QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (QIP) TEMPLATE

CONTENTS

1. Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) submission form
2. Appendix 1

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. 12 months later a report on progress made in addressing the recommendations is submitted to the Quality Office.
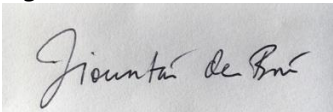
1. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUBMISSION FORM

Section 1: Unit details

Name of Unit	School of Celtic Studies
Subunits, if any, within Unit[1], that formed part of the review	Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge Early Irish Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc & Tástáil Irish Cultural Heritage
Head of Unit	An tOllamh Fionntán de Brún
Dates of Peer Review Visit	11-15 Oct 2021

Section 2: Stage of QIP

Delete as necessary[2]	Final

Section 3: Sign off

Head of Unit (NAME): An tOll. Fionntán de Brún	Signature:	Date: [DD/MM/YY] 10/04/22

---

[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.
Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh/ The School of Celtic Studies (SCS) owes its origins to a tradition of over two centuries in teaching and scholarship in the Irish language, beginning with the establishment of a chair in Irish in St Patrick's College in 1804. The present SCS was constituted in 2005/2006 following restructuring of faculties and is now part of the Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies and Philosophy (FACSP) one of the 3 faculties of Maynooth University. The SCS is comprised of the following departments and units: • **Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge** – Dept. of Modern Irish • **The Department of Early Irish** • **Lárionad na Gaeilge** (specialised unit for Irish teaching, assessment and pedagogic research) • **Irish Cultural Heritage** (an interdisciplinary subject area within the SCS, originally known as Ionad na hÉigse) In its broad range of teaching programmes and research activities, the SCS engages the entire historical span of the Irish language, its literature and culture, from the 7th to 21st centuries. This broad remit also includes teaching and scholarly expertise on the archaeology and material culture of prehistoric and medieval Ireland. The content encompassed by this chronological range represents a rich and complex vein of European cultural expression and ethnography centred in Ireland but with equal international significance to the history and contemporary study of philology and linguistics, myth, saga and folklore, literature and song, the history of ideas, material culture and contemporary language teaching pedagogy. While the SCS is comprised of departments and units each with its own disciplinary focus, its members share an overview of the linguistic, cultural and historical continuum represented collectively in the School. Just as the scholarly community thrives on this distinct chronological and disciplinary range of expertise, so too do students enjoy opportunities to study Irish and its attendant culture in all of its historical stages. While each department/unit offers a core curriculum carefully designed to give students a solid foundation in their subject area, students also benefit from the many optional modules which allow them to deepen their interests and create their own learning pathways.

Outline the process followed in developing the QIP including details of Unit staff involvement and how they contributed to the QIP preparations.
Following an intensive Quality Review process in 2020-21 which involved the production of a wide-ranging Self-Assessment Record and Draft Quality Improvement Plan, the recommendations of the QR Peer Review Panel were discussed at School/Departmental/Unit level and the final QIP was co-ordinated by: • Head of School and Irish Cultural Heritage (Prof. Fionntán de Brún); • Head of Dept. of Nua-Ghaeilge, Prof. Tríona Ní Shíocháin • Head of Early Irish (Prof. David Stifter); • Director of Lárionad na Gaeilge (Aoife Ní Ghloinn); During February/March 2022 Colleagues in the SCS were asked to contribute ideas and comment on draft action points which were collated and discussed at departmental/unit meetings. A final draft was approved by a meeting of the SCS on Wednesday 6th April 2022.

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

The Peer Review Group Report (PRGR) commended the SCS's Self-assessment Report as 'exceptionally comprehensive, detailed, reflective, and honest'. The PRGR also highlighted the School's strengths, in particular, its 'distinguished record of providing high-calibre undergraduate, postgraduate and adult education across the full life-cycle of the Irish language and relating to Irish cultural heritage… Its impressive research profile and success in attracting research funding are notable strengths, as are its innovative courses for both adult and traditional learners. The School is pro-active in providing the best possible learning and assessment experience for its undergraduate students, adult learners, and masterly tuition and supervision for postgraduate scholars.' The PRGR also commended the SCS for 'its academic rigour, vibrancy and as a stimulating environment for learning at all levels. It commends the responsive, flexible and sensitive quality of the leadership in the School and in the Departments and Units. The open-mindedness, pragmatism and creativity of the leaders was noted by many whom the PRG met.'

