



UCC

University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

Fheabhsú Cáilíochta Quality Enhancement



QUALITY REVIEW

PEER REVIEW PANEL REPORT

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

“To support the University’s mission and strategy for excellence in learning, research and related services through developing and embedding a culture of quality enhancement based on the outcomes of robust expert peer review and informed by ongoing analysis of key quality indicators.”

(UCC Quality Enhancement Committee Aim)

April 2024

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Context

The School of Medicine in UCC is one of six schools situated in the College of Medicine & Health and is among the oldest in the University with its origins in 1849, shortly after the foundation of the University. It is one of the largest Schools in the University with eleven academic departments and one administrative unit. Some departments are further divided into disciplines. The School's academic departments (and disciplines) include Anatomy & Neuroscience; Physiology; Pathology; General Practice; Surgery (Anaesthesia & Intensive Care Medicine, and Emergency Medicine); Medicine (Centre for Gerontology & Rehabilitation; Medical Imaging & Radiation Therapy, and Radiology); Paediatrics & Child Health; Pharmacology & Therapeutics; Obstetrics & Gynaecology; Psychiatry & Neurobehavioral Sciences, and the Medical Education Unit.

Since the previous quality review, the School has approved and launched various new undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, responding to market needs, including the Health Service Executive's (HSE) National Ambulance Service (NAS) Paramedic programme and the MSc Allergy & Immunology programme, the only postgraduate programme of its kind in Ireland. The School of Medicine currently offers four undergraduate and eleven postgraduate programmes with diverse entry pathways. There are four accredited programmes, specifically anchored in the School of Medicine with the BSc (Hons) Paramedic Studies currently undergoing its first professional International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) accreditation. The School of Medicine also serves as the anchor School for multiple interdisciplinary CPD courses in UCC.

The School works closely within the healthcare provider sector through affiliation as primary academic partner for the South-South West Hospital Group, which includes Cork University Hospital (CUH), Cork University Maternity Hospital (CUMH), University Hospital Waterford, University Hospital Kerry, Mercy University Hospital (MUH), Tipperary University Hospital, South Infirmity Victoria University Hospital, Bantry General Hospital, Mallow General Hospital and Kilcreene Regional Orthopaedic Hospital. The School of Medicine also serves as the primary academic partner for other community and primary care sites, and several private hospitals including Bon Secours Cork and Mater Private Mahon.

Staff in the School are situated across the Brookfield Health Sciences Complex, Western Gateway Building and the multiple clinical sites mentioned in the above paragraph. The School currently has a Headcount of 289 staff members (full-time and part-time, including contract research staff) with an additional 650 Clinical Senior Lecturers on Hourly Occasional Contracts of indefinite duration. The gender mix of full-time and part-time, permanent and fixed-term staff in the School is 67% female and 33% male, with a senior management team that is 50% female. The School of Medicine has worked hard on promoting the recruitment of an international workforce with a diverse range of skills to align with the broad remit of the School in education, research and innovation. The School of Medicine also recently submitted its application for an Athena Swan Bronze award. There is a serious research appetite in the School and strong connections internally as well as with the Infant Research Centre, APC, Clinical Research Facility, and Tyndall.

The most recent student Headcount figures reported in the SER refer to the academic year 2023/24 and correspond to 1372 full-time and 21 part-time, undergraduate students. The 2023/24 Headcount figures reported in the SER for postgraduates refer to 278 full-time and 522 part-time students.

Methodology and Site Visit

A model for conducting site visits virtually was developed in 2020 to enable completion of Quality Reviews under the prevailing public health restrictions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. This model ensured continuity in the operation and delivery of quality review and enhancement activities. In 2022 the model moved to a hybrid review comprising of a 2 day on-campus site visit and 2 half-day virtual meetings.

This review took place under the hybrid review process over 2 weeks during February 2024. During the site visit the Panel met with staff, students, senior officers, and relevant stakeholders. During the virtual meetings the Panel focused on writing the Report with a particular emphasis on the commendations and recommendations. The sequencing of meetings was organised to ensure coherence and progression in the conduct of the review. The platform used for the virtual meetings was MS Teams. The timetable for the site visit afforded appropriate time to engage with the broad variety of stakeholders. The timetable is included as Appendix B.

The Panel brought together internal and international peer reviewers (Panel profiles can be found in Appendix A). The internal reviewers provided knowledge of institutional and organisational structures with the external Panel members contributing their peer expertise. The student Panel member brought valuable insights and perspectives on student issues. At the end of the site visit, the Panel presented its initial findings, both commendations and recommendations, to the staff of the School.

To support the Peer Review Panel and facilitate effective engagement throughout the site visit, additional guidance and support was provided by staff of the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU) in UCC. This included technical support, as well as briefing and advisory support prior to and throughout the review. Review coordination was provided throughout by a Review Coordinator to facilitate the review process and to support the Peer Review Panel in formulating and agreeing the final Panel Report. The Report was compiled collaboratively, and the entire Panel contributed to the production of the final Report.

