

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) TEMPLATE

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CONTEXT

Maynooth University's overall policy on quality assurance and quality enhancement is set out in the Maynooth University [Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement](#). The typical model for all quality reviews consists of five phases: self-assessment; peer review group (PRG) report, quality improvement plan (QIP) outlining how the Unit plans to address recommendations made in the PRG report; publication of the PRG report and the QIP; then follow-up and ongoing monitoring.

Note for the purposes of this document a unit is interpreted in a broad sense and is defined in the University's Framework for Quality Assurance and Enhancement as "an academic department/school, research institute, administrative unit, support unit or an amalgamation of units such as a Faculty. It may also be a programme (e.g., an omnibus degree programmes), a set of programmes (e.g., taught postgraduate programmes in a Faculty), a specific initiative (e.g., reform of the first-year curriculum) or a theme (e.g., quality and impact of Maynooth University research)"

This current phase, the production of a Unit's QIP, involves a number of steps (outlined in Appendix 1). Provision for consultation within the Unit and with senior members of the University is incorporated into the process. Once finalised, the Unit sets about addressing the various recommendations according to the plan it has laid out in its QIP. Twelve months later a report on progress made in addressing the recommendations is submitted to the Quality Office.

1. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUBMISSION FORM

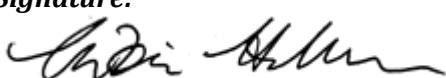
Section 1: Unit details

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of Unit | School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures |
| Subunits, if any, within Unit¹, that formed part of the review | Chinese Studies French and Francophone Studies German Studies Spanish and Latin American Studies |
| Head of Unit | Professor Valerie Heffernan |
| Dates of Peer Review Visit | 15-19 Nov. 2021 |

Section 2: Stage of QIP

| | |
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| Delete as necessary² | Final |
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Section 3: Sign off

| | | |
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| Head of Unit (NAME): Prof. Valerie Heffernan | Signature:  | Date: 10/05/2022 |
|--|---|----------------------------|

¹ For a School, this would include the departments/subject areas, etc. For a support or service unit, this would include the various service or support subunits that make up the operating unit so for example Registry would list student records & registration, examinations, etc.

² Indicate whether a draft or a final version of the QIP. Are classified as drafts when submitting to the QIP review meeting (see appendix 1).

Section 3: Introduction/Commentary (max. 2 pages)

Provide a brief introduction to the Unit.

The School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures (SMLLC) is composed of four language units: Chinese Studies, French and Francophone Studies, German Studies, and Spanish and Latin American Studies. Though not formal units in the same sense as the four language sections, the School also has thriving strands in Applied Linguistics and Intercultural Studies (ALIS) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

As of May 2022, the SMLLC has 18 members of academic staff, 19 members of academic support staff, six administrative and technical staff members, eight PhD students (some of whom are also employed as Graduate Teaching Assistants), and two emeritus members of academic staff.

The School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures offers teaching in the languages, literatures and cultures associated with its language units. The School has research strengths in literary and cultural studies (from early medieval through to the twenty-first century) and applied linguistics/intercultural studies.

Outline the process followed in developing the QIP including details of Unit staff involvement and how they contributed to the QIP preparations.

The Final Report of the PRG was received on 14 Jan. 2022. In the week immediately following its receipt, the SMLLC Executive met to discuss its commendations and recommendations.

Since the recommendations related to research were considered to be the most urgent, the Head of School arranged a facilitated session for academic staff members in February to devise some actions related to research. These were drafted and shared with the Research Committee in March for feedback and further input.

The commendations and recommendations related to teaching and learning, and postgraduate education were discussed at the meetings of the relevant school committees in March 2022. The Head of School took note of the outcomes of those discussions and subsequently met with the Chairs of these committees to discuss actions to address the PRG's recommendations.

The Head of School worked through the recommendations to the School in a more systematic way during the month of April; she also sought advice from the Quality Office on how the institutional and strategic recommendations should be reflected in the draft QIP. The Head of School then shared the draft QIP with the School Committee for final review and feedback.

The draft QIP was submitted to the Quality Office on 10 May 2022.

Provide a general commentary on the recommendations made and outline the rationale for the Unit's approach in addressing the recommendations.

The staff in the School were very pleased with the PRG's positive comments about our teaching and assessment, as well as our commitment to our students. We were especially happy to read about the high levels of student satisfaction noted by the PRG and to know that our students feel so strongly supported in their learning. It is clear that the PRG took a more global view of our teaching programmes than we are used to doing, and as such, the recommendations challenge us – in a positive way – to think more strategically about the development of our teaching in the coming years. The SMLLC has already achieved considerable harmonisation across languages units, and has collaborated on recruitment and retention of students, and we will continue to do so in line with the PRG's recommendations. We will also work towards the articulation of a Teaching and Learning Strategy for the School.

We are rather less satisfied with the more negative appraisal of our research. While we are not surprised about the negative assessment of our success in attracting research funding – this is something that many colleagues find challenging – we were quite taken aback at the negative assessment of our publications. According to the latest figures received in January

2022, our publication output is higher than the Faculty average when it comes to the publication of peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters. In this respect, it is difficult to discern what benchmark was used to measure our success. The PRG also mentioned the need for more information in certain areas, and it would have been optimal for this gap to have been addressed before the report was completed. Nonetheless, we have taken the PRG's observations as an opportunity to reassess our commitment to our research. It is certain that during the pandemic, we gave absolute priority to teaching and supporting our students. As we now emerge from the health crisis, we recognise the need to give equal priority to our research. We are grateful to the PRG for their recommendations, which we will take as guidelines for how we might best approach this.

We find the PRG's recommendations related to our administrative structures to be appropriate, even as we recognise that they will be a challenge to implement. Our School has grown at a rapid rate since its establishment in 2010, and our structures and processes have not always kept pace with this growth. It is important that we formalise our policies and procedures to properly support our day-to-day running and strategic development. We appreciate the PRG's insight into this and look forward to addressing their recommendations.

Indicate in brief, how the actions proposed in meeting the various recommendations will inform the Unit's plans/strategy over the short and the long term.

The actions proposed in relation to Teaching and Learning encourage us to continue to collaborate as a School. They enable us to continue to work towards enhanced quality and alignment of our teaching and assessment and will help us further improve our recruitment and retention.

The actions in relation to research will enable us to reinstate research as a priority activity in the coming years. They are aimed at freeing up more time for research and developing a more strategic approach to publication and grant capture.

The actions proposed to address the PRG's recommendations related to our administrative structures and processes will enable us to formalise and further consolidate our School policies and procedures and thus strengthen the day-to-day operation of the SMLLC.

Additional commentary

We are delighted to note the PRG's long list of commendations also. The process of moving from four separate departments to a School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures has been a long and at times challenging one, and we are very pleased that the PRG views this transition as successful and the SMLLC as a well-functioning unit.

