

ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE
(A College of Dublin City University)



**QUALITY PROMOTION
PROGRAMME 2003/2004**

PEER REVIEW REPORT
for the
**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATION UNIT**

March 2004

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1 Introduction

This Peer Review Report constitutes one aspect of the Quality Review Process undertaken by the Education Administration Unit in St Patrick's College, Drumcondra. It is part of an extensive process that included the preparation of a detailed self-assessment document by the Unit reflecting all aspects of its policy and practice, and a peer review visit in which a team of peer assessors were asked to respond to this evaluation. The members of the Peer Review Group (PRG) were as follows:

Professor Alan Harrison, Director of Quality Assurance, University College Dublin

Ms Rachel Godfrey, Higher Executive Officer, Arts Office, Mary Immaculate College Limerick

Ms Pauline Mooney, Senior Faculty Administrator, Faculty of Science and Health, Dublin City University

Ms Olivia Bree, Assistant Registrar, St Patrick's College

The PRG visit to the College took place over three days from February 17th to February 19th 2004.

2 Profile of the Education Department Administration Unit

2.1 Overview of Processes and Services

The Unit is attached to and facilitates the work of the Education Department which has a fulltime staff of 53 academic members, part-time staff, and a student enrolment of 1,792 (at December 2003) on six programmes.

The main responsibilities of the Unit are as follows:

- a) **Student Support**
To provide a comprehensive support service for students enrolled on Education Department courses
- b) **Academic Staff Support**
To provide support services for full and part-time academic staff teaching Education Department courses
- c) **Support to Post-holders in Education**
To facilitate the work of holders of posts of responsibility within the Education Department
- d) **Administration**
To design, implement and review administrative procedures
- e) **Record-keeping**
To maintain department records, including examinations records and computer files
- f) **Examination results**
To collate and validate Education Department examinations results, and respond to queries from students, staff and the Registrar's Office

2.2 Staff

The Unit is staffed by eight fulltime members: a Higher Executive Officer, three Executive Officers and four Clerical Officers.

Higher Executive Officer (HEO)

Education Office

Executive Officer (EO) Graduate Courses
Executive Officer Exams/Student Services
Clerical Officer (CO) Student Services
Clerical Officer Human Development (half-time)

Teaching Practice Office

Executive Officer Teaching Practice
Clerical Officer Teaching Practice
Clerical Officer Teaching Practice (half-time)

Educational Disadvantage Centre

Clerical Officer Educational Disadvantage

2.3 Location

The Education Department Administration Unit is situated principally in the central administration section in C Block with one office in E Block.

The Unit has four offices and two storage areas as outlined below:

Staff Offices

Education Office	C109
Teaching Practice Office	C111
Educational Disadvantage Centre	E Block
Office of Higher Executive Officer	C108

Storage Areas

Teaching Practice Records	C114
Examination Scripts and Assignments	D201

The above allocation of office space has been in effect since March 2003. The Education Office and Teaching Practice Office are located centrally but are slightly separated. The Educational Disadvantage Centre office is located entirely separately to the other Unit offices, but close to the office of the Co-ordinator of the Centre.

3 The Self-Assessment Process

3.1 Background to the Review

Context

The Unit has recently undergone significant change. During the 2002-2003 academic year the appointment of an EO in Examination and Student Services, the filling of a CO in TP post, and a reorganisation of office space enabled the Unit to implement the organisational structure agreed in June 2001. Thus the Quality Review process coincided with a period where the Unit would have had to undertake a substantial assessment and subsequent reorganisation of services in any case.

Scope of the Review

The Unit sought feedback from user groups on the following:

- Support to full-time staff and students provided by TP and the Education Office
- Support to part-time staff provided by the Education Office
- Ratings of administrative services and procedures by staff and students

3.2 The Co-ordinating Committee

The permanent members of staff in the Education Department Administration Unit constituted the co-ordinating committee. All Unit staff were actively involved in the self-assessment process. The Quality Co-ordinator, the Quality Administrator, the Head of Education and a member of the Education Department provided support, advice and expertise in specialist areas.

3.3 Methodology Adopted

The review process was split into six phases as outlined below.

Phase 1 – Introducing the Quality Process (March 2003)

The Unit met with the College Quality Co-ordinator and Head of Department in order to agree Unit staff involvement, the distribution of tasks, and to appoint a Co-ordinator.