Panel Members

Refer to Appendix A for detailed Panel profiles.

Name	Position/Discipline	Institution
Professor Máire Leane	School of Applied Social Studies	University College Cork
Professor Desmond Leddin	Faculty of Medicine	Dalhousie University
Ms Caitlin Madden (Student Reviewer)	College of Business and Law	University College Cork
Emeritus Professor Neil Marlow	Department of Neonatal Medicine	University College London
Professor Chris Williams (Chair)	Head, College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences	University College Cork

<i>Review Coordinator</i>		
<i>Ms Seugnet Kritzinger</i>	<i>Quality Enhancement Unit</i>	<i>University College Cork</i>
<i>IT and Logistics Coordinator</i>		
<i>Ms Marie O'Regan</i>	<i>Quality Enhancement Unit</i>	<i>University College Cork</i>

Objectives of Quality Review

The overarching objectives of academic quality review at UCC are to enable Schools, through evidence-based self-evaluation, to:

1. Reflect on and promote the strategic enhancement of their academic activities to ensure an outstanding learning experience for all students (enhancement dimension).
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of their processes for assuring academic standards and provision, in line with the University's academic mission and strategy (assurance dimension).

Thus, peer review goes beyond quality assurance to also embrace continuous quality enhancement. The Peer Review Panel Report reflects these objectives in the recommendations and commendations outlined to support the [School of Medicine](#) in further refining its priorities and optimising its activities in the pursuit of its ambitious drive for excellence within the international and national arena of higher education.

Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

Based on the information obtained from the Self-Evaluation Report and meetings with multiple internal, as well as external stakeholders to the [School of Medicine](#), the Panel commends the School for the following:

1. The Head of the Self-Evaluation Committee and all the committee members in producing a very clear and concise Self-Evaluation Report. The collegiality displayed throughout the Self-Evaluation process is evident to the Panel, especially given the short timeframe for completion.
2. The leadership and continuous commitment of the Dean of Medicine/ Head of the School, particularly relating to the work completed during and since Covid. The Panel was particularly impressed by the work already accomplished in revising the management structure of the School.
3. The dedication and excellence of teaching, administrative and technical staff to delivering education of the highest standard nationally and internationally. It is evident to the Panel, based on feedback from multiple internal and external stakeholders, that the staff in the School of Medicine are rightly held in high esteem.
4. The commitment of staff and clinical tutors to delivering high quality placements, teaching, and clinical training including the outstanding administration facilitating GP and hospital placements.
5. The pride, dedication and innovation shown by staff in the work being delivered by the School.
6. The outstanding leadership and organisation in the School in supporting the National Ambulance Service. The Panel was particularly impressed that the opportunities afforded, provided vocational students with formalised qualifications and development opportunities.
7. The success of academic staff in the recent promotion rounds and the introduction of an updated process for the appointment of Honorary Clinical Professors.
8. The continuous focus on enhancing the student learning experience in the School as evidenced by the current curriculum review and responsiveness to feedback from students.
9. The high quality of programmes being delivered by the School. The Panel was particularly impressed with the variety of postgraduate programmes available to students through a range of teaching methods including online programmes.
10. The excellent UCC campus-based, physical infrastructure and simulation facilities available to students in the School. The precision and pride in preparing students for real-life scenarios is evident to the Panel through positive feedback from students combined with an in-person tour guided by staff in the School.
11. The influence of the School in terms of the amount of existing world-leading research in the area of Medicine especially impressed the Panel.
12. The commitment of staff in the School to the implementation of Athena Swan Principles.
13. The Good Practice Case Study on Interprofessional Learning within undergraduate medical programmes in the School. The Panel was impressed by the efforts of staff in the School to incorporate interprofessional communication and teamwork into the preparation of students for their collaborative practice.

Summary Recommendations

The recommendations made by the panel were signalled by a combination of elements, including recommendations by the School in the SER, combined with internal and external stakeholder discussions during the review. Considering this, the panel has identified the below key areas for the [School of Medicine](#) to focus on, to further enable the growth and success of the School.