We are also satisfied to see that the PRG picked up on the positive and cooperative working environment within the school and the collegial approach of all staff to collaboration across the School. This is something that we value greatly, and it means a lot to us to know that the PRG have taken note of and appreciate this aspect of our work.

The PRG's comments about our commitment to high-quality teaching and pedagogical practice, as well as our openness and approachability vis-à-vis our students, are extremely positive. We are very proud of our staff members' achievements in this area and gratified to hear that students recognise and appreciate our commitment to their learning. It is also very helpful to read the PRG's positive comments about the breadth of our current course offerings and to know that they support our plans for the development of new programmes.

Finally, we are very pleased to note the PRG's very positive comments about the high quality of service offered by our administrative and technical staff, especially in the light of the increase in workload they have experienced in recent years. The strong support of our admin team is essential to the smooth and successful running of our teaching and research activities, and their trojan efforts are very much appreciated by the other staff in the School. We are delighted to hear that the students emphasised their positive experiences with the admin staff and are very pleased to see their commitment recognised by the PRG.

Section 4: Action Plan Responding to Recommendations of Peer Review Group.

A separate table is used for each recommendation made.

Recommendations for Improvement for the Unit

| Recommendation S1 School to discuss (with library) changes or increases in resources required in the library for T&L and research, and a plan to achieve this on an ongoing basis | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| No ³ . | Brief Commentary ⁴ <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item ⁵ <i>(In brief)</i> | Short ⁶ / long term action | Person in Unit leading item ⁷ | Schedule for completion ⁸ <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
| S1.1 | Library statements are usually issued at the end of March each year. | Initiate preliminary discussion with the Library Rep. in each section about the appropriateness of the library budget. | Short-term | Head of School | May 2022 | Medium |
| S1.2 | Staff members are well positioned to provide informed input into a discussion about T&L and research needs of the section and the corresponding needs of the library budget. | Discuss the current situation and future needs of the library for each section with the staff members in that section and report back to the Head of School. | Short-term | Library Rep. for each section | May 2022 | Medium |
| S1.3 | Head of School will be better positioned to bring suggestions for changes to the budget to the library once section-level discussions have taken place. | Discuss changes or increases in resources required in the library for T&L and research with the designated member of the library staff. | Short-term | Head of School | June 2022 | Medium |
| S1.4 | This needs to be reviewed on an ongoing basis. | Make such discussions a part of the annual planning process. | Long-term | Head of School | April of each academic year | Medium |

³ Number each action item in line with the recommendation number so S1.1, S1.2 etc. Add rows as needed to include additional action items.

⁴ Where relevant indicate alignment to University Strategic Plan and/or Unit plans/strategy.

⁵ For some actions, engagement with unit(s)/key post holder(s) outside your own unit may be required. Indicate those, against an action item, where already identified.

⁶ Short term actions are those planned to be completed **within one year**. Long term actions are those planned to be completed **in longer than one year**.

⁷ For e.g., Head of Unit, Deputy Head of Unit, Chair of Unit T&L Committee etc.

⁸ Realistic timelines for completion/implementation of actions should be included. For academic year use format 2021/22. In case of timelines with no clear deliverable date, capture an indicative timeline.

Recommendation S2

In the absence of an established workload allocation model at University level, the School should consider devising its own model to ensure equitable, open, and transparent distribution of teaching and administrative workloads across all units. Beyond the number of teaching hours per week, the model should allow inclusion of such details as coordination, class size, and number and type of assessments (albeit with the assumption that modules with the same credits have same assessment load). PhD supervision could also be integrated. A common allocation for research should be considered, with additional weightings for externally funded research. Models already adopted elsewhere in the University or used in other institutions might be helpful in this respect. The request for such a model was reiterated by staff during the visit days.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|------|---|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| S2.1 | The PRG group notes that gathering information about Workload Allocation Models in use elsewhere in the University or in other institutions might be helpful in devising our own. | Engage with cognate departments at MU and Schools of Modern Languages at other universities to request information about their workload allocation models (WAMs). | Short-term | Head of School | Sept. 2022 | High |
| S2.2 | We will need to adapt any existing model to the specific needs of our School. | Compare and contrast different models and select the aspects that best suit our needs. | Short-term | Head of School | Oct. 2022 | High |
| S2.3 | Our WAM should take into account the full range of activities expected of staff. | Design a model that suits our School and maps onto MU's promotion criteria. | Short-term | Head of School | Nov. 2022 | High |
| S2.4 | It would be important for staff members to have a say in the design of our WAM. | Bring a proposal to the School meeting for discussion and commentary. | Short-term | Head of School | Dec. 2022 | High |
| S2.5 | A proposed model will need to be approved at the School meeting before adoption. | Bring a revised proposal to the School meeting for discussion and approval. | Short-term | Head of School | Apr. 2023 | High |
| S2.6 | The new WAM will need to be trialled to gauge its efficacy and appropriateness. | Pilot the new WAM for a full academic year. | Long-term | Head of School | Sept. 2023 | High |
| S2.7 | Feedback will be ongoing throughout the year but will be formally discussed at the March School meeting. | Collect feedback on the implementation of the WAM and discuss amendments needed on the basis of the pilot. | Long-term | Head of School | Mar. 2024 | High |
| S2.8 | Based on the experience of the pilot, we will be in a better position to decide on a WAM that can be used in subsequent years. | Bring a revised proposal to the School meeting for approval and adoption. | Long-term | Head of School | May 2024 | High |

Recommendation S3

In the interim, workload (teaching and admin) allocations within sections should be made transparent.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
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| S3.1 | The Head of School worked with the Subject Leaders in Summer 2021 to align the teaching loads of academic colleagues within the School. | Continue the practice of aligning the teaching loads of academic staff members and expand this to include their admin roles and to incorporate University Tutors and other members of teaching staff. | Short-term | Head of School | Aug. 2022 | High |
| S3.2 | Circulation of teaching and admin loads will make the allocation more transparent. | Make an overview of all teaching allocation available to members of the SMLLC Committee. | Short-term | Head of School | Oct. 2022 | High |

Recommendation S4

The role of Deputy Head of School, introduced in the School in December 2020 as a precautionary measure during the Covid-19 pandemic but now set to be extended beyond the health crisis, needs to be properly defined, either at School or University level as most appropriate, and integrated into School structures.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
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| S4.1 | The role and responsibilities of the Deputy Head of School are still emerging. | Document the duties and responsibilities of the Deputy Head of School for the current academic year. | Short-term | Deputy Head of School | Aug. 2022 | Medium |
| S4.2 | New duties and responsibilities may arise as we emerge from the health crisis and return to more on-campus activity. | Discuss duties and responsibilities of the Deputy Head of School for the next academic year with the Head of School. | Short-term | Deputy Head of School | Sept. 2022 | Medium |
| S4.3 | Other Schools in the University have appointed Deputy Heads in recent years. | Investigate how the role and responsibilities of Deputy Head of School have been defined in other Schools in the University. | Short-term | Deputy Head of School | Dec. 2022 | Medium |