The PRGR also commented on current weaknesses. The School's configuration as a loose confederation of departments/units led the Peer Reviewers to conclude that the 'primary weakness is the lack of a cohesive structure and mission for the School as a whole beyond its individual parts. This is no reflection on the excellent leadership provided by current and recent Deans and Heads of School, but the absence of a description of the role of Head of School and the lack of a separate budget makes it difficult to envision how the School can be more than a loose confederation.' In addition to this, the PRGR highlighted 'staff time pressures, fuelled by high teaching and administrative workloads, alongside the inaccessibility of Maynooth University's sabbatical scheme… Several risks to the retention of very talented staff, particularly at Lárionad na Gaeilge, arise in the shape of precarious, short-term contractual arrangements, the downgrading of formerly high-level roles, and inadequate structures for promotion and regrading.' The PRGR also made a recommendation that the contractual status of ICH staff should be urgently reviewed.

The 'Recommendations for Improvement' (6.3) in the PR Report are categorised as being institutional/strategic or at School level, in line with the guidance notes accompanying the Quality Office template. Each department and unit has considered the recommendations in their entirety and agreed actions to address those recommendations with specific relevance to them. As mentioned above, the School met to agree the draft Quality Improvement Plan on 6th April 2022. The QIP will form the basis for a further discussion with the Dean of the FACSP and Registrar.

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

Institutional or Strategic Recommendations

S1 (x6): Governance & Organisation

No.	Recommendation	Peer Review Group (PRG) Additional Comment	Planned Action item. *(In brief)*	Relevant unit(s) *(SC, RG, LG, EI, ICH, All)[3]*	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion *(Acad. year)*
Recommendation S1: Governance & Organisation						
S.1.1	Clarify the role of Head of School.	Departments/Units within the School enjoy a high degree of autonomy with regard to academic matters, distribution of roles and in financial governance, aspects which are clearly valued by the units, their staff and the benefits of which are recognised by the PRG. The Head of School clearly has a coordinating and leadership role, but this should be underpinned by University or Faculty-level documentation that sets out the duties and responsibilities of the position, and the relationship between that role and those of the heads of the School's constituent units with regard to dealings with the Faculty and the University.	The Dean of FACSP will work with the current Head to develop a role description, cognisant of the specific circumstances of the School of Celtic Studies.	SC	Dean, HoS[4]	2022-23
S.1.2	Clarify the administrative and financial structure of the School.	Currently the School, as opposed to its constituent parts, has no budget of its own to pursue its day-to-day work and to take strategic decisions. While the excellent administrative support available to the Head of School comes from the administrator of their department of origin, it is unclear how that might be maintained in the longer term should there be a change in roles. The administration of the School is clearly an extra work load for current administrative staff that could increase should the School's role expand.	If School-level recurrent costs, analogous to those of the Departments, can be identified, a case can be made to the Dean of FACSP, who will put a case on the School's behalf at University level. Should the School's role or workload expand, the University will listen to a case for further appropriate administrative support.	SC	Dean, HoS	Ongoing

---

[3] SC- School. RG- Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge. LG- Lárionad na Gaeilge. EI- Early Irish. ICH- Irish Cultural Heritage.

[4] HoS-Head of School.