1. The Panel recommends that a review of the current Vision and Mission statements of the School be carried out in order to focus more on the staff and students in the School than on the systems and processes it undertakes.
2. The Panel recommends that the appointment of Vice-Deans, with responsibility for discrete areas of activity, in the School be strongly supported.
3. The Panel recommends that the overall School structure and management structure be clarified as a first step in strengthening the cohesion and identity of the School.
4. The Panel recommends that a detailed Communications Strategy be developed to foster interdepartmental connections and camaraderie in the School as well as with stakeholders interfacing with the School.
5. The Panel recommends that a flexible and appropriate Workload Model be identified and implemented in the School to properly address workload allocation.
6. The Panel recommends that a process be put into place to facilitate all clinical tutors (including GPs) applying for appropriate honorary academic titles.
7. The Panel recommends that an Action Plan for appraisal and mentorship be devised and implemented for all members of the School.
8. The Panel recommends that for the BSc Medical & Health Sciences degree, consideration be given to how the degree teaching and student experience is differentiated from other courses and priority given to expansion of work placement opportunities for students.
9. The Panel recommends that the resources required for sustainability and growth of postgraduate programmes are reviewed.
10. The Panel recommends that quality is monitored through routine data collection, and utilisation of UCC-wide metrics.
11. The Panel recommends that teaching and learning practices and facilities/educational environments, in all sites at which there is clinical teaching, be continuously monitored and supported to ensure inconsistencies in quality are addressed.

Recommendations – Further Detail

Priority Recommendations

The panel considers the following as priority recommendations for the School to act upon over the next 12 to 18 months:

1. The Panel recommends that a review of the current Vision and Mission statements of the School be carried out in order to focus more on the staff and students in the School than on the systems and processes it undertakes.

The Panel perceived the current Vision and Mission to be focused on the processes and systems of the School rather than developing the people who work in and interface with the School. The panel thus recommends that the Vision and Mission be reviewed and realigned to the overall direction the School is working towards, instilling a sense of belonging in the School of Medicine for all staff in the various Departments and Disciplines.

This recommendation should be led by the Head of School and supported by the School Leadership Team. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

2. The Panel recommends that the appointment of Vice-Deans, with responsibility for discrete areas of activity, in the School be strongly supported.

The Panel is aware that with the current management structure, all responsibility and decision-making rests with the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School who has significant clinical responsibilities as well. The Panel feels that the appointment of Vice-Deans in the School will provide appropriate support to the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School in terms of strategising, workload, and decision-making.

- The Panel specifically recommends in this instance that a Vice-Dean for Teaching and Learning role be considered to drive the continuation of Quality Assurance in teaching, CPD for staff and clinical tutors across the board as well as regular curriculum review. The Panel suggests that particular attention be paid to ensuring uniform consistency of clinical experience in hospitals, and to maintaining, building, and enhancing the relationship with the GP network.
- The Panel recommends that additional Vice-Deans to provide leadership in research/innovation and postgraduate affairs would be advantageous as these are areas of activity that are less coherent at present.

This recommendation should be led by the Head of School and supported by the Head of College of Medicine & Health. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

3. The Panel recommends that the overall School structure and management structure be clarified as a first step in strengthening the cohesion and identity of the School.

The Panel heard of general concern regarding the lack of connection and unity within the broader School due to the dispersion of staff throughout the various departments and disciplines; staff and to a certain extent students, felt disconnected from the School itself and better associated with their

specific departments/disciplines. The panel considered that this should be approached in several ways to establish more coherence across the school structures. It was also considered that there had not been clarity over the setting up of the new management structures (Leadership group; Strategy group) and that more clarity is needed over the membership particularly of the former group. Furthermore, some consideration should be given to the reconfiguration of the school into fewer (larger) cognate groupings to streamline decision making and distribute the administrative load.

This recommendation should be led by the Head of School and supported by the School Executive and Leadership Subgroup. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

4. The Panel recommends that a detailed Communications Strategy be developed to foster interdepartmental connections and camaraderie in the School as well as with stakeholders interfacing with the School.

- The Panel recommends that the School develop a Communications Strategy aligning to the overall Communications Strategy of the University.
- The Panel recommends that a thorough refurbishment of the School's website be completed as part of the new Communications Strategy to improve the outward identity and message of the School.
- The Panel recommends that the School devise a comprehensive Communications Plan and system to close any communication gaps in the School and ensure that everyone is well-informed. Examples include keeping email lists updated in each department/discipline to ensure that the necessary communication reaches the applicable staff at any given point and implementing a centralised communication platform like a SharePoint site for the School.

This recommendation should be led, as a matter of priority, by a senior member of staff in the School, in collaboration with the Office of Media and Communications, and supported by the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

5. The Panel recommends that a flexible and appropriate Workload Model be identified and implemented in the School to properly address workload allocation.

- The Panel recommends that a Workload Modelling Group be assigned.
- The Panel recommends that the Athena Swan principles be considered in identifying the Workload Model.

This recommendation should be led, as a matter of priority, by a senior member of staff in the School, and supported by the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

6. The Panel recommends that a process be put into place to facilitate all clinical tutors (including GPs) applying for appropriate honorary academic titles.

- The Panel recommends that GP tutors be enabled to apply for honorary academic titles.

- The Panel recommends that the School continues to advocate for the completion of the project relating to full library access and UCC email addresses for all clinical tutors, so as to avoid future frustration and offer clinical tutors the opportunity to feel recognised as part of the School and the University, given the invaluable work they do.