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| S4.4 | After two complete academic years in the role, the Deputy Head of School is likely to have a clearer picture of the scope of the role and its associated duties. | Draft a role description and bring this to the School Executive for discussion. | Long-term | Deputy Head of School | May 2023 | Medium |
| S4.5 | The SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures”, which includes a list of the duties and responsibilities of key positions within the School, will need to be revised and the revised document discussed and approved by the School committee/School Executive. | Revise the SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures” to include a description of the role and responsibilities of the Deputy Head of School and bring the revised document to the first School meeting of the 2023-24 academic year. | Long-term | Head of School | Sept. 2023 | Medium |

Recommendation S5

All University and School policies and procedures should be made centrally available to staff in the School. Development of a regularly updated staff folder/resource in a central location (Teams/OneDrive/SharePoint as appropriate) accessible to all staff would be beneficial in this regard.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
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| S5.1 | The new resource will need to include or link to School, Faculty, and University policies. | Make a list of which policies and procedures staff members need to be aware of, and collate all documents related to those policies and procedures. | Short-term | Admin. Lead | Aug. 2022 | Medium |
| S5.2 | It is important that all staff members, including part-time and occasional staff, have access to these resources. | Discuss and decide on the optimal format for making policies and procedures available and accessible to all staff. | Short-term | Admin. Lead | Aug. 2022 | Medium |
| S5.3 | Some policies pre-date the establishment of the School and may need revision/updating. | Identify which policies need to be updated and/or where School policies are no longer compliant with University policies and standards. | Short-term | Admin. Lead | Jan. 2023 | Medium |
| S5.4 | This needs to be reviewed on an ongoing basis. | Maintain and update the folder/resource to ensure that it contains the most up-to-date versions of all policy documents. | Long-term | Admin. Lead | Ongoing | Medium |

Recommendation S6

The roles and relationship of the School Executive and School Committee should be reviewed to improve the efficacy and transparency of the decision-making process, with robust lines of communication maintained throughout the School to build collective understanding and trust in that process. The relationship between School Subcommittees (Teaching and Learning/Research/Postgraduate Education) and the School Executive should also be reviewed. We recommend the inclusion of the Chairs of these Subcommittees on the Executive to help firm up, and initiate School discussion of, Executive proposals prior to their presentation at the School Committee.

Broadening Executive membership and the consultative process should aim to reduce the length and agenda load of individual School Committee meetings. This would allow the Head of School (who can attend Subcommittees ex officio but should not be running them) to delegate strategy and leadership responsibilities in key areas.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
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| S6.1 | We agree that it would be sensible to have representation from the committees on the SMLLC Executive. | Bring a proposal to the School meeting to have the Chairs of the three SMLLC Committees included on the School Executive. | Short-term | Head of School | May 2022 | High |
| S6.2 | According to our MoU, the SMLLC committee constitutes the primary deliberative structure within the School. However, the fact that all decisions must be discussed and approved by the SMLLC committee means that School meetings have become very long. In addition, this decision-making power places restrictions on membership of the SMLLC committee, which means that staff who are not members, and thus not entitled to attend committee meetings, can sometimes miss out on important information. Moving decision-making power from the SMLLC Committee to the SMLLC Executive would mean that committee meetings could focus on information-sharing and discussion. It would also open up the | Bring a proposal to the School meeting to give the SMLLC Executive more decision-making power, where the Subject Leaders will represent the views and interests of their colleagues in the respective language unit and the Chairs of the three SMLLC Committees represents the views and interests of the committees they Chair. Revise the SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures” to reflect any changes agreed. In this process, consider whether the membership of the SMLLC Committee can and should be expanded. | Short-term | Head of School | Sept. 2022 | High |

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| | <p>possibility of wider membership of the SMLLC Committee.</p> <p>Given that this change would involve a fundamental adjustment to the way decisions are made at School level, checks and balances would have to be written into this process to safeguard the democratic structures of the School and build trust in the process.</p> <p>From a technical point of view, the SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures”, which includes a description of the membership and responsibilities of the SMLLC Executive and SMLLC Committee respectively, would need to be revised to reflect any changes agreed.</p> | | | | | |
| S6.3 | <p>If this change in structure is to be approved, all meetings of Subject Committees and SMLLC Committees would have to be timed in such a way that the Subject Leaders and Chairs have the opportunity to discuss relevant issues with their colleagues to ensure they represent the views of the Committee at the meetings of the SMLLC Executive.</p> | <p>Plan the meetings of the School Committees and School Executive across the academic year to optimise the upward and downward flow of information.</p> | Short-term | Head of School | Sept. 2022 | High |

Recommendation S7

Consider the method by which chairs of committees are nominated. Key roles (chairs of sub-committees, deputy head of school) should be advertised with an explicit role profile, and written expressions of interest invited. As far as practicable, an effort should be made to ensure representation of all School sections across key roles.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
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| S7.1 | Given that the various SMLLC committees are relatively new, the role profiles for committee Chairs and members are still evolving. | Develop a role profile for the Chairs and members of each of the three SMLLC committees. Review and update as required on an annual basis. | Short-term | Committee Chairs | Aug. 2022 | Medium |
| S7.2 | Given that the role of Deputy Head of School is very new and emerged as an emergency response to the Covid-19 health crisis, the role profile as it relates to the regular situation is still evolving. | Record the duties associated with the role and develop a role profile for position of Deputy Head of School. | Long-term | Deputy Head of School | Aug. 2023 | High |
| S7.3 | Membership of SMLLC committees will be due for reconsideration at the beginning of the 2023-24 academic year. | Advertise the roles of chairs and members of SMLLC committees with an explicit role profile and invite written expressions of interest. | Long-term | Head of School | Aug. 2023 | High |
| S7.4 | The SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures”, which includes a list of the duties and responsibilities of key positions within the School, will need to be revised and the revised document discussed and approved by the School committee/School Executive. | Revise the SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures” to reflect these changes and bring the revised document to the first School meeting of the 2023-24 academic year. | Long-term | Head of School | Sept. 2023 | Medium |
| S7.5 | The term of office of the Deputy Head of School will conclude on 30 Sept. 2024. | Advertise the role of Deputy Head of School with an explicit role profile and invite written expressions of interest. | Long-term | Head of School | June 2024 | High |

Recommendation S8

The PRG recommends that the SMLLC develop a Teaching and Learning Strategy for the School as a whole and articulate it in written form. This would ideally be aligned with the overall teaching and learning strategy of the University, to the extent that such a strategy exists or can be determined.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

This would address issues such as: priority areas of teaching-learning for further development, possible additional languages to be added to the suite of languages offered in the long term, the criteria to be applied when assessing proposals for new modules (including aspects such as blended learning, embedding enhancement of graduates' employability, skills profile, etc.).

