

# **ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE DRUMCONDRA**

## **INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY**

**supplementary note on institutional strategy  
overall institutional strategy**

**2009-2014**

**Shaping 21<sup>st</sup>-century innovative,  
enterprising Irish knowledge society**

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## 1 b. Explanatory note on institutional strategy up to 2014

SPCD's existing Strategic Plan, *Ar Aghaidh*, covers the period 2006-10. The preparation of a new plan has been entrusted to a Strategic Planning Group comprised of representatives of Governing Body, staff and students. The Group will report to Academic Council in June 2009.

SPCD's plan for 2011-14, therefore is still in process. However, the College has prepared a scoping document, in which it addresses Irish education's radical challenges in rapidly changing contexts. It responds to these challenges keeping a clear focus on its mission.

The College's **INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY** (1a) therefore, is presented in two documents: *Ar Aghaidh*, which is at the end of this volume, covering the period 2006-10, and a preliminary update, which reviews SPCD's priorities in the light of the need to meet the short-term challenges of securing Ireland's enterprise economy and restoring competitiveness; of building an innovative, ideas economy; enhancing the environment and securing energy supplies; investing in critical infrastructure; and providing efficient and effective public services and smart regulation.

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# 1 a. INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY UPDATE

## PREFACE

St Patrick's College, Drumcondra (SPCD) is a linked College of Dublin City University and one of Ireland's two largest Colleges of Education.

Its primary functions are

- to enhance its role in teacher education both general and special;
- To provide degrees in the humanities, to promote academic research and further develop postgraduate studies, while fostering excellence in all its activities.

The strategic policy and direction of SPCD is outlined in *Ar Aghaidh*, which covers the period 2006-11.<sup>1</sup> The implementation of that plan and the preparation of a new one are entrusted to a Strategic Planning Group comprised of representatives of Governing Body, staff and students. In developing its plan for 2011-14, the College addresses Irish education's radical challenges in rapidly changing contexts. It responds to these challenges keeping a clear focus on its mission. It will concentrate its efforts on preparing civic-minded graduates who 'are skilled, knowledgeable, flexible, reflective and creative', who value 'excellence, equity, community and innovation',<sup>2</sup> are well qualified in education and the humanities and equipped to accept their civic, social, cultural and economic responsibility to Ireland.

## VALUES

- SPCD will instill in teachers an awareness of their role in **conveying cultural, civic and social values** and ensuring that they respond flexibly to the challenges of a changing Irish society with innovative solutions.
- It will maintain its output of creative, flexible, entrepreneurial Humanities graduates who are central to the creation and transmission of new knowledge skills.

In fulfillment of its function, SPCD offers NFQ Level 6-10 qualifications in the faculties of Education and Humanities and promotes translational and conceptual research and scholarship in particular on childhood, primary education and teacher education. It recognizes the signal role that the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities play in Irish Society;<sup>3</sup> its Humanities graduates offer a favourable rate of social return on public

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<sup>1</sup> St Patrick's College Drumcondra, *Ar Aghaidh Strategic Plan 2006-10*

<http://www.spd.dcu.ie/main/administration/president/planning.shtml>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> See *Foresight in the AHSS: Response of St Patrick's College, Drumcondra*

investment.<sup>4</sup> **Justice and equity** inform its research themes, its access and international strategies, and its foregrounding of special needs and disadvantage education.

SPCD responds to current challenges by

- harnessing and increasing the power of a supportive, knowledge society
- maintaining its tradition of stimulating collaborative, supportive, collegial learning
- Building on its strengths.

## ACTIONS

Arising out of its strategic plan, but taking account of the changing landscape of Irish society, SPCD prioritizes the following ACTIONS for the period 2009-14.

### STUDENTS

- Students' welfare is a core value. SPCD will continue to deliver **QUALITY STUDENT EXPERIENCES** within a caring environment.
- Maintain and develop a reputation for **EXCELLENCE IN STUDENT-CENTRED AND CHILD-CENTRED LEARNING AND INNOVATION** by
  - promoting innovative, creative translational research in education and Humanities, with clear cultural and social added value
  - integrating pioneering and translational research into its teaching and learning at all levels
  - Extending institutional research
  - maintaining the highest ethical standards.

### STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

- SPCD will **COLLABORATE** with key partners, especially DCU and all-Ireland Colleges of Education, in devising innovative focused cost-effective programmes that build on combined strengths.
- SPCD's **strategic alliances** and meaningful and practical collaborations will
  - stimulate learning, discovery and enterprise
  - ensure economies of scale and avoid replication
  - Harness the best international research and teaching talent and increase SPCD's international exposure.

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<sup>4</sup> British Academy report (March 2004) *That full complement of riches*. Response to the Government's Consultation Paper on 'Science and innovation: working towards a ten-year investment framework'.

- promote civic and community engagement in a spirit of partnership
- Continue to embed in the education system the distinctive values of Irish civic society and culture, and the priorities of the knowledge society, the smart economy, and the green agenda, and lead change in levels of awareness and civic duty.

Strategic alliances include

- The Colleges of Education Research Consortium (CERC)
- An Foras Feasa: Humanities Serving Irish Society Digitizing the Humanities
- The Zambia-Ireland Teacher Education partnership and the Centre for Global Development through Education (CGDE) Irish Aid programmes
- The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) and the Centre for Cross Border Studies
- The Institute for Child Education and Psychology (ICEP) – in relation to on-line programmes in SEN
- The proposed all-Ireland SMARTSTEM structural doctoral programme in Science, Mathematics and Technology education.

SPCD will

- **CONSULT** with its stakeholders, including other educationalists and educational agencies, the wider community, in particular the disadvantaged, the business sector, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholder groupings in their proposals
- work constructively to **INFORM POLICY** makers, relevant agencies and schools and research collaborators about its areas of expertise.

#### RESEARCH

- SPCD will continue to promote and initiate high-quality, innovative and scholarly **RESEARCH** in targeted areas in Humanities and Education Studies in line with its mission. It will incentivize strategic research
- SPCD will prioritize maintaining its current level of investment in **RESEARCH** and seek additional funding pathways in order to increase it from its present level.
- Concentrate its focus on funding the **EARLY-STAGE RESEARCHERS** including postgraduate students and early stage researchers

- Provide top quality **STRUCTURED TRAINING** to young researchers, and continue to increase significantly SPCD's doctoral output, over and above the national target
- Support the enhancement of appropriate **SUPERVISORY CAPACITY** for postgraduate students, and of quality postgraduate training, including a wider spectrum of skill sets, especially innovative structured and professional doctorate training
- Facilitate and support the **Education Research Centre** in its international and national research especially on educational assessment
- Address through research and teaching and learning issues related to childhood and Irish society within an international context, and issues of equity and social justice

#### **INTERNATIONALIZATION**

- SPCD will be Bologna compliant in 2010
- Integrate further SPCD's **INTERNATIONALIZATION** programme into all programmes and promote focused staff and student mobility that adds value to SPCD's priorities. Vigorously pursue EU-funded research and teaching initiatives and promote SPCD's programmes in targeted regions of the US and EU, and Zambia

**RESPOND TO NATIONAL NEEDS** in the provision and delivery of teacher education, including continual professional development.

#### **CURRICULUM REFORM**

SPCD responds rapidly and flexibly to emerging needs and to ongoing curriculum reform with focused initiatives that capitalize on its strengths, including course development and initiatives in early childhood education, SEN, digital technologies and learning, literacy and mathematics education, inter-cultural education and diversity, sustainable energy, science education, special needs, access and disadvantage.

#### **CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT**

- complete the current phase of its campus enhancement programme
- SPCD is a green campus and its community takes a responsible, measured, planned approach to conserving and sustaining resources.

## FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

- SPCD adopt the highest standards of accountability and transparency in its financial affairs. The College subscribes to the IUA/HEA Code of Governance for Third level Institutions and other relevant codes and will continue to embrace best practice in this area.
- It will maintain its accounts in good standing and observe the highest standards of transparency and accountability.
- It will advocate publicly and energetically investment in high quality pre-service and in-service teacher education and research and promote teacher education programmes and implement strategies to ensure that it continues to attract the highest calibre of applicant.