This recommendation should be led by a senior member of staff in the School, in collaboration with the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School and supported by the Head of College of Medicine & Health. This recommendation should be implemented within 12 to 18 months following receipt of the Panel report.

Medium-term Recommendations

The panel considers the following medium-term recommendations for the School to act upon over the next 18 to 24 months:

7. The Panel recommends that an Action Plan for appraisal and mentorship be devised and implemented for all members of the School.

- The Panel recommends that a system of Appraisal be developed to ensure that all members of staff have the opportunity for personal development and to position themselves for advancement (should they desire it). Training needs should be established for each individual and the School must work to ensure that these may be met. This provides an opportunity for personal academic and research agendas to be supported and developed - for clinicians a dual appraiser system will be required to ensure fair distribution of activity for each individual.
- The Panel recommends that the mentorship programme be developed further to include research into teaching and learning, and the publication of these results.
- The Panel recommends that greater consideration be given to facilitating the taking of sabbatical research leave by eligible academic staff.

This recommendation should be led by a senior member of staff in the School and supported by the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School. This recommendation should be implemented within 18 to 24 months following receipt of the Panel report.

8. The Panel recommends that for the BSc Medical & Health Sciences degree, consideration be given to how the degree teaching and student experience is differentiated from other courses and priority given to expansion of work placement opportunities for students.

The Panel heard of general concern among BSc Health Sciences students regarding their standing as a distinct cohort from Medicine, with whom they share many modules. They further expressed a wish to have modules specifically addressing their learning, work placement and career pathway needs as students taking a BSc degree. The Panel thus recommends:

- That the School continue to work with industry collaborators to develop a work placement model that is sustainable in providing placement opportunities to BSc Health Sciences students.
- That the School considers providing students, not on placement, with the option of an Erasmus period.

- That the possibility be considered of incorporating career guidance by industry collaborators earlier in the BSc Health Sciences degree, leading up to their options for final year work placement.

This recommendation should be led by the Director of the BSc Medical and Health Sciences course and supported by the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School. This recommendation should be implemented within 18 to 24 months following receipt of the Panel report.

9. The Panel recommends that the resources required for sustainability and growth of postgraduate programmes are reviewed.

The Panel heard of some concern among postgraduate students about the support framework outside their normal supervision structure to allow them to navigate their way around their courses, particularly research-based degrees. Additionally, the Panel heard from Staff in the School that there was a lack of sufficient administrative support in general. The Panel thus recommends:

- That an information pack be provided to all new PhD students with a clear outline on roles and applicable support within the School of Medicine outside their immediate supervision team.
- That more formal postgraduate peer mentorship groups be supported, similar to the Academic Appetites group started by students themselves and that the School considers providing PhD students with a Digital Badge to acknowledge all their volunteering work.
- That the School take steps to ensure that the necessary marketing and administrative support is provided to postgraduate courses.

This recommendation should be led by the Programme Directors of Postgraduate Programmes in the School and supported by the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School. This recommendation should be implemented within 18 to 24 months following receipt of the Panel report.

Long-term Recommendations

The panel considers the following long-term recommendations that are considered to be **ongoing and should be a reoccurring item** on the School's agenda:

10. The Panel recommends that quality is monitored through routine data collection, and utilisation of UCC-wide metrics.

The Panel became aware of the shortage of available data in the wider UCC, and that the information received by the Self-Evaluation Committee for utilisation in the SER, was very fractured and difficult to make sense of. The Panel thus recommends that the School collect its own routine data, which is then combined with current UCC-metrics. The School needs to collate research activity including measures of academic esteem, research support and funding and outputs - alongside similar data on teaching and other support activities.

This recommendation should be led by a senior member of staff in the School and supported by the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School. This recommendation is ongoing and should be a reoccurring item on the School's agenda.

11. The Panel recommends that teaching and learning practices and facilities/educational environments, in all sites at which there is clinical teaching, be continuously monitored and supported to ensure inconsistencies in quality are addressed.

The Panel heard of general concern due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning, and the facilities in the various clinical placement sites. The Panel thus recommends that:

- The School develop internal KPI's to continuously monitor, support and engage the various clinical sites so that any inconsistencies can be minimised and addressed in a timely fashion.

This recommendation should be led by a senior member of staff in the School and supported by the Dean of Medicine/ Head of School. This recommendation is ongoing and should be a reoccurring item on the School's agenda.

Observations

Additional to the recommendations, the Panel identified some observations for further consideration on issues that the Panel believes fall outside of the School's remit. The Panel suggests that these observations be shared with the appropriate units to agree on a plan for addressing these accordingly.