Phase 2 – Definition of Services and Procedures (Apr-May 2003)

Unit staff completed templates which provided the basis of the subsequent definition and evaluation of services.

Phase 3 – Gathering Student Perspectives (June – Sept 2003)

Graduating BEd, Human Development and Graduate Diploma students were surveyed, the questionnaire having been based on the Definition of Services and Procedures forms. Meetings were held with TP and the Education Office to discuss the results of this survey and make changes as appropriate for the upcoming academic year.

Phase 4 – Gathering Unit Staff Perspectives (11th/12th Nov 2003)

A two-day conference was held during which Unit staff perspectives were gathered, a SWOT analysis was performed and preliminary work was undertaken on a Unit Mission Statement and Strategic Plan.

Phase 5 – Gathering Academic Staff Perspectives (Nov-Dec 2003)

All academic staff teaching Education courses were surveyed. A selection of part-time staff was also surveyed.

Phase 6 – Preparation of Final Draft (Jan 04)

The final report was prepared based on data gathered in Phases 1-5, i.e. the Definition of Services and Procedures forms, the student and academic staff surveys, and data gathered during the staff perspectives session. This final report was agreed with the Head of the Education Department and all Unit staff members.

4 The Peer Review Group Process

4.1 Methodology

The Peer Review Group was given sufficient time to read and assess the Self-Assessment Report of the Education Department Administration Unit. The site visit was organised by the Quality Promotion Office and involved a preliminary meeting on arrival at which the Quality Co-ordinator briefed the members of the PRG on their duties and the proposed format of the review. The HEO of the Unit informed the PRG members of changes/amendments to the schedule.

Days two and three included meetings with various stakeholders in the Unit, such as students, academic staff, post-holders, College Management and, of course, the Unit staff themselves. The schedule also allowed for a visit to the Unit offices which gave a useful insight into working conditions in the Unit and the innovativeness of Unit staff.

4.2 Site Visit Timetable

Day 1 Tuesday 17th February: Introductory Session

- 17.30–20.00 Convening of Peer Review Group
Welcome by the President, Dr Pauric Travers
Briefing by the Quality Co-ordinator
Welcome by the Head of Administration Unit
Finalisation of Draft Schedule
Allocation of roles and responsibilities
- 20.00 Dinner for members of Peer Review Groups (Education Department and Administration Unit), Unit staff, members of Education Department, and others involved in the process.

Day 2 Wednesday 18th February

- 9.00–9.30 Convening of Peer Review Group
- 9.30–11.00 Consideration of Self-Assessment Report
- 10.00–10.30 Meeting with Head of Unit
- 11.00–11.30 Coffee/tea
- 11.30–12.00 Meeting with all Unit staff
- 12.00–13.00 Meetings with individual members of Unit

- 13.00–14.00 Lunch
- 14.00–14.45 Visit to Unit facilities
- 14.45–16.10 Meetings with representatives of students
 14.45–15.00 Bachelor of Education students (1st, 2nd & 3rd years)
 15.00–15.40 Graduate Diploma students 2003-2004
 15.40–16.10 Human Development students (1st, 2nd & 3rd years)
- 16.10–16.40 Meeting with representatives of academic staff
- 16.40–18.00 Meeting of Group to identify aspects to be clarified and finalise tasks for the following day

Day 3 Thursday 19th February

- 9.00 Convening of the Peer Review Group
- 9.20–9.50 Meeting with President, Registrar, Bursar
- 9.50–10.15 Meeting with the Head of Education
- 10.15–10.30 Meeting with Director of Human Development
- 10.30–10.55 Meeting with Acting Director of Teaching Practice
- 10.55–11.40 Meeting with Directors of Graduate Diploma, In-Career and MEd
- 11.50–12.20 Meeting with the Head of Unit to clarify outstanding issues
- 12.20–13.00 Preparation of Draft Final Report on the Unit
- 13.00–14.00 Lunch
- 14.00–14.30 Preparation of Draft Final Report on the Unit (contd...)
- 14.30–15.00 Meeting with Human Resources Manager
- 15.00–16.00 Preparation of Draft Final Report on the Unit (contd...)
- 16.00–16.15 Presentation of Group Findings to Head of Unit
- 16.15–16.45 Exit presentation to Unit staff made by Chair of the Peer Review Group summarising the principal findings of the Group
- 17.00 Reception

4.3 Overview of Site Visit

The visit of the Peer Review Group broadly followed the original schedule drawn up by the Quality Promotion Office in conjunction with the Unit. However, certain changes were necessary to allow for meetings running over time, the fact that the Education Department Review was taking place at the same time and to enable the PRG to meet with other relevant members of College staff deemed necessary to the overall understanding of and insight into the workings of the Education Department Administration Unit.