S.1.3	The University to recognise bilingual skills of administrative and support staff appropriately in appointments, allocation of duties, and in opportunities for promotion.	The School is required to operate bilingually, as are most of its constituent units. The ability of administrative and technical staff to work bilingually should be understood as an asset by the University, and recognised accordingly as a key employment criterion. The University should recognise appropriately the particular demands and skillset involved in offering administrative support in a bilingual context, where high levels of fluency in both Irish and English are required of staff on a daily basis, and where the additional burden of translation arises on a daily basis.	Bilingual skills will continue to be a requirement for administrative staff in Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge and Lárionad na Gaeilge. In the case of Lárionad na Gaeilge, administrative work related to the high-stakes TEG (Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge) exams requires a particularly high level of competence and accuracy in both linguistic and administrative skills. The issue of appropriate grading of administrative positions commensurate with the language skill level required in these roles to be raised with Dean/HR, to ensure suitable staffing and provision in this area.	RG, LG	Fionntán de Brún, Tríona Ní Shíocháin, Aoife Ní Ghloinn	Ongoing
S.1.4	Urgently review contractual status of staff in Irish Cultural Heritage	The PRG was convinced that a review of the contracts of the academic staff in Irish Cultural Heritage should be undertaken and that both positions should be adjusted to 1 FTE each.	The University does not accept this recommendation.	ICH		
S.1.5	The position of Irish Cultural Heritage as a separate unit within the School to be reviewed as a matter of urgency.	The activities and academic offerings of ICH are clearly valued by the University, Faculty and School, in particular as part of the portfolio of courses for international students, local studies, community outreach and engagement. Student feedback on ICH courses is overwhelmingly enthusiastic. However, the tensions within the School about real and perceived duplications of offerings and internal competition in attracting students must be addressed. The PRG met with all stakeholders and concluded that all see a merger of Irish Cultural Heritage with the Department of Early Irish as the ultimate outcome with potential for complementarity and mutual benefit for both units and for the School and University in the longer term. However, the ways in which this will be achieved will require considerable input from all concerned in a spirit of mutual respect in creating a vision for the future that will allow Early Irish and Irish Cultural Heritage to flourish.	The Dean of FACSP will work with the School to investigate the feasibility of this recommendation.	ICH, EI		Ongoing

S.1.6	The University to recognise the national and international importance and impact of the remit, research, teaching and assessment outputs of Lárionad na Gaeilge – Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil and must urgently address the contractual status and salary scales of staff to facilitate long-term planning and development.	Lárionad na Gaeilge relies, for key parts of its work, on periodic funding from government. It seems that the leadership of Lárionad na Gaeilge in the field of language teaching, learning, and assessment is undersold and, in some ways, misunderstood within Maynooth University.	Continued efforts will be made to raise awareness within the University regarding the contribution of Lárionad na Gaeilge and its national and international importance and impact, particularly in the context of the consultation process for development of the 2023-2028 University Strategic Plan. See also S.1.4.	LG	Fionntán de Brún, Aoife Ní Ghloinn	Ongoing

S2 (x1): Teaching, Learning & Assessment

Recommendation S2: Teaching, Learning & Assessment						
No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item. *(In brief)*	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion *(Acad. year)*
S.2.1	Tease out discrepancies in references to certificate programmes, NQAI Framework levels and workload in programmes within the School. Align these with structures in other Departments across the Institution and ensure consistency	Students taking a stream of modules on BA Local Studies are recognised at level 8 while Certificate in Teaching Irish to Adults is at Level 6. An exploration of learning outcome level and workloads may also help address disparities in ECTS allocation mentioned in the Quality Review process.	A working group will be established in the School to explore the alignment of certificate programmes with the NQAI (National Qualifications of Ireland) Framework, to ensure consistency.	SC, LG,	Fionntán de Brún, Aoife Ní Ghloinn, Ailín Ní Chonchúir, Aisling Ní Bheacháin	2022-23

S3 (x2): Research Activities and Outputs

	Recommendation S3: Research Activities and Outputs					
No.	**Recommendation**	**PRG Additional Comment**	**Planned Action item** *(In brief)*	**Relevant unit(s)**	**Lead (person/ team)**	**Schedule for completion** *(Acad. year)*
S.3.1	Continue support of research excellence in the School via University schemes such as the Research Incentivisation Fund.	Following the completion of the large ChronHib project in 2021, the Department of Early Irish has been very successful with follow up projects. In spite of this, it was noted that there are difficulties bridging between grants and retaining expert research staff. We can point to the successful utilisation of the Research Incentivisation Scheme as a tangible support for this excellence in research and an example of the types of schemes that can support research activities and bridge/smooth between research projects.	The University does not see this an appropriate use of the Research Incentivisation Fund.			
S.3.2	Review University sabbatical schemes considering accessibility to the full range of staff members.	Staff time pressures were highlighted in the SAR across all 4 units. In relation to research, the inaccessibility of Maynooth's sabbatical scheme to members of staff who cannot afford to take the 25% salary reduction was noted. Tax exemptions for overseas sabbaticals are not (generally) applicable for scholars of modern Irish, but also for those with caring responsibilities. This was also highlighted as an issue by members of the University Executive, raised through Athena Swan applications and associated action plans.	The University plans to review the sabbatical scheme in 2022-23.			Expected 2022-23