Observations to the Chief People & Culture Officer

1. The Panel believes that the current administrative, technical and academic vacancies in the School of Medicine are compromising the overall performance of the School, in its delivery of core activities of education and research, and that recruitment should be prioritised as a matter of urgency.
 - The workload for current administrative and technical staff is significant which impacts on the overall wellbeing and retention of staff. This, in turn, has an impact on academic staff, having to undertake their own administrative tasks in certain instances, in addition to their core academic duties etc.
2. The Panel is of the view that the delay in implementing a revised appraisal system has had an impact on supporting staff development and progression across the board.
 - Delays in the previously planned appraisal system now seems to be an important step to ensuring it is implemented in line with the people and culture objectives of the current Strategic Plan in UCC.

Observations to the Chief People & Culture Officer and Deputy President & Registrar (DPR)

1. The Panel suggests that serious consideration be given to addressing the impediments to career progression resulting from current promotion schemes (or the lack of same) for administrative, technical, research and clinical staff.
2. The Panel feels that reflection should be given on how staff, who focus on teaching, are best enabled to progress their careers, potentially through promotion models that allow greater weighting to be placed on teaching and which could be chosen as an alternative by some staff to the current 50% research weighted model.

Observation to the Deputy President & Registrar (DPR) and Head of College of Medicine and Health

1. The Panel believes that the School of Medicine should be encouraged through the DPR and Head of College to engage in strategic future proofing of GP and external placements nationally.

Observation to the Quality Enhancement Unit

1. The Panel is of the view that the completion of the current project relating to quality indicators and key metrics for all future quality reviews is essential.

Overall Analysis of Self-Evaluation Process

The Self-Evaluation Committee (SEC) was made up of staff from the different departments and disciplines in the School of Medicine. The committee consisted of academic, technical, administrative, and clinical academic staff to ensure an accurate representation of the School of Medicine. All members of the SEC and the Chair volunteered for the task of coordinating the Self-Evaluation process and compiling the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) with Appendices. The committee held fortnightly meetings.

Self-Evaluation Report (SER)

The Panel was impressed by the clarity and comprehensiveness of the SER, which provided a lot of information around the processes in the School of Medicine. The Panel could see that the Self-Evaluation Committee put a lot of effort into the completion of the SER and noted that the limited data and information included on external stakeholders, was due to the short timeline provided to the committee for submission. It was clear from the SER that the School is very successful in many ways. It is evident to the Panel, based on the recommendations in the SER, that the self-evaluation process provided the School with key insights into their strengths and opportunities for enhancement.

The Panel thought that the structure of the overall School and its management team presented in the SER was unclear. The Panel also thought that it would have been beneficial for the School to include more information on the postgraduate courses, which have expanded over the past five years, with evidence of numbers who graduate and where PhD students are on their trajectory.

SWOT

The initial step in the Self-Evaluation process was a whole school SWOT analysis, to gather the information which would form the basis for the recommendations from the SEC in the SER. The SWOT analysis was conducted by the Quality Enhancement Manager in the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU), who is independent from the [School of Medicine](#), and all staff in the School were invited to attend the workshop. The workshop occurred on 12 October 2023, 25 staff members in the School attended in-person. Due to the geographical spread of the [School of Medicine](#), an online option was included for staff that could not attend in-person to submit their thoughts via Padlet, to maximise participation and representation in the analysis. The results of the SWOT highlighted many positive things about the School as well as three main themes (summarised under staff recruitment, communication and building a School identity) that were identified by the SEC. Each theme was assigned to a working

group of SEC members for in-depth analysis and the formation of recommendations. This was further enhanced with systematic data collection from internal and external stakeholder groups.

Based on discussions with internal and external stakeholders, the Panel perceived staff in the School to be very aware of what the School's strengths are and to be held in very high esteem by their stakeholders. The Panel also felt that the School is realistic about the challenges they face, as the three main challenges outlined in the SER from the SWOT, were also echoed by the Panel in their recommendations to the School.

Benchmarking

The SEC selected two benchmarking institutions, one national and one international. Trinity College Dublin was selected as the national Medical School due to also working within the Irish Medical Council/WFME framework and being similar to the School based on student numbers, geographical distribution and undergraduate, and post-graduate courses offered. The aspects used for Benchmarking include School Structure, Staffing and Communication. Erasmus University, Rotterdam was identified as the School's international Benchmarking institution based on their academic health care model and reputation for excellence in medical education. The aspects used for Benchmarking include their Medicine Programme, School Structure, Joint Assembly and Communication with Clinical Partners. The SEC found the Benchmarking exercise to be useful and reassuring.

The Panel acknowledges that the Benchmarking exercise is based on the current Quality Review format and that a review of this format is in progress which has also been addressed in the Observations section of this report.

Developments since previous Quality Review

From the previous Quality Review of the [School of Medicine](#) in 2013, there were 8 recommendations suggested to the School for consideration. The School included their previous Quality Improvement Plan with an interim review held in 2016 as means of tracking progress. The SEC revisited the recommendations during the Self-Evaluation process for this quality review and commented that some of the recommendations have not been implemented whereas others are ongoing.