## RESEARCH

### OVERVIEW

SPCD has a long tradition of international Education/Humanities scholarship and integrates rigorous, innovative research values into its mission. It first graduated PhD students in 2001, and is uniquely placed to lead research relevant to school and society that identifies economies and efficiencies and really changes national policy and society. Its research portfolio derives from close collaboration between faculty and **schools** arising from student internships/teaching practice.

SPCD's **Education Research Centre** (ERC) plays an influential international role **evaluating education and assessment**. Scholarship in Arts, Humanities and Creativity synergize with Education Studies at SPCD, in digital learning, language teaching and linguistics, schools and graduate curricula etc.

Research capacity, outputs and confidence are growing, especially in **niche/ emerging areas**. Growth and standards are facilitated by **strategic centres of excellence**, such as Science Teaching & Learning (jointly with DCU), educational research, educational disadvantage, citizenship and children's culture. SPCD is a strong, distinctive partner, complementing, adding value to capacity, linking educational research to pure disciplines/inter-disciplines, testing real-life problems.

**Outcomes** typically are the translation of knowledge into educational and scholarly, rather than commercial, impact, but SPCD promotes entrepreneurship consistent with its remit. Research outputs are directly integrated into teaching and learning, and to practical school settings. SPCD has strategically developed a unique critical mass of

expertise in mathematics, science and technology education, building on and creating synergies with subject knowledge in partner institutions.

Through **strategic all-Ireland and international alliances** SPCD has promoted its work and continues to learn from best practice. SPCD now proposes to promote an entrepreneurial spirit in its research. Its close working relationship with Microsoft offers opportunities for SMARTSTEM PhD students to link STM education to innovation and to learn entrepreneurship skills.

SPCD's internationally standardized **performance indicators** are highlighted in its Annual Research Reports.

### **ACCESS AND EQUITY**

SPCD's research integrates acute social and civic awareness, the green agenda, and equity and access concerns including interculturalism and gender, into its research agenda and its protocols. SPCD caters specifically for educators' continuing professional development (CPD) and its Special Education Department and Educational Disadvantage Centre promote research on disability and education. Over half of SPCD's student body is grant-aided, and it will maintain this high level, and raise public consciousness about disability and education through research and vigorous dissemination of that research.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES**

SPCD invests in human resources in priority research areas. It implements a strategic equitable recruitment policy. A mix of senior and early career researchers is recruited to enhance SPCD's research priorities. It strategically deploys secondments from the primary teaching profession to enhance its work, and seconds staff to research-related activities.

### **Action**

Within current constraints, SPCD will recruit at least 2 key posts to priority areas in educational interdisciplinary research, including some of the following: STM and digital learning, Arts/Humanities/language/linguistics; will use academic vacancies through retirements to recruit strategically; will appoint additional human resources to the research administrative unit.

### **DOCTORAL RESEARCH**

Building new knowledge through doctoral research embedded in society is SPCD's mission.

Supports include Research Committee; Research Ethics; centralized management/administration; programme validation process within DCU; EdD programme board; dedicated human, physical, financial resources; a Graduate suite; Digitized language research facility; IT resources; generic/transferable skills programme; Teaching/Research Fellowships.

#### **Actions: doctoral programmes**

- Fund additional Research Scholars and enable scholars successfully compete for FP7 Marie Curie, HERA, IRCSET, IRCHSS, and other public awards; establish **inter-institutional supervision** 2010; implement **innovative modes of delivery**, 2009-14.
- Implement **structured thematic degree flexible doctoral programme** in Science, Mathematics and Technology Education with all-Ireland partners, mainstreamed and integrated into SPCD programme menu with multiple exit routes and alternative awards, such as an EdD, 2010.
- Complete **review of regulations and protocols** surrounding research degrees, 2010.

#### **INSTITUTIONAL ACTIONS**

- Enable the **Education Research Centre** meet its targets, including **PISA** 2009; DES Schools Support Programme; **OECD TALIS** study 2009; major assessments of English reading and mathematics 2009, 2010; achievement tests in **Gaeilge** for primary schools 2009 and 2010.
- Devote 3% of income to research.
- **Incentivize collaborative initiatives** that progress new areas, stimulate entrepreneurship, serve current national needs and gain international recognition. Work closely with DSE, NCCA, Teaching Council and other strategic bodies, 2009.
- A working party will **consolidate centres of research excellence** and build capacity, 2009.
- SPCD will advance STM collaboration with QUB, Arizona State U, U Mass, and key individual international collaborators, 2009
- Maintain **staff research fellowships**; support early, mid-career/ established academics, 2009.

