligning and conceptualizing our research within *Sustainable Development Goals*.

1.3.2. We will continue to lead on *Patient and Public Involvement* (PPI), engage with and shape PPI processes in wider university community. We will explore options for a School wide reference group PPI panel.

1.3.3. Embedding EDI principles and awareness in all our research endeavours is a key priority.

1.3.4. Further development of our practices related to open science is key. We will move in the next five years to a position where we are clearly defined as an "open science" School.

2. EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

2.1. A REIMAGINED CURRICULUM FOR RELEVANCE, INNOVATION, IMPACT AND EFFICIENCY

2.1.1. Programmes will form Boards of Studies, where not already in place, and all will lead on reimagining our signature portfolios of degrees, in innovative ways and to be informed by the challenges outlined above (C.1). An annual programme review process will monitor progress across years.

2.1.2. Our curriculua will show connectivity in its applied focus, skills for employability, research led-teaching, in-person teaching blended with the opportunities of digital education and nudge towards universal design.
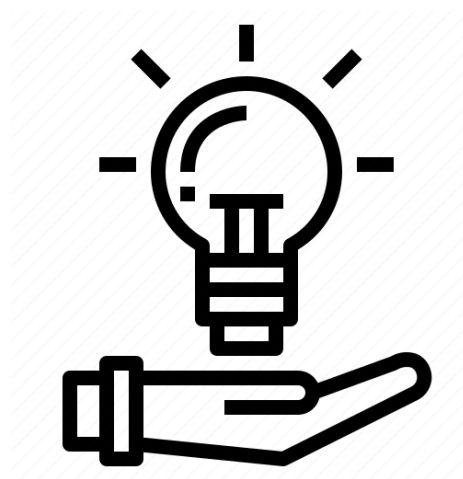
2.1.3. As a matter of priority, we will maintain accreditation of a number of our programmes by the *Psychological Society of Ireland*. All programmes will be benchmarked to the highest quality assurance and enhancement frameworks.

2.1.4. Through these processes we will seek to pool resources in consolidated modular frameworks, to minimize administration and create flexibility for team teaching and thus synergise with sabbatical opportunities.

2.1.5. Assessment methods will be reviewed for best alignment to learning outcomes and skills for employability.

2.1.6. Placement and work-based learning is recognized as a signature strength in many of our degree pathways. Strategic actions will be taken to meet the contemporary challenges here (C.1), consolidate and integrate these learning contexts within our overall approach to Applied Psychology education.

2.1.7. We will explore innovative new models for our degree structures and pursue lifelong and life wide opportunities in our training and qualification offerings.

2.2. STIMULATE STUDENT SUCCESS FOR IMPACT.

2.2.1. We will maintain our excellent record of student success, but more rigorously monitor key performance indicators such as such as admission profiles, retention, progression, degree outcomes and predictors of all. Boards of Studies will report on same in annual programme reviews with any actions consequent to same.

2.2.2. We will weave through our taught curricula, related to psychological knowledge and skills, training in transferable skills for employability and impact such as leadership and competencies to exert influence, digital literacy and other personal and professional development attributes. We will seek to motivate and prepare our students for the exciting full range of potential careers following Psychology degrees.

2.2.3. We will ensure fora and mechanisms to consult and collaborate with our student body, both in the evaluation and design of our educational portfolio.

2.2.4. We will review our retention / drop out data for action opportunities and collaborate with stakeholders to ensure we have effective remedial and support processes in place for students who will benefit from same.

2.2.5. In consultation with our PhD / Postdoc community, we will explore further ways to support and develop their experiences and competencies, for academic and academic-related careers, such as teaching, student supervision and mentoring, module quality assurance etc.

2.3. ENGAGED AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

2.3.1.   Our actions related to collaborating with students (2.2.3), review of retention rates (2.2.4) will be informed by an EDI lens throughout.

2.3.2.   Our review of admissions (2.2.1) will explore ways to increase access and participation of traditionally harder to access groups and in ways which will benefit the richness and diversity of our student community and later impact on society.

2.3.3.   A lifelong learning lens will inform our curricula reviews as outlined above. Mechanisms and opportunities related to recognition of prior learning processes and a reanimated culture of continued professional development will inform this work.

2.3.4.   Patient and Public involvement in our educational portfolios will be reviewed for opportunities to expand.

3.   EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND SCHOOL CULTURE

3.1. CREATE A SCHOOL CONTEXT WHICH MAXIMIZES WORK-RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE

3.1.1.   Co-create a culture of appropriate autonomy, responsibility, leadership, collegiality, transparency, affirmation, value and shared values and vision.

3.1.2.   Enable staff development through support, mentoring, training and promotional opportunities.

3.1.3.   Support appropriate blended working and opportunities for coming together, as staff and students, to enhance belonging and connectivity.

3.1.4.   Promote collegiality and connectivity through byte sized training together initiatives, inclusive committee and working groups with shared meaning and purpose, team building and inclusive social events.

3.1.5.   Formulate a written staff charter which articulates our standards for relating to each other, shared workloads and acting together within our School community.

3.1.6.   Create a range of in-person social engagement opportunities for PhD, Postdoc researchers and PMSS/academic staff.

3.1.7. Deepen and broaden our network of alumni engaging with the life of the School.

3.2. ADVANCE A CULTURE OF EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

3.2.1. Support an EDI committee, as a reference and steering group, within the School. Weave EDI principles across all key committee and decision-making fora within the School.