The overarching recommendation from the previous report summarised refers: *That the School clarifies and communicates its administrative and committee structures, including how these relate upwards to the College and the University and downwards to subject level structures and committees.*

The Panel perceived this recommendation to still be relevant and this is addressed in the current recommendations. The Panel has also flagged that the mission and vision statements of the School need attention, that greater clarity around School structures is required, and that teaching and scholarship tracks still need to be addressed. Certain recommendations from the previous report were, however, less prominent themes in the Panel's engagement with the School during this review.

Good Practice Case Study

The Case Study of Good Practice on Interprofessional Learning (IPL) within Undergraduate Medical Programmes at the School of Medicine has been a curricular activity within the Direct Entry Medical

(DEM) and Graduate Entry Medical (GEM) programmes since academic year 2007/2008. The timetabled IPL activities concentrate on the development of IPL within the Medical Undergraduate Curricula (DEM/GEM) and has recently expanded with two new activities in the programmes. The primary objective of IPL refers to enabling medical students to gain experience in interprofessional communication and teamwork in preparation for, and prior to, their collaborative practice. Interprofessional collaboration, communication and teamwork is implied within the Medical Council's 8 Domains of Good Professional Practice.

The mandatory IPL curricular activities are implemented at various levels in students' courses with various aims at each level including:

- Year 1 Direct Entry Medicine (DEM): Interdisciplinary/interprofessional teamwork and community engagement towards a combined exploration of a history of medicine topic.
- Year 1 DEM: Interprofessional team socialisation, introduction to roles of IPL stroke rehab team, guided by the story of a real patient journey. Reflection on IPL team communication with and without a handover tool.
- Year 2 DEM: Having initially commenced in 2019 as a face-to face simulated patient interprofessional communication skills session, this activity has evolved to an online IPL telecommunication activity based on collaborative generation of questions for an IPL simulated teleconsultation with a Virtual Patient presenting with headache. It includes an introduction to IPL pain management and prescribing. IPL telecommunication is now a learning outcome in this module as this is an important skill for future practice (tele-healthcare).
- Year 3 DEM/Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM) 2: Interprofessional medication safety; Interprofessional safe prescribing from paper-based patient cases generated from year 5 IPL and Interprofessional communication for palliative care – breaking bad news.
- Year 4 DEM/GEM 3: Safe prescribing.
- Year 5 DEM/GEM 4: Interprofessional iNEWS training (national early warning score) and Interprofessional medication safety teamwork with patients on hospital wards.

There are also additional IPL sessions that are not mandatory in the curriculum. The approach to evaluation focuses on inclusivity of students as partners towards a research-informed connected curriculum. Feedback from staff, students and other stakeholders on this initiative have provided evidence of a beneficial effect on the student experience in the School.

The Panel thought that the Case Study of Good Practice was an interesting initiative in the School and found the effort made by staff in the School, to make Interprofessional Learning part of the curriculum, commendable.

School of Medicine Overview

The Panel was impressed with the staff in the School of Medicine, their commitment to their disciplines and students is extraordinary. The Panel heard ongoing praise from all stakeholders, and it was clear that the student experience and student academic accomplishment is at the centre of the School.

Internal stakeholders were clear about the School's potential, especially the existence of world-leading research in Medicine related areas being produced in UCC. There was perhaps a concern that the existing research activity is not collated and disseminated as well as it could be to provide measurable indicators of the high degree of research success and esteem achieved by members of the School.

The School currently consists of eleven separate academic departments with an administrative unit, grouped as a twelfth department, under the banner of the School name. The Panel heard that the departments operate in siloes and that staff in the School identify with their specific departments rather than with the School as a whole unit. Nevertheless, the Panel perceived that there is a need among staff for more interconnectedness and collaboration.

The Panel heard much enthusiasm from staff on the prospect of introducing a Workload Model for more effective workload allocation among academic, technical, and administrative staff. Particular concerns were raised regarding vacancies in the School currently affecting the overall performance of staff in the School and, in effect, staff morale. The Panel considered the matter carefully, cognisant of the current financial position of the University. The Panel has made recommendations based on the School's recommendations provided in the SER, combined with evidence from discussions with stakeholders throughout the Site Visit.

Facilities

The Panel undertook a guided tour of some of the on-campus facilities of the School, including the FLAME Laboratory, Clinical Skills Resource Centre, and ASSERT Centre. The Panel was impressed by the excellent presented facilities. The Panel wish to thank the School for the hospitality shown during the facilities tour.