The PRG would like to thank all those involved in organising the visit, in particular the staff of the Unit and the Quality Promotion Office, for their superb support and help during this time.

4.4 Peer Review Group Report Methodology

A Chairman and Rapporteur were appointed on the first day. Before the end of the site visit each member of the Group had assumed responsibility for different sections of the PRG report. A draft PRG report was circulated to all members of the PRG for their input and comments. Amendments and inputs were collated by the rapporteur and a final draft report compiled. Following final approval by the Peer Review Group, the report was forwarded to the Quality Co-ordinator.

The following information was consulted in compiling the PRG Report: The Education Department Administration Unit Self-Assessment Report, the College Strategic Plan 1999 - 2004, The Education Department Self-Assessment Report, background documentation provided by the Unit such as examples of handouts for students, examples of administrative procedures and documentation procedures; the Student Information Handbook; course literature.

5 Findings and Recommendations of the Review Group

5.1 Introduction

The Peer Review Group would like to express their appreciation of the manner in which they were made welcome and treated during the review process. This process is very intensive and was helped greatly by the attention to our physical needs and especially by the open and frank way that all of those we met approached their contribution to our work. We were also helped by the documentation that was made available to us that clarified and amplified the description of the culture and institution. We noted early on in our deliberations the transitional and developing nature of Coláiste Phádraig and are in agreement with the sentiment expressed in the College Strategic Plan 1999 – 2004 that it is the aim of the College to maintain the good atmosphere of the old while embracing the professionalism of the new.

The PRG were very impressed with the calibre of staff employed in the Education Department Administration Unit and with their professional approach to their tasks. They have an understanding of their importance as being frequently the frontline in the delivery and administration of the College's flagship degree Programme. It is our opinion that they present a professional and united front to their public of students, academic staff and general public. The administrative systems and procedures are excellent and indicate a real quality for the purposes intended. It was the opinion of the members of the PRG that the Unit's Records Management System represents "best practice" in this area and that it is worthy of imitation in other institutions. However, it was also the opinion of the PRG that the storage facilities available to the Unit for this purpose were less than ideal.

The PRG were somewhat surprised that the Administration Unit was presenting for review independently from the Academic Department of Education. We understand from our consultations that this was actually coincidental. The College had agreed that one administrative unit would be reviewed and one academic unit and these were the two units that expressed willingness. Despite the surprise expressed above about the separateness of the two reviews we are of the opinion that this approach has been beneficial for the Administration Unit and for our deliberations. However we recommend strongly that the next phase of the QA/QI process be carried out in tandem with the units overlapping for the elements of their implementation/improvement plans that are of common interest. Such co-operation, it seems to us, is entirely in keeping with the desire of the College Management to manage the current changes in a spirit of inclusion and partnership.

The Self-Assessment report produced by the Unit was produced according to the guidelines and a great help to the reviewers in their efforts to understand the present work and status of the Unit. We noted the evaluations of the Unit presented in the report, which were generally very positive from both staff and students. Our consultations during the two days of the Site Visit broadly confirmed these findings.

The Self-Assessment report was comprehensive and objective, and no significant issues arose during the PRG visit which had not been noted in the report.

The recommendations of the PRG are categorised into three groupings: those at Unit level, those which involve the Unit and the Department and those at College level.