- Target **graduate recruitment** in strategic areas to increase annually by 5%, 2009.
- Significantly enhance **IT infrastructure** to progress portals repositories and distance learning.
- Expand research **award** system to include President's Award for staff/students, 2010.
- Promote SPCD as a centre of research for policymakers and to derive **income** from that work.
- That SPCD is recognized as a centre of scholarly excellence in critical debate.
- That it will complete the **Bologna** process and further embed **mobility** 2010.
- Increase volume of and publish institutional research data; survey performance, 2009.

#### **PERFORMANCE - SELF EVALUATION AND FUTURE TARGETS**

SPCD has established strategic centres of excellence in emerging areas of national and international significance, on Educational Disadvantage, Human Rights/ Citizenship and Human Development, CASTeL, Children's Culture/Literature. Among the significant areas of output are

- **Education Research Centre** 2004-: PISA/OECD; 34 articles, 38 books, 10 tests.
- **Colleges of Education Research Consortium (CERC) (2003)** Outputs: 6 publications, 6 conference papers, 2 commissioned reports and 7 ongoing projects. <http://www.cerc.ie/gpage.html>.
- **Digital Learning:** Book chapters – 2 ; Refereed Journal Articles – 2; Reviewed Conferences/ Proceedings – 8; Project evaluation reports – 5; Funded awards – 15; Digital Learning resources: [www.teachnet.ie](http://www.teachnet.ie); DVD of digital learning materials and resources; National Digital Learning Repository – digital learning resources uploaded
- **Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South (SCoTENS):** 2 peer review publications; 4 reports; 7 ongoing projects; 9 conference papers.

- An **Foras Feasa** NUIM, DKIT and DCU PRTL 4 2006- Prioritized research streams: ICT Innovation and the Humanities; \*Multiculturalism/ Multilingualism; Heritage/ Social.
- **Irish in Europe Project** multi-disciplinary, cross-institutional research (SPCD/NUIM); outputs include 4 books, monograph series, web-integrated, interactive biographical databases; bibliography of publications and reviews; scholarly network; NLI exhibition 2007, media presentations.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

Teaching and learning (T&L) are integral to SPCD's ethos and create dynamic synergies with research. Effective teacher education, SPCD's core business, is central to social and economic and wellbeing. T&L best practice is incorporated into SPCD's Institutional, Knowledge Transfer and Research Strategies. It continually strengthens its core programmes (i) through rigorous Quality Assurance processes (ii) by adopting flexible, proven, diverse modes of delivery

A full statement on SPCD's teaching and learning policies may be found at [http://www.spd.dcu.ie/main/teaching\\_today/index.shtml](http://www.spd.dcu.ie/main/teaching_today/index.shtml)

### ACTIONS: TEACHING AND LEARNING AND RESEARCH TRANSFER

- **Teaching Studies**, including theory, conceptualisation and effective application/translation of research on teaching inform a central strand of the SPCD research agenda
- SPCD **Institutional Strategy** links T&L and research to ensure that all programmes, from CPD through undergraduate and graduate, integrate research developments
- **Recruitment and promotion** policy values strategic research excellence in teaching and actively seeks research-active academic staff with commitment to teaching
- **Incentives**. SPCD funds **teaching fellow** programme and Research scholars. Operates targeted **secondment** opportunities for experienced excellent primary school teachers in association with the DES. Operates a competitive **professional development fellowship** scheme
- **Hosts** IRCHSS-funded fellowships and facilitates doctoral fellows in acquiring knowledge/ experience **teaching skills opportunities**

- Operates a framework for supporting and **upskilling supervisors**.
- SPCD has an award system to reward Excellence in T&L.
- T&L committee disburses **funding** to support T&L-related upskilling.
- Will continue to commission student **exit surveys** to identify and address strengths and weaknesses.
- SPCD will continue to present T&L research on **peer-reviewed international platforms**. It values highly peer-review international **publications** on T&L.
- SPCD will continue to pursue research on **assessment** in T&L to ensure effectiveness and economy.
- SPCD will increase awareness of embedding **entrepreneurship and innovation** in its T&L.