S4 (x4): Staffing and Staff Development

	Recommendation S4: Staffing and Staff Development					
No.	**Recommendation**	**PRG Additional Comment**	**Planned Action item** *(In brief)*	**Relevant unit(s)**	**Lead person/ team**	**Schedule for completion** *(Acad. year)*
S.4.1	The University should consider adopting a flexible strategy to ensure that steps are taken to retain talented	See pt. 2a of Draft Quality Improvement Plan for Lárionad na Gaeilge. This will, in particular, involve addressing the precarious nature of some staff contracts,	See recommendation S.1.4.			

	and skilled staff, particularly those with skillsets that are in high demand.	the lack of certainty and stability for staff and in certain contexts the lack of promotion opportunities. This will involve identifying strategies to address vulnerabilities to staff retention arising from the precarity of funding streams and late confirmation of funding renewals. The precarious nature of staff contracts for externally-funded projects is a major threat to the retention of talented staff. Hybrid academic-administrative roles in the Lárionad do not fit neatly into existing University grade descriptions, and existing job evaluation structures are unsuitable for the evaluation of these roles. There is no clear pathway for progression from tutor to senior tutor.	A promotion pathway from University Tutor to Senior University Tutor is under discussion at University level.			Ongoing
S.4.2	The University should work to ensure stability and certainty in contractual arrangements for staff, in particular clarity, sufficient planning and notice around renewals. See also S1.4 above.		See recommendation S.1.4.			
S.4.3	The University should review, clarify and enhance pathways for promotion for administrative staff and for tutors and university tutors.	Promotion opportunities for administrative staff are limited, and complicated by the fact that promotion may involve having to move Department, in a context where administrators in this School have a particular high-level bilingual skillset. The School is very dependent on tutors for the delivery of teaching and workshops. There is no clear pathway for progression from tutor to senior tutor.	See recommendations S.1.4 and S.4.1.			
S.4.4	The Lárionad Director position involves substantial responsibility for an immensely successful and busy unit. The downgrading of the position from Senior Lecturer to A01 should be reconsidered, particularly in light of	The Lárionad Director position was downgraded from SL to A01 when replaced in 2020, significantly lower than similar positions in other institutions, making it unsustainable for the retention of the Director.	Leadership roles in Lárionad have been reconfigured since the PRG visit.			Completed

| | the risks to retention. The University should work to recognise appropriately hybrid academic-administrative-managerial positions and ensure appropriate salary structures for those in such positions. | Hybrid academic-administrative roles in the Lárionad do not fit neatly into existing University grade descriptions, and existing job evaluation structures are unsuitable for the evaluation of these roles. | | | | |

S5 (x1): Resources and Facilities

Recommendation S5: Resources and Facilities						
No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item _(In brief)_	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion _(Acad. year)_
S5.1	The plan to co-locate School staff in Rye Building (ending the current dispersal of staff) should be implemented in the near future.	Co-location of research staff was raised by a number of groups particularly in terms of connection with other postgrads/postdocs within the school. We recognise that the move of the school to Rye Hall presents an opportunity for closer, casual relationships building across the school.	For operational reasons it was not possible to undertake this move. Campus Services are working to retrofit the rooms currently in use in the Arts Building and to re-assign space to the School.	All	Fionntán de Brún	2022-23

Recommendations for the improvement of the Unit (School of Celtic Studies)

U1 (x2): Governance and administration

No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item *(In brief)*	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion *(Acad. year)*
Recommendation U1: Governance and administration						
U.1.1	Review the structures regarding the relationship between Lárionad na Gaeilge and Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge, concerning costs and management of duties associated with language teaching on undergraduate programmes		These structures are currently under discussion and review by HOD (Head of Department) for Nua-Ghaeilge and the Director of Lárionad na Gaeilge in conjunction with HOS (Head of School) and Dean of Faculty.	RG, LG	Dean, Fionntán de Brún, Aoife Ní Ghloinn, Tríona Ní Shíocháin	2022-23
U.1.2	Urgently address the information available internally and particularly to incoming students (both international and undergraduate) about the specific nature of the courses and modules provided; in promotional material, on the University, Admissions Office, International Offices, School website, social media interaction.	The PRG noted some lack of clear understanding among some University-level agencies and students/potential students about the nature of the various course offerings, and the different opportunities and emphases afforded in the School's different units.	Staff continue to engage fully with university recruitment fairs at undergraduate and post-graduate level; information leaflets have been updated and made available on the relevant departmental websites. ICH continue to work closely with International Office to ensure clear information on opportunities for international students. Lárionad na Gaeilge will continue to develop its marketing and social media strategy to ensure a targeted and principled approach to communications. Downloadable handbooks/ information leaflets, a series of informational videos and lists of FAQs will be added to the Lárionad na Gaeilge website for each course.	All	LNG: Aisling Ní Bheacháin, Cormac Ó Feinneadha	Ongoing