5.2 Recommendations at Unit level

With regard to changes that can be made at Unit level, these are the recommendations of the Peer Review Group:

- **The PRG recommends that the Unit should hold regular team meetings.** These meetings should be facilitated by the HEO and should provide an opportunity for the HEO to feed back to the staff decisions / discussions that have taken place at other bodies and which directly effect the running of the Unit. Such team meetings would also provide a “talking shop” for Unit staff and promote co-operation within the team.
- **The PRG recommends that the Unit introduce a system of internal training for its staff members, i.e. a “buddy” system.** This would facilitate multi-tasking by staff and would ensure that no one person is solely responsible for a given function or procedure. It would also promote co-operation between Unit members and a better understanding of each other’s roles.
- **The PRG recommends that the Unit investigate the possibility of procedures for early submission (in advance of the deadline) of student assignments.** This would address one of the issues raised by students and would also convey an air of flexibility and helpfulness to students about the Education Administration Unit.
- It is noted from the Unit’s Self-Assessment Report that 18% of students would like to communicate with Unit staff in Irish. **The PRG recommends that the Unit investigate possibilities of Irish language classes/training for its staff.** Such training may be supported under the College’s policy of bilingualism. The HEO of the Unit should investigate possibilities with various bodies both internally, through the Human Resources Manager, and externally.
- The expanding workload expected of the Unit and the increasing pressure on it from growing student and staff numbers became clear to the group during its consultations. **The PRG recommends that a training course in communication skills be organised for Unit staff.** Although the Unit scored quite well with both students and academic staff for communications in the recent surveys carried out by the Unit, the Group feels that it would be beneficial for staff of the Unit to receive further training in appropriate communication skills. This should clarify for Unit staff their exact roles in communicating information to students, i.e. what is appropriate for them to communicate to students and what would be better addressed by others. The Group also feels that such training would go towards addressing the 19% of

students who were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the approachability of staff in the Unit by introducing methods of dealing with all types of service users.

- In commending the Unit for its ongoing review of internal communications and protocol, **the PRG recommends that such reviews be maintained, especially in respect of Teaching Practice services and procedures.**
- **The PRG recommends that the Unit continue to review how information and procedures are notified to students** so that the most effective means of communication are identified and used. The College website, when further developed as planned, will serve as a useful though not exclusive means of communication.

5.3 Recommendations at Unit / Education Department Level

5.3.1 Introduction

This section of the PRG Report deals with the interaction between the Administration Unit and the Education Department it supports. It identifies issues that arose repeatedly in this regard during the course of the site visit, all of which had been identified in the Unit's Self-Assessment Report. Recommendations are made in respect of each of these issues, all of which are within the remit of the Unit and Department to address.

The Peer Review of the Education Department Administration Unit was carried out contemporaneously but entirely separately from that of the Education Department itself. This separation was the very first aspect of the Unit's Self-Assessment Report to be discussed by the PRG at its initial meeting on the evening of 17 February 2004.

In the course of the site visit it became apparent that the separation of the Unit and Department in terms of the review process reflected a "disconnect" between the two. This "disconnect" is clearly referred to in the Administration Unit's Self-Assessment Report. Despite the clearly excellent relationship that exists between members of staff of the Unit and the Department, the absence of a truly integrated model of operation was evident. That this absence was the source of some difficulty for the Administration Unit was clear.

It should be noted that the absence of an integrated structure is due in no small part to the fact that the Education Department has experienced phenomenal growth in the period since 1993 and that it is only in the last three to four years that similar growth has occurred in staffing levels of the Administration Unit. The scale of operation prior to 1993 was sufficiently small to allow informal structures and modes of communication to work very effectively between the Education Department and the one or two individuals who provided its administrative support. It also served to foster the very friendly atmosphere and student focused ethos for which the Department and the College generally is known and of which it is justifiably proud. The informal structures and modes of communication that existed previously continue to operate. However, the current scale of operation within the Education Department

and its Administration Unit is such that it requires formal structures if it is to continue to be effective.

In the absence of formal management and communication structures, the growth of the Administration Unit and the development of its function appear to have occurred almost independently of the Department. There is clear separation of Unit and Department function and this separation accentuates the perception expressed by staff in both areas that the administrative function is “invisible”. This perception was referred to in the Unit’s Self-Assessment Report and was conveyed by Unit and Department staff during the site visit. The implication of this perception for Unit staff is that their contribution to Department activities is not necessarily recognised or valued. However, this should be weighed against the hugely positive evaluation of the Unit by academic staff.