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
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| S8.1 | The School does not have a tradition of discussing strategy for the development of teaching and learning at School level, and we will need to learn to work together on this. | Arrange a Teaching & Learning Strategy Day aimed at developing a shared vision for Teaching & Learning in the School and sharing best practice across units. | Short-term | Head of School | Sept. 2022 | Medium |
| S8.2 | As the PRG notes, it is important that the School's teaching and learning strategy is aligned with the overall teaching and learning strategy of the University. It is important that colleagues have a chance to feed into the development of the new strategic plan. | Organise two meetings to consider how the SMLLC can feed into development of the University's new strategic plan as it relates to teaching and learning. | Short-term | Chair of the SMLLC Teaching & Learning Committee | Dec. 2022 | Medium |
| S8.3 | It is also important that colleagues continue to engage in the process so that their views are appropriately represented in the new strategic plan. | Share the University's new strategic plan as it relates to teaching and learning with all colleagues teaching in the School, solicit feedback on the draft document, and pass on the feedback to Faculty- and University-level committees. | Short-term | Chair of the SMLLC Teaching & Learning Committee | Mar. 2023 | Medium |
| S8.4 | It is important that a strategic planning day becomes an annual event. | Arrange a Teaching & Learning Strategy day to develop a written T&L Strategy for | Long-term | Chair of the SMLLC Teaching & | Sept. 2023 | Medium |

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| | | the School. Address in particular the priority ideas raised by the PRG. | | Learning Committee | | |
| S8.5 | The PRG is keen to see us think more strategically about our teaching and learning and to articulate our ideas in written form. | Devise a written Teaching & Learning Strategy that is aligned with the T&L strategy of the University. Ensure that this encompasses the priority areas raised by the PRG and gives adequate consideration to opportunities for teaching modules across the School. | Long-term | Chair of the SMLLC Teaching & Learning Committee | Dec. 2023 | Medium |

Recommendation S9

The School should continue to harmonise teaching across the languages where this is feasible, to ensure that equivalent student effort is required for equivalent credits in cognate areas of expertise and competence, such as in the oral/aural skills area, in written composition or in the learning of literary and cultural content.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|------|--|--|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| S9.1 | Certain modules offered at equivalent levels in all languages might lend themselves to further harmonisation to ensure parity of experience for all language students. | Discuss with the SMLLC Teaching and Learning Committee which modules are comparable across languages. Decide whether harmonisation is desirable for these modules. | Short-term | Chair of the SMLLC Teaching & Learning Committee | Oct. 2022 | Medium |
| S9.2 | Where the Committee believes that further harmonisation would be beneficial, the Committee should recommend an approach to how this would be implemented. | Discuss with the SMLLC Teaching and Learning Committee what kind of harmonisation is appropriate, taking into account issues such as alignment of modules to the Common European Framework of References to Languages (CEFR), learning outcomes, contact hours, assessment forms and their relative weighting, provision of online resources, etc. | Short-term | Chair of the SMLLC Teaching & Learning Committee | Jan. 2023 | Medium |
| S9.4 | Where the Committee believes that further harmonisation would be beneficial, the | Consult with Subject Committees to ensure that plans for harmonisation take | Short-term | Chair of the SMLLC | Mar. 2023 | Medium |

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| | Committee should recommend a timeline for carrying out such harmonisation. | appropriate account of the needs of the specific language at each level. | | Teaching & Learning Committee | | |
| S9.5 | Where the Committee believes that further harmonisation would be beneficial, the Committee should recommend a timeline for carrying out such harmonisation. | Design a timeline for and approach to harmonisation that balances the need for parity of student experience with the specific needs of each language. Identify any training that might be needed to support this process. | Long-term | Chair of the SMLLC Teaching & Learning Committee | May. 2023 | Medium |

Recommendation S10

Where language-teaching specialists are available to take over and coordinate complete modules, identify ways in which this can be allowed to happen, including opening up further opportunities for such work to be undertaken by relevant and well-qualified tutor staff, by this means ensuring that academic staff with research as part of their role profile have more time for research.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
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| S10.1 | The MU Policy on the Engagement of Tutors stipulates that the duties carried out by a University Tutor are supplemental to the core teaching of a module and must be carried out under the supervision and mentorship of a Lecturer or Professor, who has overall responsibility for the module. | Initiate a discussion with HR to identify ways in which well-qualified University Tutors might in future be allowed to take on coordination of language modules and/or to take on responsibility for certain areas within language modules, such as conversation. | Short-term | Head of School | Dec. 2023 | Medium |

Recommendation S11

The School should consolidate steps recently taken to establish regular seminars on teaching practice by making a concerted effort to secure further resources to support and expand the initiative, including University resources (funding; advice; expertise).

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|-------|---|---|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| S11.1 | It is important that the SMLLC T&L Colloquium becomes a regular and recognised part of our annual calendar. | Plan the schedule for the SMLLC T&L Colloquium across the academic year and advertise the dates of the colloquium to all staff. | Short-term | Coordinators of the SMLLC T&L Colloquium | May 2022 | Medium |
| S11.2 | Providing baseline funding for invited experts will support the development and expansion of the colloquium. | Establish a budget for inviting specialists in the teaching and assessment of languages to contribute to the T&L Colloquium. | Short-term | Head of School | June 2022 | Medium |
| S11.3 | Securing Faculty and/or University funding for the SMLLC T&L colloquium will both ensure its consolidation and contribute to its recognition by the broader University community. | Explore options for Faculty and University funding of the T&L Colloquium and apply for these, where relevant. | Long-term | Coordinators of the SMLLC T&L Colloquium | May 2023 | Low |

Recommendation S12

The School should focus the effort to increase its student numbers on the expansion of its *undergraduate* student population, above all.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

Given the tight market at postgraduate level, and the existing workload pressures on staff, resources and energy are better spent on building on existing successes at undergraduate level, rather than seeking to resource postgraduate courses with very low student uptake and a small potential market.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|-------|---|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| S12.1 | The Head of School has already had a number of conversations with the Heads | Continue conversations with Heads of a departments and schools in the | Short-term | Head of School | Aug. 2022 | High |

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| | of a number of departments and schools in the university about collaborating on new designated-entry programmes, though there is still some work to be done to work out how the proposed programmes would be structured. | university about collaborating on new designated-entry programmes. | | | | |
| S12.2 | The School has made great strides in the current academic year with introducing initiatives aimed at boosting student numbers. It would seem appropriate to build on those efforts and make recruitment and outreach a more formal part of our annual planning. | Bring a proposal to the School for the introduction of a more formal strategy for recruitment and outreach and the appointment of a Coordinator with responsibility for recruitment and outreach activities. | Short-term | Head of School | Oct. 2022 | High |
| S12.3 | It would be important to bring a proposal for any new programmes to the Academic Programmes Committee (APC) in time for them to be advertised in the CAO handbook for the following academic year. | Bring proposals to APC for designated-entry programmes involving the SMLLC language programmes and other departments. | Long-term | Head of School | Nov. 2022 and subsequent years | High |