#### LINKAGES BETWEEN STRATEGIC CENTRES/PROJECTS

- Research Committee and T&L Committee, in association with the interdepartmental committee and chairs of strategic centres/projects, will establish a **working group** to identify strategies for coordinating the activities of SPCD strategic centres, and for establishing procedures for College-designated centre status. Will report findings and establish an implementation schedule, 2010.
- Future **annual research reports** will identify linkages between strategic centres and projects in terms of staff, expertise, funding, deliverables and outcomes, 2009.
- Will disseminate the outcomes of research completed within the Education Research Centre and other SPCD centres as an integral part of **undergraduate and graduate** programmes, 2009.
- Generic and transferable **skills modules** will be made available to all associates of strategic centres.

#### EQUALITY OF ACCESS

- SPCD's T&L policies and access office are informed by the [National Access Plan](#). SPCD values inclusion and diversity and provides entry mechanisms, programmes and

support services at 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>- levels ensuring equality of entry, participation and outcome for students.

- **Additional supports** in place guarantee accessibility for under-represented groups including, informal and individualised guidance, mentoring and support, Assistive Technology Resource Library & Audio services, Library Assistance, one-on-one mentoring/learning, disability services support educational needs assessment for each student with a disability.
- SPCD creates a **supportive T&L environment** and promotes second-chance learning.
- SPCD's **Special Education department** supports groundbreaking innovative research and teacher education programmes on disabilities within the educational environment.

#### **T&L BUILDING FUTURE RESEARCHER CAPACITY**

- SPCD's **T&L committee, coordinator and administrative unit** promote T&L, disburse funding to disseminate and integrate research into courses and ensure excellence in teaching across disciplines.
- Full IUA **quality assurance** measures ensure standards and international recognition.
- SPCD is extending its suites of programmes and resources accessible at **distance**.
- SPCD **disseminates information** on research and T&L opportunities, awards, fellowships, etc.
- Shares access to DCU's T&L initiatives.
- **International/ Northern Ireland student cohorts** may access structured PhD programmes
- SPCD established **centres of excellence** in order to build capacity in educational disadvantage, children's literature, human development, human rights.
- The Colleges of Education consortium (**CERC**) enhances researcher capacity within the College of Education sector with target international initiatives and collaborative research projects that support early-stage researchers in education studies especially T&L.

#### **ENHANCING EDUCATION AND TRAINING: UNDERGRADUATE/ POSTGRADUATE**

- High quality **professional development programmes** supports academics and postgraduates from all disciplines to disseminate their research findings and methodologies effectively to students at all levels within their discipline.
- Academics combine unique pedagogic and discipline-specific expertise, including smart-economy areas (science/mathematics/technology, language-linguistics, digital learning) with learner supports in writing and languages, building teaching/ research capacity from undergraduate phase.
- Implements extensive teacher-development initiatives: faculty induction, teaching evaluations, peer observation, institutional teaching award systems, pedagogical innovations that extend T&L and research links to undergraduate level.
- Produces student textbooks and teacher handbooks.
- Targets further development of facilities to build on graduate suite, digital learning centre, etc.
- Adopts flexible modes of delivery including electronic options.
- SPCD's accompanying structured PhD proposals (Vol. 3) will show how it will further professionalise PhD graduate profiles in strategic areas; equip strategic PhD researchers with key generic/ transferable skills; facilitate synergy, complementarities and interaction with leading researchers in partner universities across collaborative national platforms.
- SPCD's teaching fellowship scheme enables young researchers to acquire supported and mentored teaching experiences and to develop their teaching portfolios.
- Structures, including graduate seminars, publication opportunities, and preparation for conferences, etc. enable graduate students disseminate their findings effectively to society at all levels.