5.3.2 Management Structure and Communication

- Despite the clear advantages in conducting separate Unit and Department reviews, the PRG felt it would have been preferable if at least one session in the course of the two day review were conducted in common, focusing on the interaction between the Unit and the Department it supports. With this in mind, **the PRG recommends that in progressing the outcomes of both reviews, the Department and Unit work closely together, perhaps generating a single Quality Improvement Plan that will encompass both academic and administrative activities and address the matter of Unit – Department interaction.** Such a joint exercise would facilitate the formulation of an integrated strategic plan or vision that would encompass both academic and administrative activities.
- The “disconnect” referred to above was apparent in the absence of administrative representation in the membership of the Department’s Management Committee. The Committee is responsible for the “planning of major issues relevant to the Department and the preparation of reports to be presented to the Department for consideration”; the Department comprising all permanent members of academic staff being the “ultimate decision-making body”. Despite the potential impact of issues under consideration at Management Committee level upon administration, and the administrative expertise available within the Unit, there is currently no administrative representative on this or any other Department Committee. **The PRG recommends, therefore, that the Unit HEO become a full member of the Education Management Committee.**
- The lack of clarity surrounding the respective roles and responsibilities of the HEO and academic Post-holders was identified as an issue both in the Unit’s Self-Assessment Report and in the course of the site visit. Unit staff report directly to the HEO but, in many instances, work directly to Post-holders. Yet there is no formal mechanism for interaction and communication between the HEO and the Post-holders in relation to administrative matters. **The PRG recommends, therefore, that, in order to ensure greater clarity regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the HEO and Post-holders, a further Committee or Group comprising the Head of Department, HEO**

and all Post-holders be established. It is further proposed that this Group clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of administrative matters, and identify appropriate modes of communication both within the Group and between the Group and other members of staff.

5.3.3 Student Related Issues

- The Unit's Self-Assessment Report refers to a lack of clarity on the part of students in relation to decision-making and the difficulties that face Unit staff in communicating to students decisions that have been made by academic staff. In a somewhat similar vein, students with whom the PRG met during the site visit referred to a lack of clarity around where authority to make decisions lay. Students also referred to the central role that administrative staff can play in students' College experience. With these issues in mind, **the PRG recommends that specific Department induction be provided to student groups (B.Ed., BA and Graduate Diploma groups in particular) in which administrative staff would participate, outlining their role and function to students in so far as it relates to them.**
- **The PRG felt that it would be particularly important that Graduate Diploma students are provided with specific or tailored induction (it would appear that they currently receive a generic College induction) and recommends that, as part of this induction, the policies and procedures that must operate in relation to Teaching Practice and the reasons for them are communicated to Graduate Diploma students.**
- In addressing its functions in relation to student support, the Unit's Self-Assessment Report makes reference to the prior existence of a Student Liaison Committee. **The PRG understands that the Committee is now in abeyance but recommends that, if reactivated or replaced by an alternative staff/student forum, administrative staff representatives be included in its membership.**
- The difficulties created for both students and administrative staff by the absence of a system whereby students can have access to their examination scripts in the period immediately following the promulgation of results were identified in the Unit's Self-Assessment Report. **The PRG recommends that the Department consider putting in place a mechanism to facilitate the viewing of scripts in conjunction with the Administration Unit.**
- Currently, it is the case that results are submitted and validated on an individual basis by members of academic staff. There is no stage in the examinations process whereby the Department obtains an overview or oversight of student performance at programme level in advance of those results being brought to College level for ratification or adoption. **The PRG proposes that the Department, in conjunction with members of staff of the Unit, investigate the putting in place of a system whereby Departmental oversight of examination results can be secured.**

- As indicated above, each of these recommendations lies within the remit of the Unit and Department to effect in collaboration with each other. The excellent relationship which exists between Unit and Department staff members, together with the very high regard in which Department staff hold their administrative colleagues, should provide a very sound basis for the development of integrated management structures and modes of communication, and for the further improvements in the delivery of service to students.

5.4 Recommendations at College Level

These recommendations are those that involve general College policy decisions and are beyond the remit of the Unit or the Education Department. They are divided into two sections: Human Resource Matters, and Facilities.