U2 (x6): Teaching, learning and assessment

	Recommendation U2: Teaching, Learning and assessment					
No.	**Recommendation**	**PRG Additional Comment**	**Planned Action item** *(In brief)*	**Relevant unit(s)**	**Lead person/ team**	**Schedule for completion** *(Acad. year)*
U.2.1	Consider how existing teaching and learning structures within the Faculty and Institution might be strengthened and developed. Find new ways to celebrate pedagogical innovations, and teaching, learning, assessment, and support initiatives in the School; share practices and show that these are valued.	The PRG suggests that regular teaching and learning updates are included at all Departmental, School, Faculty and Academic Council meetings. A Teaching and Learning "away day" might be considered outside of term time. School links with the CTL should be strengthened. Collaboration in the area of Teaching and Learning within the School may also create other synergies and ways of bolstering the School's identity.	Regular teaching and learning updates will be included at all Departmental/Unit/School meetings. A Teaching and Learning "away day" will take place outside of term time during 2022/23. School links with the CTL (Centre for Teaching and Learning) will be strengthened. Lárionad na Gaeilge will continue to engage in practice-based research on issues relating to teaching and learning, and to disseminate this work within the University and the various professional networks with which it is involved.	All	F. de Brún	Ongoing
U.2.2	Ways to more proactively communicate the reputation and expertise in research-led teaching and practice at Lárionad na Gaeilge should be explored. Consider opportunities to document successes, innovations and the impact of this work within Maynooth University itself.	The PRG notes that this reputation and expertise is highly valued externally. Use internal reporting structures and fora to raise profile and showcase practice within Maynooth University.	Lárionad na Gaeilge will continue to highlight achievements in monthly bilingual news articles published on the University website, as well as through social media engagement. Staff will also continue to present their work at research/ teaching and learning seminars within MU and in other institutions.	LG	Aoife Ní Ghloinn	Ongoing
U.2.3	Explore ways to create more opportunities for off-campus learning, experiential learning, placements, and field trips. Develop structures for students of Nua-Ghaeilge to have Gaeltacht and immersion experiences.	Build on existing practices mentioned in the SAR and meet demand for these learning experiences expressed by Maynooth University participants in the review process.	Gaeltacht courses in the Connemara Gaeltacht for second-year students of Nua-Ghaeilge, which were paused due to the Covid 19 pandemic, resumed in August 2022; placements have proceeded with an tOireachtas for students of the MA Nua-Ghaeilge; opportunities for strengthening of links with the Ráth Chairn Gaeltacht, including the possibility of new experiential learning opportunities, are also currently being considered.	RG		Completed

			Lárionad na Gaeilge is currently exploring possible industry collaborations to facilitate the introduction of a work placement as part of its MA programme in Translation and Editing.		Aisling Ní Bheacháin, Aoife Ní Ghloinn, Freda Nic Giolla Chatháin	2022-23
U.2.4	Systemise and document procedures and agreed tools for the annual collection of student feedback across the School.	This recommendation is taken from the Lárionad section of the SAR (p. 203). The PRG considers it relevant to the whole School. In the absence of a central system at CTL, embrace the opportunity to design local mechanisms and to tailor procedures and instruments to the context of Teaching, Learning and Assessment in the School.	Since the PRGR was received the University has introduced an agreed policy on feedback (effective from March 2022). This new system has been designed to ensure University oversight and provide relevant reporting data for quality assurance purposes while retaining a flexible, Departmental-driven approach. In keeping with this new system, the departments/units will have the flexibility to apply their own mechanisms for collecting feedback. The new University policy includes the requirement to annually document procedures and agreed tools for the annual collection of student feedback.	All		2022-23
U.2.5	Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge, as suggested in the SAR, should revise the structure of compulsory and optional modules in the BA with a view to enhancing the organisation and design of literature tutorials (*Ranganna Oidis)*.	As literature tutorials are aligned with compulsory modules there is little opportunity for lecturers to explore new and innovative assessment modes. There is significantly increased assessment load at the end of the semester, when compared to optional modules.	Staff met to discuss and agree new approaches to the delivery of literature tutorials (ranganna oidis) and also to review and revise the structure of compulsory and optional modules within the BA (17/02/2022). Necessary changes will be implemented in the online database, and a new curriculum for literature tutorials will be piloted in the coming year.	RG		May 2022
U.2.6	Review labour-intensive assessment and feedback practices across the School, consider effective alternatives. Staff at Lárionad na Gaeilge are well placed to offer consultancy and advice in this area.	This recommendation was highlighted by a number of departments and units in the SAR and during the site visit.	Initial discussions have begun on labour-intensive assessment and feedback practices across the School and specifically in Nua-Ghaeilge as part of the renewed organisation and design of literature tutorials (Ranganna Oidis) (17/02/2022), and within the context of strategic research plans for the Department (24/02/2022). Further meetings will be facilitated so as to examine viable alternatives that reduce workload while maintaining	RG, LG	Head of Department and Staff of Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge	August 2022