Recommendation S13

The School should focus strategic effort at postgraduate level on numerically viable courses (which might include, for example, Applied Linguistics). Consider Masters by Research programmes to accommodate small numbers of 1-year Masters programmes.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Me d/Low)</i> |
|-------|---|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| S13.1 | While student numbers on some taught postgraduate (PG) programmes are low, many modules are cross-listed on several programmes. This means that there are fewer modules with small student numbers. | Review student registrations on all taught postgraduate modules and identify possibilities for rationalisation while still allowing for some flexibility of choice. | Short-term | Chair of PG Education Committee | June 2022 | High |
| S13.2 | The SMLLC Committee previously agreed that Masters programmes should be prioritised and should run with a | Discuss with the SMLLC PG Education Committee and decide on a minimum number of students necessary to render (a) | Short-term | Chair of PG Education Committee | Oct. 2022 | High |

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| | minimum of one student. In the absence of a hard-and-fast rule at Faculty or University level, any change to that policy would require a decision at School level. | a module and (b) a programme numerically viable. Consult Faculty and University rules for this to ensure any School-level decision is informed by Marks & Standards. | | | | |
| S13.3 | Opening up our taught PG modules to students on other PG programmes might help to make them more viable. | Explore opportunities for cross-listing our taught MA modules on other departments' MA programmes. | Short-term | Chair of PG Education Committee | Jan. 2023 | High |
| S13.4 | If we raise the minimum number of student registrations required for an MA module to run, this may mean that we cannot offer all MA modules every year. | Discuss with the SMLLC PG Education Committee and decide on a system of rotation to ensure that all staff members have periodic opportunities to teach research-led modules at Masters level. | Long-term | Chair of PG Education Committee | May 2023 | High |
| S13.5 | If we raise the minimum number of student registrations required for a programme to run, we will need to offer applicants an alternative. The PRG's recommendation that we consider Research Masters programmes to accommodate students may be a viable option in some cases. | Discuss with the SMLLC PG Education Committee and decide on a date by which we will make a decision on whether a programme will run. Decide who will discuss the possibility of a Research Masters programme with applicants in cases where a decision is taken not to proceed with a programme that has been advertised. | Long-term | Chair of PG Education Committee | May 2023 | High |

Recommendation S14

The School and Faculty should examine the feasibility of offering additional timetabled groups for language courses on the Arts programme, to facilitate students from a greater variety of disciplines who would be interested in studying a combination of subjects that is not currently feasible.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

The PRG noted that the gradual expansion of combinations is already underway, to continue incrementally.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|-------|--|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| S14.1 | While staff members in the School recognise the challenges posed by this | Bring a proposal to Academic Programmes Committee to offer the | Short-term | Head of School | Complete | High |

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| | change, they are willing to work with the Timetabling Office and APC to find a way to make it work. | three more established languages (French, German, and Spanish) in a second timetable group. | | | | |
| S14.2 | Since our initial proposal has not been approved by APC, some further discussion is necessary. | Meet with the Deans of the Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies & Philosophy, the Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, and the Assistant Registrar to discuss how we might overcome the administrative issues involved and thus smooth the way for this change. | Short-term | Head of School | Aug. 2022 | High |
| S14.3 | Once this discussion has taken place and potential challenges addressed, we hope to be able to proceed with this plan. | Bring a revised proposal to Academic Programmes Committee to offer three languages in a second timetable group. | Short-term | Head of School | Dec. 2022 | High |

Recommendation S15

Ensure that opportunities are made available for the ongoing training and development of teaching staff at all levels, including both academics of all grades and tutorial staff: the University to ensure that favourable consideration is given, where possible, to requests from staff for access to training courses, degree programmes, etc. where these enhance the profile of the staff member in a way that responds both to the professional expertise of the person in question and to their general educational profile.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|-------|---|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| S15.1 | It sometimes happens that part-time and occasional staff members, as well as tutors and teachers whose salary is paid by an external body, are not automatically informed of training opportunities. It is important that these opportunities are communicated to them. | Enquire with Learning & Development, the Centre for Teaching & Learning (CTL), and the Admin Staff member responsible for advertising the T&L Colloquium to ensure that <u>all</u> staff teaching in the School are included on their email distribution lists. Where this is not the case, put in place a mechanism for informing those staff members who are excluded from these lists about these possibilities and ensuring they are | Short-term | Admin. Lead | Sept. 2022 | High |

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| | | permitted to register for training courses. | | | | |
| S15.2 | The PG students who participated in a Focus Group that took place as part of the preparation of the Self-Assessment Report for the Quality Review explicitly expressed the need for a more rigorous induction programme for teaching assistants. | Pilot an induction course for new tutors, lecturers/lectrices, and Graduate Teaching Assistants to ensure they all receive some basic teacher training. | Short-term | Head of School | Sept. 2022 | High |
| S15.3 | It has previously been the case that tutors and teaching staff who wished to participate in external training could request financial support for this from the Head of School. However, the process was not formalised, and as a result, not all staff members were aware of this possibility and not many availed of the opportunity. | Put in place a process to allow tutors and teaching staff to apply for financial support for external training, where this is not available within the University, and advertise that process to all tutors and teaching staff. | Short-term | Head of School | Nov. 2022 | Medium |

Recommendation S16

In order to ensure continuity of excellence in the provision of courses to students, in making the case for staffing priorities to the University, the School should attend to the relative strengths and weaknesses of staffing levels in the various sections within the School, so that there is equitable distribution of senior posts providing leadership in the sections.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|-------|---|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| S16.1 | It is not within our gift to decide on the appointment of new staff and/or promotion of existing staff to senior posts. At most, we can raise the need for viable staffing levels in each section at the Academic Planning and Staffing Review in January of each year. | Keep an eye on the staffing levels and distribution of senior posts in each language unit. If the strategic development of the School/a language unit necessitates the appointment of a more senior staff member, make a case for this in the Academic Planning and Staffing Review. | Ongoing | Head of School | Jan. of each academic year | High |