#### **PROJECTED FUTURE OUTCOMES AND TARGETS UP TO 2014**

- Committee for Teaching and Learning will further clarify desired unique characteristics of SPCD education.
- T&L will continue to be prioritized areas of research at SPCD.
- An annual T&L report will be established and will present annually to Academic Council.

- SPCD will establish a joint Working Group of the Research Committee and the Teaching and Learning Committee to strengthen links between teaching and research. Mechanisms include targeted pedagogical innovation, specialized modules, research skills training, etc.
- Research groups will be encouraged to develop strategies for disseminating their findings to the full. SPCD student body with incentives accruing to faculties and/or departments.
- SPCD's promotions processes will take account of research/T&L synergies.
- SPCD will undertake further institutional research to identify and capitalize on its strengths.
- SPCD will complete the process of rewriting its programmes and modules to incorporate learning outcomes by 2010.
- SPCD will organize and implement focused training opportunities for administrative and support units to ensure optimum efficiency in academic programme delivery.
- Extend and integrate further the use of information technology and e-learning solutions in T&L (ongoing).
- Mainstream elements of funded initiatives such as the digitized Humanities An Foras Feasa programme and the proposed SMARTSTEM structured doctoral programme.
- Finalize policy on ECTS credits.
- Implement the principles of the National Framework for Qualifications.
- Phased implementation of structured PhD elements across all programmes.
- Extend the suite of available professional development awards and modules systematically.

## **KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND INNOVATION STRATEGY (KTI)**

Knowledge Transfer and Innovation are core SPCD activities that produce wide-ranging varied Education and Humanities outputs to serve Irish civic life, scholarly communities, heritage bodies, and enhance its reputation at local, regional, national and international levels.

## EVALUATION: LESSONS LEARNED

SPCD has identified and addresses the following needs:

- Dedicated human infrastructure and advanced, reliable, resilient and secure network access systems, linked to local, national and international networks and services to deliver applications to users.
- Efficient, coherent **organization** with easier user access to relevant authoritative information as required, within legal, ethical or commercial restrictions, in digital/traditional formats.
- **Information Support Services** provide user support and sustainable research **computing services**; improved **processes** within the information environment, smooth interfaces, improved interactions, reduced duplication of effort and enhance course development and diverse learning.
- Free, open-access publishing **Institutional Repository (IR)** to store and disseminate SPCD's digitised research publications, raise its research profile and increase individual publications' impact.
- **Research expertise** portal: SPCD scholars encouraged to create profiles on DCU's public Research Support Service that allows external parties access researcher profiles.
- **Acceleration** of research and development.
- A **collaborative culture** within which knowledge and information once created are routinely shared.
- **Transferable Skills: SPCD** recognizes need for training, support and resources to equip staff and students with skills transferable to workplaces.

## MANAGING KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER/TRANSLATION, INNOVATION AND SHARING

- SPCD will enhance its **Managing Information Resources/ Services** to integrate effectively quality, shareable, relevant, authoritative information relevant to its mission; to support teaching, learning, and research; to manage quality assurance; and **comply with Information Legislation**.
- Develop effective IT infrastructures, systems and services and integrate new/emerging technologies.

- Develop processes for defining responsibilities for information management and dissemination.
- **Administrative Support** to improve relevance and interoperability and eliminate duplication.

#### KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND INNOVATION PROCESSES

- Through the **application of theoretical knowledge to real-life learning and teaching contexts**.
- Through **integrating digital technology into learning** experiences as a means of generating new knowledge in Education Studies and Humanities.
- Through graduate skills and experiences. Training, including SPCD's teacher programmes, forms invaluable **national capital**. Graduates' high employment testifies to SPCD's KTI success.
- Through knowledge dissemination via **academic channels** including peer-reviewed publications, conferences etc. SPCD's strategies for Research and for T&L form part of its KTI strategy.
- **DCU's** (which awards SPCD's degrees) networks promote SPCD's strategic priorities.
- SPCD's links with **prestigious overseas institutions** promote its values and research outcomes.
- Through **reports commissioned** by local authorities and government-appointed bodies, consultancy services, participation in social agency boards, faculty shares and disseminates its knowledge.
- **Scholarly** peer reviewed publications disseminate new knowledge and scholarship central to the College's mission, reach key private and public audiences and the global research community, enhancing SPCD's reputation and collaborative capacity. SPCD may part-fund publication.
- **Professional publications/** outreach material/ commissioned reports/ SPCD's annual research report. SPCD faculty publish textbooks and teacher handbooks in traditional and e-formats.