5.4.1 Human Resource Matters

- In answer to a direct question from one of the reviewers the HEO informed the PRG that she had not been involved in the proposed filling of a vacancy in the Unit, apart from writing a reference for a staff member currently employed in a temporary capacity. This was confirmed in an interview with the HR Manager. While the PRG understands that this was one of a series of proposed appointments and that shortlisting and interviewing for all these posts was carried out by the same committee, the members feel that for many reasons this is not an optimum way to recruit staff for a specific unit and that, apart from not benefiting from the advice of the Head of the Unit, it negates his/her leadership role. **The PRG recommends that in the future the Head of Section be included in shortlisting and/or on interview boards for recruitment to the Unit.**
- The PRG feels that, given the growth in certain areas (for example Human Development and postgraduate programmes), the number of staff in the Unit needs to be reviewed. **The PRG recommends a review of the number of staff in the Unit with a view to creating a further post if necessary.**
- Based on the job descriptions for Unit staff provided in the Unit's Self-Assessment Report, it would appear that the duties and responsibilities attaching to the post of CO in the Educational Disadvantage Centre, in terms of tasks and level of operation, are more appropriate to a higher grade. **The PRG recommends a review of the post of CO in Educational Disadvantage, with the possibility of regrading the post if appropriate.**
- Some members of staff were unclear on HR policies in certain areas. **The PRG recommends that HR policies are articulated to all staff clearly, particularly those policies that concern appointment, promotion and conflict resolution.**

- **The PRG recommends the revival of the Forum between HEOs and the Senior Management.**
- **The PRG recommends that the Unit have a designated budget for the training and development of administrative staff.**
- Recommendations concerning staff appraisal are not included as it was noted that this would be dealt with under the Agreement for Sustaining Progress. The PRG approves of what was learned of the College's engagement in this process.

5.4.2 Facilities

- The location of the Educational Disadvantage Office in the reception booth of one of the entrances poses problems. It is often confused with a porter's booth. This could be dealt with by using partially buffed glazing. However the accommodation is unsuitable for a computer and for the growing library of reference books. The PRG considers that the continued use of a computer in these cramped conditions poses a potential Health and Safety threat. **The PRG recommends that the College seek to address the problems associated with the location and working conditions of the Educational Disadvantage Office.**
- Ideally the offices of the Unit would be clustered together. This would be better for every aspect of their work and for the promotion of collegiality. **The PRG recommends that the College investigate the possibility of locating all the offices of the Unit close to each other.**
- **The PRG recommends that the College investigate the possibility of providing an office that could be used for the compilation of examination results and for confidential consultations.**
- While the PRG was impressed with the management of records the members had concerns about Health and Safety regarding the facilities used for this purpose. **The PRG recommends that the College carry out a Health and Safety audit of the rooms and equipment used by the Unit for storing records.**
- The PRG understands the history behind the separate common rooms for Academic and Administrative staff but feels that it is an anachronism and not in keeping with the culture of partnership that the College wishes to encourage among all staff. **The PRG recommends that both staff common room areas be available to all staff and that the College indicate the desirability of common usage of these.**
- **The PRG recommends that adequate and consistent signage be provided to the Administration Unit offices.**

- **The PRG recommends the provision of adequate and suitable notice-board space.**
- The College recognises the necessity to update and develop its Web page and computer network. The PRG wishes to endorse this aspiration and to point to the obvious benefits to be gained by the institution and its component parts from such development. The provision of an institutional Intranet facility is also desirable. The PRG would draw attention to the fact that a significant improvement in communication with the student population will depend on a corresponding improvement of student access to IT facilities. **The PRG recommends the College's aspiration to improve its Web page provision and that this be done taking into consideration the overall IT policy of the institution.**
- With the current configuration of the Unit's offices it was noted that there is a problem for access by wheelchairs to the Teaching Practice Office. **The PRG recommends that all the offices comply with the needs of wheelchair access.**

6 Summary of PRG Recommendations

6.1 Unit

The PRG recommends

- That the Unit hold regular team meetings.
- That the Unit introduce a system of internal training for its staff members.
- That the Unit investigate the possibility of procedures for early submission of student assignments.
- That the Unit investigate possibilities of Irish language classes/training for its staff.
- That a training course in communication skills be organised for Unit staff.
- That ongoing reviews of internal communications and protocol be maintained, especially in respect of Teaching Practice services and procedures.
- That the Unit continue to review how information and procedures are notified to students.

6.2 Unit /Department

The PRG recommends

- That in progressing the outcomes of both reviews, the Department and Unit work closely together, perhaps generating a single Quality Improvement Plan that will encompass both academic and administrative activities and address the matter of Unit – Department interaction
- That the Unit HEO become a full member of the Education Management Committee.
- That in order to ensure greater clarity regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of the HEO and Post-holders, a Committee or Group comprising the Head of Department, HEO and all Post-holders be established. Further this Group to clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to the management of administrative matters, and identify appropriate modes of communication both within the Group and between the Group and other members of staff.