Conclusion

The Peer Review Panel for the quality review of the School of Medicine found the review process to be insightful and thorough. The panel considered it as an opportunity for reflection, as well as engagement with fellow colleagues in the field of Medicine and Health. The Panel gained a better understanding of the contribution by the School to the University and the wider health and academic community in Ireland, among which the UCC School of Medicine enjoys high regard, and concluded that staff generally had exceptional commitment to their students. It was evident to the Panel that the work of staff in the School and in the various clinical sites is critical to success for their students both in the course outcomes and the future. The enthusiastic and collaborative engagement of staff with the self-evaluation process was greatly appreciated by the Panel. All the enhancement-focused feedback received was aimed at processes and procedures, rather than staff and it is evident that the School is considered to be of great value to the College of Medicine and Health and to UCC.

Next Steps

The Panel Report will next be presented to the Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC), chaired by the President, and subject to QEC approval, will be subsequently published on the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU) website.

The School will implement the recommendations within the timeframes outlined and provide a detailed report on their progress via a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP will be considered and approved by the QEC and published on the QEU website.

Appendix A – Panel Profiles

<p>Professor Máire Leane</p>	<p>Máire Leane (PhD) is Professor in Social Policy, Project Director and PI of id+ Project and Co-Chair of the Board of Women's Studies at UCC. She held roles as Dean in the Office of the Deputy President and Registrar and as Vice- Head (Research) and Associate Dean (Graduate Studies), in the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences. Most recently she has served as Head of the School of Applied Social Studies.</p> <p>Her academic work explores of how policy and legislation impact on peoples' lives and she has a particular interest in the spheres of gender, disability, sexual violence and sexualities (see UCC Research Profiles: Maire Leane, Applied Social Studies). She is Project Lead and PI on the ID+ Project which received funding of €1 million from the Higher Education Authority and PI on the Higher Education Authority SOAR for Access Program. She is also a partner on an EU Gender Net Plus project (PositivMasc) which seeks to develop strategies to tackle violence against women.</p> <p>Máire received a President's Award for Excellence in Teaching (2018), an Exceptional Citizen Award (2021) and was a co-awardee of the MacJannet Prize for Global Citizenship (2019) and the Frank McGrath Perpetual Award for Equality and Welfare (2018).</p>
<p>Professor Desmond Leddin</p>	<p>Dr Leddin graduated from Trinity College Dublin. He completed postgraduate training in Internal Medicine and Gastroenterology at Queens University, Ontario and at the University of Toronto before completing a Masters in Physiology at Queens on intestinal inflammation. He has chaired the Royal College of Canada examination board in Gastroenterology, the College specialty committee in Gastroenterology, the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology education committee, and has been director of education for the World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) training centres. He was head of the Dalhousie University Division of Gastroenterology and district clinical head for Medicine. He served as interim head of the medical school at the University of Limerick 2017-2018. He is a past President of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology. Research interests include IBD, colon cancer and climate change. Retired from clinical practice he is the section editor of the American Gastroenterology Association journal, Gastro Hep Advances. He is chair of the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology climate committee, the World Gastroenterology Organisation climate committee, and is the American Gastroenterology Association representative of the US</p>

	<p>multi society climate task force. He is currently adjunct Professor of Medicine at Dalhousie University, Canada.</p>
<p>Ms Caitlin Madden (Student Reviewer)</p>	<p>Ms Caitlin Madden is a final year student at the College of Business and Law, University College Cork, where she is currently studying a BCL (Law and French). Ms Madden has also played an active role in UCC and has served in various student representation and support functions. She was elected academic representative during the first year of her degree – a time during which a lot of students were struggling during the pandemic. She held virtual town halls and polls to gather information on what supports her peers needed & then effectively communicated this to the department & worked with academic staff to improve the overall online experience. She has also served as a student ambassador for the skills centre where she curated study skills sessions which corresponded to areas identified by her peers as topics in which they were in need of support, this resulted in the most well attended study sessions for the skills centre to date. In addition to this, Caitlin has been involved in the Free Legal Advice Centre Society both as a Public Relations Officer and now as Chairperson. Thanks to these experiences with the University's Students Union, Societies and Skills Centre Ms Madden has gained valuable insights into student needs, expectations, and the operations of the University, which will assist her in performing the role of Student Reviewer for the Quality Review of School of Public Health.</p>
<p>Emeritus Professor Neil Marlow</p>	<p>Neil Marlow is Emeritus Professor of Neonatal Medicine at University College London. His major academic interests have been in long-term outcomes following prematurity and he is the Director of the MRC-funded EPICure studies (www.epicure.ac.uk). He studies brain and cognitive development following very preterm birth, outcomes following asphyxia, communication in neonatal care, and is a co-investigator on a range of UK and international cohort and randomised studies.</p> <p>Neil has been President of the British Association for Perinatal Medicine, Director of the UCL Institute for Women's Health, President of the European Society for Paediatric Research and was appointed Chair of the NHS England national Neonatal Review and subsequent Implementation Board. He was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences and awarded a Bliss Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019. He was also a member of the executive of the European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants until April 2021.</p>

Professor Chris Williams
(Chair)

Professor Chris Williams has been Head of the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences at UCC since 2017. Previously he was head of the School of History, Archaeology and Religion at Cardiff University, and has also worked at the University of Glamorgan and at Swansea University. Educated at Balliol College, Oxford and at Cardiff he is a historian of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain and Wales.