- **Commitment to Teaching and Learning** is at the core of SPCD's mission and inform and of its KT processes. All elements of the T&L strategy impact on knowledge transfer.
- SPCD is promoted as a **welcoming and supportive environment** for learning for an increasingly diversified student body, for its alumni and for the wider local, regional and national community.
- Improves **cultural and recreational campus facilities** to sustain the College's unique identity.
- Mentors students and provides **pastoral care** thereby enhancing knowledge transfer.
- SPCD prioritises **learner support** to build researcher capacity, over a wide spectrum including Ethics, Mathematics Education, Science Education, writing, Languages, ICT, good research practice, project management.
- Capitalizes on **unique expertise** in specialist areas within humanities and education.
- Extends **alumni** involvement and draws on their experience, particularly as teachers/mentors.
- Enhanced opportunities for **retired** former staff as researchers, mentors and supervisors.
- Better use of the networks of SPCD's **governing body** members.
- **Technology transfer**: Its doctoral programmes will ensure that educational scientific/ technological innovation is accessible to a wider range of users who can further exploit the technology into new products, processes, applications particularly through the proposed, shared, structured doctorate.
- Strategic links that create **centres of excellence** such as CASTeL (Mathematics/Sciences: DCU-SPCD) and An Foras Feasa's Digital humanities (SPCD-DCU-NUIM-DKIT), CERC (Irish Colleges of Education Research Consortium), SMARTSTEM (SPCD-DCU-MIC-UL-NUIM structured PhD proposal) further enhance the development and dissemination of policy innovation.
- Effective KTI flows from SPCD to practice and **the wider community** through continually improving networks and technology transfer. SPCD's **Institutional Strategy** ensures widespread, focused dissemination through research expertise portals, non-academic publications, conferences, public lectures, business and

school outreach and social responsibility. It organises/ hosts conferences/ public lecture/seminars with internationally acclaimed speakers. Staff members play roles in civic life, contributing to exhibitions, public lectures, heritage campaigns, debates, media and consciousness raising events, consistent with the College's mission.

- Faculty registers with public, international bodies as **experts** and expert witnesses; are commissioned to write policy; and report annually in SPCD Annual Research Report.
- Through involvement in **national and regional networks** innovative partnerships develop.
- **Knowledge & business incubation:** SPCD avails of DCU's business incubation processes.

#### **PROJECTED FUTURE OUTCOMES AND TARGETS UP TO 2014**

- Closer cooperation and **collaboration** with key stakeholders, academics, publishers, economists, policymakers and students, educational and humanities communities, and public-private partnerships.
- More and closer collaborative links with leading international experts and institutions.
- Policy on commercialization and **intellectual property** as they relate to SPCD work and mission.
- Enhanced opportunities for **teacher mobility** in partner institutions in Ireland and abroad.
- Maximized potential for **leveraging external funding** to sustain knowledge transfer.
- Faculty lead innovation in curriculum, arts in education, humanities; and in the **design, development and delivery of pioneering T&L methods**, further develop virtual learning environments to facilitate distance learning, online programmes, etc.
- Staff more involved in the production of web texts aimed at facilitating scholarly research.

#### **SUMMARY**

SPCD will play its part in shaping a responsible, innovative, sustainable society in which humanities, creativity, new ideas, and the discoveries and knowledge from research and scholarship will stimulate a whole new form of enterprise culture. SPCD is fully

committed to responding to Ireland's urgent priorities as mapped in the Government's Strategy in Science Technology and Innovation (STI) and *Building Ireland's Smart Economy*.