| | | | effectiveness. This issue will be explored at a staff away-day at the beginning of the 2022-23 academic year. Colleagues with specific expertise in current innovative practice in Teaching and Learning and initiatives such as 'Assess for Success' will host workshops at the School Teaching and Learning Away-day in Semester 1 2022-23. | | | |
| | | | Lárionad na Gaeilge will form a working group of tutors from various programmes to review feedback practices and consider potential alternatives to current labour-intensive approaches. | LG | Aoife Ní Ghloinn, Freda Nic Giolla Chatháin, Eilís Everard, Caroline Gallagher | 2022-23 |

U3 (x3): Research

Recommendation U3: Research						
No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item *(In brief)*	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion *(Acad. year)*
U.3.1	The School (potentially in collaboration with the Arts and Humanities Institute) should investigate provision of specific GREPS modules on digital humanities.	Digital humanities have been a major part of the successful research in Early Irish. PhD students noted that some GREPS were not useful for expansion of their skillset and that specific transferable skills GREPS modules in digital humanities would be beneficial, especially with regard to future employment prospects.	Potential provision of new GREPS (Graduate Research Education Programmes) in digital humanities to be explored with MU AHI (Arts & Humanities Institute) and Computer Science.	EI, RG, ICH	David Stifter	2023-24
U.3.2	Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge should continue to develop its research profile around performative pedagogies.	The recent appointment (Ollamh le Nua-Ghaeilge agus Taibhealaíona) in Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge presents an opportunity to expand the research activities of the Department. New programme at	The MA stream in Irish-language performing arts and oral traditions continues to develop, including new engagement with the Graduate Studies Office on recruitment for Irish-language	RG	Tríona Ní Shíocháin	Ongoing

		postgraduate level (MA + PhD) in collaboration with the Oireachtas na Gaeilge, will strengthen research activity in this area. New collaborations with the University Department of Music and Oireachtas na Gaeilge are exciting. Possible connections with Adult and Community Education in terms of arts-based teaching and research methodologies might also be explored.	artistic research at Maynooth University. The Department of Community and Adult Education will be contacted with a view to exploring new possibilities for expansion also.			
U.3.3	Instigate initiatives to create time/space for research	Time for research was noted across the School with high demands on teaching (Early Irish, Nua-Ghaeilge, Irish Cultural Heritage), and workload models with no designated research time (Lárionad). Initiatives such as "Quiet Time" have worked in other institutions and could be considered here.	Discussions have been initiated with staff so as to seek new practical solutions that alleviate workload pressures and thus create more time and space for research. A working group will be established to examine the practical implications and opportunities involved in Departmental research support schemes, such as internal sabbatical schemes or teaching buyout schemes, while also ensuring everyday workload is not increased as a consequence of any new schemes/structures.	All		2022-23

U4 (x4): Staffing and staff development

Recommendation U4: Staffing and staff development						
No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item *(In brief)*	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion *(Acad. year)*
U.4.1	Redefine roles at Lárionad na Gaeilge in planning for recruitment and retention. Give further consideration to the skillset required (language competence, research in applied linguistics, specialism in materials design etc) to work in a Centre like this where methodologies in teaching and testing are constantly and rapidly changing. Roles such as technician and tutor need to be redefined.	Consider roles such as those already in place in Maynooth University Centre for Teaching and Learning (e.g., Educational Developer) and in other language centres outside of Ireland.	See S.4.4.	LG		