- That specific Department induction be provided to student groups (B.Ed., BA and Graduate Diploma groups in particular) in which administrative staff would participate, outlining their role and function to students in so far as it relates to them.
- That, as part of this induction, the policies and procedures that must operate in relation to Teaching Practice and the reasons for them be communicated to Graduate Diploma students.
- That, if the Student Liaison Committee is reactivated or replaced by an alternative staff/student forum, administrative staff representatives be included in its membership.
- That the Department consider putting in place a mechanism to facilitate the viewing of scripts in conjunction with the Administration Unit.
- That the Department, in conjunction with members of staff of the Unit, investigate the putting in place of a system whereby Departmental oversight of examination results can be secured.

6.3 College

Human Resources

The PRG recommends

- That the Head of Unit be included in shortlisting and/or on interview boards for recruitment to the Unit.
- A review of the number of staff in the Unit with a view to creating a further post if necessary.
- A review of the post of CO in the Educational Disadvantage Centre with the possibility of regrading the post if appropriate.
- That HR policies be articulated to all staff clearly, particularly those policies that concern appointment, promotion and conflict resolution.
- The revival of the Forum between HEOs and the Senior Management.
- That the Unit have a designated budget for the training and development of administrative staff.

Facilities

The PRG recommends

- That the College seek to address the problems associated with the location and working conditions of the Educational Disadvantage office.
- That the College investigate the possibility of locating all the offices of the Unit close to each other.
- That the College investigate the possibility of providing an office that could be used for the compilation of examination results and for confidential consultations.
- That the College carry out a Health and Safety audit of the rooms and equipment used by the Unit for storing records.
- That both staff common room areas be available to all staff and that the College indicate the desirability of common usage of these.
- That adequate and consistent signage be provided to the Administration Unit offices.
- That adequate and suitable notice-board space be provided.
- That the improvement of the College website be done taking into consideration the overall IT policy of the institution.
- That all the offices comply with the needs of wheelchair access.

Appendix 1

Education Department Administration Unit Peer Review Group Visit

Meetings between Peer Review Group and members of Unit staff

Wednesday, 18th February 2004

- 12.00** Mairead Dunne, EO Teaching Practice
- 12.10** Maria Thornbury, EO Graduates
- 12.20** Helen Fleming, CO Human Development/Teaching Practice
- 12.30** Evelyn Cuddy, EO Exams/Student Services
- 12.45** Aoife Myler, CO Student Services

Appendix 2

Education Department Administration Unit Self-Assessment Process: Co-ordinating Committee

Evelyn Cuddy, Exams / Student Services

Mairead Dunne, Teaching Practice

Maeve Fitzpatrick, Head of Unit

Helen Fleming, Human Development / Teaching Practice

Aoife Myler, Student Services

Maria Thornbury, Graduate Courses

Appendix 3

Education Department Administration Unit Peer Review Group Visit

Meetings between Peer Review Group and Students

Wednesday, 18th February 2004

14.45-15.00

Bachelor of Education Students

Edel Barry, First Year
Seamus Conboy, Third Year
Eimear De Lasa, Second Year
Rachel Galligan, First Year
Louise Maguire, Third Year
Aoife O’Gorman, Third Year
Danny Reilly, Second Year
Kristjanna Verbruggen, Second Year

15.00-15.40

Graduate Diploma in Education 2003-2004 Students

Padraig Kilbride
Sinead Maguire
Philip McArdle
Geraldine Meade, Class Rep
Sinead Mongan
PJ O’Meara, Class Rep

15.40-16.10

Human Development Students

Patrick Doyle, Third Year
Paula Harrison, Third Year
Lisa Maxon, Third Year
Anne McCafferty, Second Year
Fionnuala Nic Cába, First Year
Tina Robinson, First Year

Appendix 4

Education Department Administration Unit Peer Review Group Visit

Meeting between Peer Review Group and Education Department Academic Staff

Wednesday, 18th February 2004

16.10-16.40

Education Department Academic Staff

Des Broderick, Physical Education

Andrew Burke, Philosophy and History of Education

Carmel Dinan, Sociology of Education and Human
Development

Therese Dooley, Maths Education

Bernadette Dwyer, Reading

Michael O'Leary, Educational Assessment and Human
Development