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| S16.2 | The availability of senior posts is more likely to be secured through the promotion of existing staff. | Encourage staff to apply for promotion and provide training and support to boost their chances of success with their applications. | Ongoing | Head of School | Nov.-Dec. of each academic year | High |
|-------|--|--|---------|----------------|---------------------------------|------|

| Recommendation S17 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Develop the role of the School Research Committee to foster and enhance an expectation and culture of research among all academics in the school (unless on an explicitly teaching-focussed track). | | | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
| S17.1 | Given that the School Research Committee is relatively new, its role is still evolving. | The members of the Research Committee will survey colleagues in their respective language units about the role the committee can and should play in promoting a culture of research in the School in the future. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | May 2022 | High |
| S17.2 | Given that the School Research Committee is relatively new, the calendar for meetings has not been formalised. | Agree the calendar for meetings for the next academic year in advance of the academic year and publicise that calendar at the final School meeting this academic year. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Sept. 2022 | Medium |
| S17.3 | We will need to work out what kinds of activities are most suitable and most effective in promoting the research culture of the School. | The members of the Research Committee will focus the first meeting of the next academic year to decide on a suite of activities for 2022-23 to promote research activity and enhance the research culture of the School. The Committee will give explicit consideration to the role and potential of SMLLC research clusters within this. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Oct. 2022 | High |
| S17.4 | The schedule for meetings will need to be reassessed and agreed on an annual basis. | Agree the calendar for meetings for the next academic year in advance of and | Long-term | Chair of the School | May of each academic year | Medium |

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| | | publicise that calendar at the final School meeting each academic year. | | Research Committee | | |
| S17.5 | As we work out what kinds of activities are most suitable and most effective in promoting the research culture of the School, we will be able to develop stronger support structures for research in the School. | The members of the Research Committee will focus the first meeting of each academic year to decide on a suite of activities for that year to promote research activity and enhance the research culture of the School. The Committee will give explicit consideration to the role and potential of SMLLC research clusters within this. | Long-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Oct. of each year | High |

Recommendation S18

Expand membership of the School Executive to include the Chair of the Research committee ex officio, with Research as a standing item.
(See also under School governance and organisation above)

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|-------|---|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| S18.1 | Our current structures dictate that the School Committee is the School's primary decision-making body, thus this would have to be approved by the School. | Bring a proposal to the School meeting to have the Chair of the School Research Committee included on the School Executive. | Short-term | Head of School | May 2022 | Medium |
| S18.2 | The SMLLC document on "Structures, Processes and Procedures", which includes details of the membership and function of the School Executive, will need to be revised and the revised document discussed and approved by the School committee. | Revise the SMLLC document on "Structures, Processes and Procedures" to reflect this change and bring the revised document to the first School meeting of the 2022-23 academic year for discussion. | Short-term | Head of School | Sept. 2022 | Medium |

Recommendation S19

Make use of dedicated sessions at Away Days, strategy days, or other similar events to continue to build knowledge and expertise in research strategy, especially awareness of expectations of research funding and how to do it. Continue and reprise “demystifying” whole-school sessions on funding opportunities, research planning, and strategy.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
|-------|--|---|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| S19.1 | The Final Report from the PRG explicitly identified research as a weakness, as measured in productivity and funding, and in the structured support for all colleagues to develop their research portfolio. | Plan a facilitated ‘Research Reset’ session to process the PRG’s comments about research outputs and come up with some initial ideas for actions to respond to their comments. | Short-term | Head of School | Complete | High |
| S19.2 | The initial ideas generated at the ‘Research Reset’ workshop provide a starting point for further discussion, but a more defined strategy is needed. | Arrange a Research Strategy Day aimed at developing a shared vision for SMLLC research. | Short-term | Head of School | Sept. 2022 | High |
| S19.3 | We need to further develop our knowledge of the research funding landscape and identify funding schemes that we can harness for the research we do. | Organise one information session per semester that focuses on demystifying a research funding scheme of relevance to our research. If appropriate, invite representatives from the MU Research Development Office (RDO) and/or previous awardees to contribute to these sessions. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Sept. 2022 | High |
| S19.4 | One idea that came up at the ‘Research Rest’ workshop was the idea of a writing retreat and/or community writing sessions. | Survey staff to gauge interest in a writing retreat and community writing sessions and to find out what form colleagues would like either to take. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Oct. 2022 | Medium |
| S19.5 | It would be a good idea to pilot some co-writing sessions to work on developing a community of practice. | Pilot some community writing sessions for interested staff members. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Nov. 2022 | Medium |

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| S19.6 | We need to hone our skills in grant-writing and writing effective proposals for funding. We also need to develop our confidence in this area by applying for more grants. | Follow up each information session with a practical workshop on preparing a proposal for that particular funding scheme. If relevant, invite representatives from the RDO and/or previous awardees to contribute to these sessions. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Dec. 2022 | High |
| S19.7 | It would be a good idea to pilot a writing retreat to create an opportunity for time out to focus on research production. | Pilot a writing retreat for interested staff members. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Jan. 2023 | Medium |
| S19.8 | Individual staff members also need support in planning their research strategies and planning for promotion. | Organise a workshop on 'Developing a Research Strategy' that takes into account the promotion criteria that relate to research. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Jan. 2023 | Medium |
| S19.9 | Several staff members have expressed an interest in field-specific mentoring. | Explore opportunities for and benefits of research mentoring within the School. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Mar. 2023 | Medium |
| S19.10 | The dedicated Research Strategy session needs to become a regular part of our academic calendar. | Decide on the timing of a regular Strategy Day with a dedicated session aimed at updating the research strategy of the School. | Long-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Mar. 2023 | High |
| S19.11 | Planning for the following academic year needs to take into account each academic staff member's research plans as well as their teaching and admin load. | Institute annual planning conversations with the Subject Leader and Head of School | Long-term | Head of School | June 2023 | Medium |
| S19.12 | | Pilot a research mentoring programme within the School | Long-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Sept. 2023 | Medium |

| Recommendation S20 | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Consider open call (no deadline) for the Research Incentivization Fund to reduce barriers to take-up. | | | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/Low)</i> |
| S20.1 | The School Research Committee considers this a very sensible and easily implementable recommendation that is likely to have a positive impact on the number of applications to the scheme. | Revise the text of the SMLLC Research Incentivization Fund (RIF) call to open up the call. | Short-term | Head of School | Complete | High |
| S20.2 | The School Research Committee believes it is important to make this change immediately to publicise this change among staff. | Present the revised SMLLC RIF call to the School Committee and encourage eligible staff to apply. | Short-term | Chair of the School Research Committee | Complete | High |

| Recommendation S21 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Consider in-School research-leave rota or other structured interventions in workload to free up research time, without salary sacrifice (this would mean higher workloads for colleagues not on leave). See separate recommendation re. a workload model. | | | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/Low)</i> |
| S21.1 | An internal research-leave rota is potentially implementable in sections with more academic staff members, but could not be implemented in smaller sections without causing an undue burden for the remaining staff member/s. We have to therefore consider alternative arrangements. | Discuss the feasibility of and appetite for a redistribution of classroom contact hours in such a way that academic staff have a lighter teaching load in one semester and a heavier teaching load in the other semester. | Short-term | Head of School | Complete | Medium |