3.2.2. Create shared understanding, ownership and committed actions to model and inspire a culture of EDI across all stakeholders within the School.

3.2.3. EDI principles, images and language, and School progress on EDI actions will be promoted on School website, social media, in the physical spaces of the School buildings, and at public and outreach events (short videos, trajectory testimonials, school signage). Include EDI-related topics in School research seminars and other events (e.g., Peter Dempsey lecture) to promote EDI education.

3.2.4. Embed EDI principles in teaching, learning and research practices within the School. Enable all staff to critically review curriculum, teaching and supervision practices, and other practices through an EDI lens. Pilot diversifying and / or decolonizing curriculum modules.

3.2.5. Organise a culture and organisation away day including invited speakers representative of organisations working with EDI populations, including reflection on language and inclusion.

3.2.6. Explore ways to increase participation from across society in access, teaching and other activities of the School.

3.2.7. Advocate and plan for accessible and inclusive physical spaces across the School buildings.

3.2.8. Develop strategies to maximise the career progression of PhD, research and PostDoc staff.

3.2.9. Lobby key senior management for reform of the UCC PMSS progression and promotions scheme, including the frequency of progression and promotion opportunities. Similarly urge equitable promotion opportunities for academic staff with an obligation to maintain a clinical practice for ongoing professional accreditation.

3.2.10. Utilise Annual EDI Staff Survey data on impact of COVID-19 to understand and act on the data on the impact of COVID on career, workload, mental health, work-life satisfaction, difficulties maintaining productive work including research for staff (PhD, researchers, PostDocs, academic and PMSS).

3.2.11. Institutionalise data gathering processes to facilitate AS and EDI tracking and monitoring.

3.2.12. Identify senior academics as Athena Swan champions for our next application as separate roles within the EDI committee.

3.2.13.

4. INFLUENCE, IMPACT AND INNOVATION

4.1. ENHANCE IMPACT OF OUR PSYCHOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH IN SOCIETY.

4.1.1. We will seek opportunities to engage with external partnerships in ways which impact, make a difference and influence community, health, work, education, policy and practice.

4.1.2. We will advance ways to increase our social and other media presence, to ensure our work promotes wider social awareness and influence towards our goals embedded in our vision and values.

4.1.3. We will advance plans for a *Centre of Psychological Health and Well-Being*. This will include a *Participatory Research Lab* and we will seek to develop consultancy, validated lifelong learning and training, with outreach to our partner networks and wider society. This will have income generating potential as well as offer an in-house placement opportunities for our students.

4.2. GLOBAL INFLUENCE

4.2.1. Where appropriate, we will attract and capitalize on an internationally diverse academic and research community composition.

4.2.2. We will seek ways to further develop our international student body in line with our vision and values.

4.2.3. We will take a focused approach to improving our QS rankings as one element in raising our global profile and to attract international staff and students.

5. SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

5.1. To assess progress in all of the above strategic priorities and actions, we will review and develop where necessary our key performance indicators across research, education, equality, inclusion and school culture and impact and innovation.

5.2. Byte sized training and other fora for collaboration and reflective practice will be developed.

5.3. A sound financial plan, linked to our strategic objectives and that of the wider university, will be formulated each year.

5.4. The administrative infrastructure of the School will be reviewed for opportunities for efficiency and to ensure the same is supportive of, and in synergy with, our strategic priorities.

5.5. We will seek to ensure that Applied Psychology is represented, and exerts organisational influence, in College and University domains related to all aspects of the strategic plans.

5.6. We will advance plans for a program of renovation and refurbishment of our existing spaces in *Cork Enterprise Centre* and *Distillery House* to advance Centre objectives (4.1.3) and a context for environmental support for our post-doc and other staff. A longer-term space review will be conducted to ensure we have the necessary infrastructure in place to enable continued growth and development.
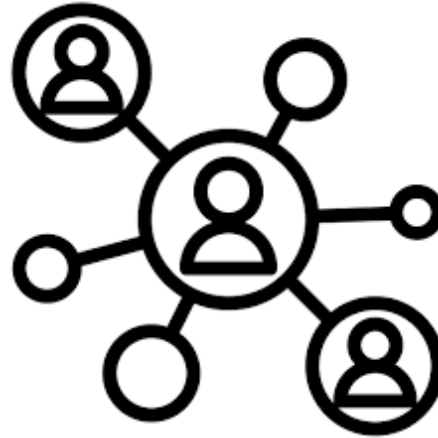
Our new strategy is ambitious. It will require concerted action and shared vision from across our School, and it is right that there is such ownership in realizing this strategy. The strategy is for the benefit of all, and so realizing our priorities and actions is the responsibility of all.

The School Executive Committee, however, will lead on formulating implementation actions each year and reviewing progress on same. Committee leads (e.g. Research, Teaching and Learning and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) will lead on advancing the strategy within the relevant pillars of the strategy outlined above. The School Manger, Programme Directors and others with specific leadership responsibilities within the School will support committee leads with specific strategic responsibilities. The Head of School will oversee overall progress and lead on specific initiatives of relevance. All members of the School will join in specific actions as appropriate. Annual reports to the School Assembly will ensure we keep on track.

The lesson of the pandemic and the other social changes noted above have, however, shown us that new challenges, new contexts and social changes can come upon us at unprecedented rates. Our actions are, therefore, indicative of what our success will look like, rather than prescriptive. Agility and flexibility will be key across all of our strategic priorities and action plans.