Appendix B – Timetable

In Summary

Tuesday 23/01/2024 – Briefing:	<i>Chair and Panel briefing from the Director of Quality Enhancement and Review Coordinator online.</i>
Friday 09/02/2024 – Introductory Meeting	<i>The Panel meets with the Head of School.</i>
Wednesday 14/02/2024 - Site Visit Day 1:	<i>The Panel meets with members from the Self-Evaluation Committee and School Leadership. This is followed by a meeting with School staff, students and visit to the School's facilities.</i>
Thursday, 15/02/2024 - Site Visit Day 2:	<i>The Panel meets with the Head of College, Senior Management, Programme Directors and key internal stakeholders of the School</i>
Tuesday, 20/02/2024 - Online Day 3:	<i>The Panel meets with external stakeholders and prepare their key commendations and recommendations</i>
Thursday, 22/02/2024 - Online Day 4:	<i>The Panel meets with the Head of School. A closing presentation is given by the Panel to all members of the School. Panel members depart.</i>

Tuesday, 23 January 2024	
15.00 - 16.30	Briefing of the Panel by Director of Quality Enhancement and Review Co-ordinator.

Week prior to Site Visit

Friday, 9 February 2024	
15.00 – 16.00	Meeting with Dean of Medicine/ Head of School, School of Medicine

Site Visit to UCC – first week

Tuesday, 13 February 2024	
During the day	Panel members arrive in Cork
19.00	Dinner for Panel members hosted by Director of Quality

Wednesday, 14 February 2024	
09.30 – 10.00	Convening of Panel members – private meeting

10.00 – 10.45	Meeting with members of the School Leadership
10.45 – 11.30	Private meeting of the Panel (coffee break)
11.30 – 13.00	Meeting with Staff of the School
13.00 – 13.40	Lunch
13.45 – 14.30	Tour of unit facilities FLAME Laboratory, Clinical Skills Resource Centre, and ASSERT Centre
14.30 – 15.30	Meeting with Heads of Department and Disciplines
15.30 – 16.15	Meeting with Undergraduate students
16.15 – 17.00	Meeting with Postgraduate students
17.00 -17.15	Private meeting of the Panel
18.00	Informal dinner for members of the Panel

Thursday, 15 February 2024	
09.00 – 09.15	Convening of the Panel – preparation for the day ahead
09.15 – 09.45	Meeting with Deputy President & Registrar
09.45 – 10.15	Meeting with Head of College, College of Medicine & Health
10.15 - 11.15	Private meeting of Panel & Coffee break
11.15 – 11.45	Meeting with Senior Leadership Team members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VP for Research and Innovation - VP for Learning and Teaching
11.45 – 12.00	Private meeting of the Panel
12.00- 12.30	Case Study of Good Practice presentation
12.30-13.00	Meeting with Dean of Doctoral Studies
13.00 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.15	Meeting with Directors of Undergraduate Programmes
14.15- 15.00	Meeting with Directors of Postgraduate Programmes
15.00 – 15.30	Coffee break
15.30 – 15.45	Meeting with Chair of Quality Review Self-Evaluation Committee (SEC)

15.45 – 16.15	Meeting with Chairs of Committees
16.15 – 17.00	Enhancing the Student Learning Experience – meeting with Placement Coordinators and CPD Modules/Programme Coordinators
17.00 – 17.30	Private meeting of Panel

Online meetings – second week

Tuesday, 20 February 2024	
09.30 – 09.45	Convening of the Panel – preparation for the day ahead
09.45 – 10.30	Meeting with External Stakeholders
10.30 – 11.30	Panel meeting to draft the recommendations and commendations
11.30 – 12.00	Break for Panel
12.00 – 12.30	Meeting with HR Business Manager, College of Medicine & Health
12.30 – 12.45	Private meeting of the Panel
12.45 – 13.00	Meeting with Chair of Athena Swan Self-Assessment Team (SAT) and Vice-Head for Learning and Teaching in College of Medicine & Health
12.30 – 13.30	Panel meeting to draft the recommendations and commendations

Thursday, 22 February 2024	
09.30 – 10.30	Meeting of Panel to finalise recommendations and commendations
10.30 – 11.00	Meeting with Dean of Medicine/ Head of School, School of Medicine and Head of College, College of Medicine & Health
11.00 – 11.30	Break for Panel
11.30 – 12.30	Panel meeting to discuss feedback; consider the closing presentation
12.30 – 13.00	Closing presentation
13.00 – 13.30	Panel – wrap up meeting