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| S21.2 | Some staff may be interested in having an uneven teaching load in order to free up time for research in one semester; others may not want this. | Survey academic staff to ascertain which staff members want to trial an uneven teaching load model in 2022-23. | Short-term | Subject leaders | May 2022 | Medium |
| S21.3 | We will have to pilot this system to see how staff members find it. | Pilot redistributed teaching load for academic staff in 2022-23. | Long-term | Subject leaders | Aug. 2023 | Medium |
| S21.4 | We will need to assess the impact of the pilot of the uneven teaching load model. | Survey staff members to assess the impact of the pilot on (a) research output; (b) operation of the language units and school; and (c) staff morale and motivation. | Long-term | Head of School | Aug. 2023 | Medium |
| S21.6 | Discuss opportunities for staff members taking on a heavier load. | Investigate the feasibility of and appetite for a redistribution of classroom contact hours in such a way that academic staff have a heavier teaching load in three semesters and no teaching in the fourth. | Long-term | Head of School | Aug. 2023 | Medium |
| S21.6 | We will have to pilot this system to see how staff members find it. | Pilot redistributed teaching load with teaching-free semester for academic staff in 2023-25. | Long-term | Subject leaders | Aug. 2025 | Medium |
| S21.7 | We will need to assess the impact of the pilot of the redistributed teaching load with teaching-free semester. | Survey staff members to assess the impact of the pilot on (a) research output; (b) operation of the language units and school; and (c) staff morale and motivation. | Long-term | Head of School | Aug. 2025 | Medium |
| S21.8 | The SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures”, which includes a section related to the allocation of classroom contact hours to academic staff, will need to be revised and the revised document discussed approved by the School committee/School Executive. | The SMLLC document on “Structures, Processes and Procedures” will be revised and the revised document brought to the first School meeting of the 2023-24 academic year. | Long-term | Head of School | Sept. 2025 | Medium |

| Recommendation S22 | | | | | | |
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| Ensure PGR students receive explicit feedback from their annual review and ensure standard review procedures across the School. | | | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item | Schedule for completion <i>(Acad. year)</i> | Priority Level <i>(High/Med/ Low)</i> |
| S22.1 | Postgraduate research is covered by the PG Education Committee rather than the Research Committee. | Survey cognate departments and departments with strong PhD numbers and ask for information about their annual review procedures for postgraduate research (PGR) students. | Short-term | Chair of the School PG Education Committee | Complete | High |
| S22.2 | It is important that we make ourselves aware of best practice in this area. | Compare and discuss annual review procedures in other departments and use them as a basis for developing a proposal for robust annual review procedures for PGR students in the SMLLC. | Short-term | Chair of the School PG Education Committee | May 2022 | High |
| S22.3 | It will not be possible to make substantial changes to annual review procedures for PGR students in the SMLLC in time for the remainder of this academic year. | Ensure that all PGR students undergoing annual review in the current academic year receive written feedback on their progress. | Short-term | Chair of the School PG Education Committee | June 2022 | High |
| S22.4 | It is important that new procedures are put in place for the next academic year. | Bring a proposal for new annual review procedures for PGR students in the SMLLC to the first School meeting of the 2022-23 academic year for adoption from next year. | Short-term | Chair of the PG Education Committee | Sept. 2022 | High |

Institutional or Strategic Recommendations

| Recommendation I1 Improve standards (transparency and timeliness) of communication between HR and the Head of School, and between HR and individual colleagues. Additional Peer Review Group Comment There is a strong sense of dissatisfaction with the level of support from HR. This is most keenly felt among junior staff, some of whom spoke of having been treated disrespectfully by HR. | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| No ⁹ . | Brief Commentary ¹⁰ <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item ¹¹ <i>(In brief)</i> | Short ¹² / long term action | Person in Unit leading item ¹³ |
| | The Head of School is happy to work with HR to address this recommendation. | The School understands that the University is working on a review of HR capacity. When addressed, the School is confident this issue will be resolved. | Short-to medium-term | Head of School with Head of HR. |

⁹ Number each action item in line with the recommendation number so I1.1, I1.2 etc. Add rows as needed to include additional action items.

¹⁰ Where relevant indicate alignment to University Strategic Plan and/or Unit plans/strategy.

¹¹ Engagement with unit(s)/key post holder(s) outside your own unit may well be required for these recommendations. Against an action item indicate those already identified. Indicate where an action proposed may require resources or implementation at University level. In such cases outline steps the unit plans to take to explore the potential of attaining this goal. In the interim, or in the absence of being able to attain this goal indicate alternative paths that may be taken.

¹² Short term actions are those planned to be completed **within one year**. Long term actions are those planned to be completed **in longer than one year**.

¹³ For e.g. Head of Unit, Deputy Head of Unit, Chair of Unit T&L Committee etc.

Recommendation I2

Review the staffing structure and plan staffing strategically for the School.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

Given evidence of imbalance in distribution of senior-grade staff across the various sections of the School, review the staffing structure and plan staffing strategically to ensure sufficient academic leadership in all areas of the School.

There is a sense that there is a dearth of academic leadership in certain sections due to a lack of staff at professorial level. There is a need to ensure sufficient levels of senior staff in the various languages.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|------------|--|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | An annual staffing review will be undertaken within the School with decisions made based on standard criteria. | Short-term | Head of School |
| | | Vice-President Academic (VPA) to contact HR with the idea of introducing a 1-to-1 mentoring programme specifically for those applying for promotion. | Short-term | |

Recommendation I3

A piece of work must be undertaken to review colleagues' contracts to ensure that colleagues undertaking similar work are on comparable contracts, especially for tutor staff. Identify relevant anomalies that exist among staff and rectify these systematically (not ad hoc).

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

Contractual differences between staff undertaking similar work were repeatedly mentioned as a source of dissatisfaction and low morale.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|------------|---|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | The Head of School is happy to work with HR to address this recommendation. | School to work with HR to address this matter. | Long-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I4

Ensure a transparent route of promotion is available from tutor to senior tutor.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

The PRG probed the assertion that this route already exists and was not able to satisfy itself that one does. This is a missed opportunity – in languages in particular – to allow skilled staff to take on greater leadership (e.g. in module convening) to free up other academic staff members to develop their leadership in research.