No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion
U.4.2	The School should consider developing an academic workload allocation and recognition model to ensure parity of workload and a fair and flexible distribution of responsibilities. Such a model should fully respect and facilitate academic freedom and allow maximum flexibility in assignment and assumption of tasks and duties.	Academic staff in the School report high workloads, with overall high and intense teaching demands and administrative responsibilities, to the detriment of research.	The University is currently undertaking a review of academic workloads which should address this matter.			Ongoing
U.4.3	Review and clarify the Irish Coordinator role at Lárionad na Gaeilge, particularly in relation to the distinction between it and other administrator roles within the Lárionad.	This recommendation was highlighted in the SAR. It was further supported by participants in the review meetings.	See S.4.4.	LG		
U.4.4	Create a *Bainisteoir TEG* role in order to meet current demands for upscaling and expansion		See S.4.4	LG		

U5 (x2): Resources and Facilities

Recommendation U5: Resources and Facilities
No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item *(In brief)*	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion *(Acad. year)*
U.5.1	Consider the potential opportunities that will arise from moving to a single School location, including further scope for collaboration with Oifig na Gaeilge, MU.	Better collaboration between the School and Oifig na Gaeilge is recommended by the PRG.	Events such as Féile Bheag, exhibitions and other collaborations with Oifig na Gaeilge will be developed.	RG, LG, All		2022-23
U.5.2	Address the risks associated with a dependency on a sole Senior Technician Officer at Lárionad na Gaeilge, a role that is shared with Modern Languages. Explore options with IT Services at Maynooth University	The growth of TEG has put an additional burden on bespoke technical systems and increased dependence on the time and expertise of the Senior Technician Officer. Any long-term absence on the part of the technician would leave certain services unavailable or unmaintained, which could pose a major threat to TEG.	This issue will be explored and a plan put in place to mitigate any potential risks.	LG	Aoife Ní Ghloinn, Éamann Ó hÉigeartaigh	2022-23

U6 (x3): Engagement

Recommendation U6: Engagement						
No.	Recommendation	PRG Additional Comment	Planned Action item *(In brief)*	Relevant unit(s)	Lead person/ team	Schedule for completion *(Acad. year)*
U.6.1	Anticipate "Engagement" as a strategic direction and trend in Higher Education in the next MU Strategic Plan. Map existing internal and external engagement across all School Departments and Lárionad na Gaeilge. Consider how engagement with the academic and non-academic community might be promoted, further developed and sustained.	The proposed new space at Rye Building might be used to share infographics, impact statements etc demonstrating connections with stakeholders, policy-makers, communities, especially Gaeltacht communities and Irish language, cultural and heritage organisations.	Engagement is ongoing as evidenced in the annual Research Report for each unit. As part of the School's input to the consultation process for the next MU Strategic Plan, current activities and further opportunities for engagement across the school to be reviewed and mapped to the key strategic areas of development.	All		2022-23
U.6.2	Continue to nurture links with Gaeltacht communities and explore ways of fostering more sustainable links with Ráth Chairn.		Continuation of support for Ráth Chairn Gaeltacht archival project; new opportunities for links through the MA Irish-language arts festival (An Fhéile Bheag) currently being explored. Lárionad na Gaeilge will continue to organise trips to Ráth Chairn for international students taking the LC101 module.	RG, LG	Staff	Ongoing
U.6.3	Consider how current relationships between Coiste na Gaeilge, Oifig na Gaeilge and Lárionad na Gaeilge might be bolstered. Find ways to have the development of Maynooth University staff competency in Irish recognised within Institutional structures.	Consider the specific professional competencies in Irish required at Maynooth University, a public body. Offer accredited and non-accredited language programmes to staff. Explore scope of having these staff development options recognised by HR as Continuing Professional Development (CPD).	Information will be gathered on staff CPD models for Irish in other institutions and expert advice will be sought from leaders in this area regarding best-practice. Potential models will be discussed further with Coiste na Gaeilge, Oifig na Gaeilge and HR.	LG	Aisling Ní Bheacháin	2022-23

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.