The lack of opportunity for career progression for language teaching staff is out of step with the sector, at least in England, and creates a serious vulnerability for the School. There is a danger in the current situation that staff could become demoralised over time, leading to an adverse impact on the School’s culture.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|------------|--|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | The Head of School is happy to work with HR on coming up with a promotion scheme for University Tutors to address this recommendation. | Head of School and VPA to raise this matter with HR. | Long-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I5

Review promotion criteria for academic staff to ensure that they are articulated so as to acknowledge specificities of Arts and Humanities research outputs, funding, and impact.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

The lack of explicit acknowledgement of disciplinary differences may constitute a structural disadvantaging of colleagues in Arts and Humanities.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|------------|---|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | The Head of School is happy to feed into any review and potential revision of the promotions scheme to address this recommendation. | The University is already committed to reviewing the promotion scheme. | - | - |

Recommendation I6

Appropriate rates of reimbursement should be applied for the correction and assessment of language courses, these to be applied in a fair and equitable manner across the range of staff, including tutorial staff.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | The Head of School is happy to work with HR and Payroll to address this recommendation. | This will be referred by the VPA to HR for consideration. | Long-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I7

There is a need for the university to provide more opportunities for career development and promotion opportunities for administrative staff in academic units.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

Some staff described having been stuck at a particular level for several years, with no chance of applying for promotion.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | The Head of School is happy to work with HR to address this recommendation and it is recognised that promotion rounds for administrative staff is part of the University workplan. The University have also put in place a mentoring scheme for administrative staff which is welcomed. | The matter of promotion rounds for administrative staff, as raised as part of the SMLLC review, to be notified by the VPA to HR to underscore with them the importance of this process moving forward. | Short-term | - |

Recommendation I8

University and Faculty should work with the School to improve the quality of the teaching-spaces that are made available for the teaching of language courses, where traditional lecture-halls are often not appropriate and where classrooms with flexible seating arrangements are often required.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | The Head of School is happy to work with the Faculty Dean and Campus Services to address this recommendation. | This matter to be raised with the Timetabling Office to request placement of language classes in rooms with flexible seating where possible. | Short- to long-term. | Head of School |

| Recommendation I9 | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Faculty to consider establishing equipment/infrastructure committee. | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
| | The Head of School is happy to work with the Faculty Dean to address this recommendation. | This work is best managed centrally so work with central systems on this matter. | Short- to long-term. | Head of School |

| Recommendation I10 | | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| A plan and specific timetable of quality control checks of the IT and technical equipment used for teaching and learning is required. This should include working with IT services to devise and implement the plan. | | | | |
| Additional Peer Review Group Comment | | | | |
| Many incidences of faulty or slow equipment have resulted in reduced teaching time or the inability to run certain classes. | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
| | The Head of School is happy to work with IT Services to address this recommendation. | This work is best managed centrally so work with central IT systems and support on this matter. In the short term, IT Services to be notified of current issues. | Short- to long-term. | Head of School |

| Recommendation I11 | | | | |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| The University should articulate clear and strong support for blended-learning modules and should facilitate the provision of such modules where appropriate, with special consideration given to postgraduate level. | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
| | Colleagues in the SMLLC welcome this recommendation and would be happy to work with the Office of the Dean of Teaching and Learning and the Faculty and University Teaching and Learning Committees to address this recommendation. | Head of School to bring proposals for blended and or online postgraduate modules for approval, in particular the diploma and certificate language courses for post primary teachers. | Short-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I12

Consider greater career development opportunities for language teaching staff on a teaching-and-curriculum leadership track (in line with other institutions) to provide leadership in teaching, especially in language pedagogy, freeing up those staff with research as part of their role profile to spend more time on research.

Additional Peer Review Group Comment

Some staff are keen to take on leadership (though not all)

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | The Head of School is happy to work with HR to discuss what can be done to address this recommendation. | Publicise the teaching and learning training opportunities that are available to language teaching staff and ensure they are made aware of opportunities available to them to undertake training externally. | Short-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I13

Make membership of the Arts & Humanities Institute automatic for all colleagues whose research is part of their role profile.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Colleagues within the School where research is part of their role profile will be strongly encouraged to become members of the Arts & Humanities Institute (AHI). | Short-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I14

Ensure funding opportunities available through the Arts & Humanities Institute are transparently and regularly advertised and are assessed according to clear criteria. Require formal application for these internal funding opportunities, as useful training in the art of writing external applications.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Make staff aware of the funding and facilities that are available to them in the Arts & Humanities Institute (AHI). | Short-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I15

Consider an annual structured programme of Research Leadership Training and/or research mentorship schemes (cross-School or even cross-Faculty), perhaps via the Arts & Humanities Institute, which is well placed to offer strategic research leadership.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Head of School to raise this matter with the Research & Development Office (RDO). | Short- to long-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I16

Consider instituting structured 1:1 annual research conversations (conducted by a group of senior colleagues) with all colleagues for whom research is part of their role profile.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | University is working towards a supportive Planning & Development Review process and staff are encouraged to engage with this when it is in place. | - | - |

Recommendation I17

Consider (if not already in place) internal peer review for funding applications (this also raises awareness among the peer reviewers).

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|--|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Make staff aware of supports already in place in particular the RDO's commitment to review funding applications if they are submitted to their Office in advance of the submission deadline. | Short-term | Head of School |

Recommendation I18

In particular, consider structured research training support schemes for early career researchers and mid-career researchers.

| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
|-----|---|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | The Head of School will work with the Director of the AHI, the Director of the RDO and the VP Research to explore the potential of advancing this recommendation. | Short -to long-term | Head of School |

| Recommendation I19 | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| In the (possible) absence of a sufficient number of research leaders, consider establishing guided “peer mentoring” among research peers. | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
| | The Head of School is working with the Faculty Dean on the rollout of the Early Career Researcher (ECR) Mentoring Scheme piloted in the Faculty in 2021-22 to all academic and research staff members in the Faculty who wish to avail of it. After a successful pilot in 2021/2022, an ECR mentoring scheme has been rolled out for 2022/2023. | The Head of School will encourage staff to avail of this opportunity. | Short-term | Head of School |

| Recommendation I20 | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Faculty/University to review existing Sabbatical arrangements to facilitate greater uptake and undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. | | | | |
| No. | Brief Commentary <i>(Complete if needed)</i> | Planned Action item <i>(In brief)</i> | Short/ long term action | Person in Unit leading item |
| | The Head of School is happy to work with the Faculty Deans and HR to support this recommendation. | The University plans to review its sabbatical scheme. | | |

2. APPENDIX 1

There are several steps involved in the Quality Implementation Plan as part of the Quality Review process.

1. The Quality Office shares the finalized Peer Review Group (PRG) report with the Unit and is asked to submit a draft QIP.
2. The Unit discusses the recommendations and drafts a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) addressing each recommendation.
3. The draft document is used to inform discussions at the QIP Review Meeting between the President, the VP Academic and/or Dean of the Faculty/Head of Administrative Area with responsibility for the Unit, the Director of Quality, and the Head of the Unit.
4. Following the meeting, the Head of Unit updates the draft QIP if and as needed.
5. The final QIP is submitted to the Quality Office.
6. The final QIP document is submitted to the Quality Committee and Academic Council for note.
7. The QIP is published on the website of the Quality Office.
8. 12 months post finalisation of the QIP a follow up report is submitted to the Quality Office from the Head of Unit outlining progress made with actions outlined in the QIP.