# ***Ar Aghaidh***



**St Patrick's College**

**Drumcondra**

**Strategic Plan**

**2006-10**

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  - Centrality of the Student/*Tábhacht an Mhic Léinn*
  - e-Learning/*r-Fhoghlaim*
  - Programme/Curriculum Development / *Forbairt Chláir/Churaclaim*
  - Research/*Taighde*
  - International/*Gné Idirnáisiúnta*
  - Wider Community/Inclusion / *Pobal níos leithne san áireamh*
  - Collaboration, Partnership and Strategic Links / *Comhoibriú, Comhpháirtíocht agus Nascanna Straitéiseacha*
  - Quality Improvement / *Mianach Feabhais*
  - Staff Development/Performance Management /*Forbairt Fhoirne/Bainistíocht Oibre*
  - Organisation and Structure/*Eagrú agus Struchtúr*
  - Campus Development / *Forbairt an Champais*
  - Finance/*Airgeadas*
- V. Implementation/Key Actions / *Feidhmiú/Príomhghníomhartha*

### Appendices/*Aguisíní:*

- Groups Consulted / *Grúpaí a ceadaíodh*
- Membership of Strategic Planning Committee / *Baill Choiste na Pleanála Straitéisí*

- Membership of Governing Body / *Baill an Choiste Riartha*

## **Executive Summary**

To mark the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Patrick's College in 2005 and to chart its future direction in the five year period ahead, a strategic planning process was initiated by Governing Body. Following an extensive process of internal and external consultation and discussion, a new strategic plan has been drafted. This seeks to build on the history and traditions of the College, to consolidate the progress made in the period of the previous strategic plan, *Beyond 2000: St Patrick's College 1999-2004*, and to ensure that the College is well prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

In recent years, St Patrick's College has grown and developed in response to the changing educational needs of Irish society. Student numbers and programmes have increased dramatically: the College currently has a cohort of more than 2300 students on eighteen different programmes.

The mission statement adopted in 1999 clarified the nature and role of the College as a Catholic College of Education and affirmed its commitment to enhance its role in teacher education both general and special, to provide degrees in the humanities and to promote postgraduate studies and research while fostering excellence.

The new strategic plan identifies a range of strategic priorities and related key actions through which they will be addressed. These are set in the context of two introductory sections: one on the recent development of the College, its values and educational philosophy and its relationship with and role within Dublin City University; and the other on the national and international context both in terms of third level generally and teacher education in particular.

The College aspires to create a learning community which has the student at its heart. The shared values of that community include a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, academic freedom within the confines of truth and the common good, a holistic philosophy of education and a concern for the poor and the voiceless. The College cherishes diversity and seeks to promote tolerance, understanding and mutual respect. The College values excellence, equity, community and innovation and seeks to produce graduates who are skilled, knowledgeable, flexible, reflective and creative.

The linkage with Dublin City University has been an important catalyst in the progress of the College over the past decade. The College is committed to developing the relationship with the University confident that it has much to give as well as to gain from the collaboration. The College supports the priority academic themes identified by the University in its own strategic plan and, in particular, Education and Learning and Internationalisation, Inter-culturalism and Social Development.

In developing this strategic plan the College has been cognizant of the wider context. Major developments and trends across the third level sector and in teacher education were considered to ensure that the plan was relevant and responsive. These developments and trends are discussed in section III.

In pursuit of its aim to be the foremost Irish educational institution in its field, the College has identified a series of strategic tracks and goals which it will pursue and which will guide its work during the period of this plan. These priorities are identified under the following headings: the role of the College in the University; Learning and Teaching; the Centrality of the Student; e-Learning; Programme/Curriculum Development; Research; International Affairs; Collaboration; Wider Community/Inclusion; Partnership and Strategic Links; Quality Improvement; Staff Development/ Performance Management; Organisation and Structure; Campus Development; and Finance. Particular priority is attached to career structure, campus development and funding.

Key actions are identified in relation to all these priorities and target dates for implementation are specified. It is also intended that named members of staff will assume responsibility for ensuring implementation. An annual report of progress will be made to Governing Body and a formal review will be conducted at the end of the third year.

A separate report will be prepared on the financial implications of this plan. It is also intended that each Department/Unit in the College will prepare their own plans arising from the institutional strategy outlined here.

## Achoimre Fheidhmiúcháin

Chun bunú Choláiste Phádraig, céad tríocha bliain ó shin, a cheiliúradh i 2005 agus chun an bealach ar aghaidh a dhearadh don Choláiste don chéad chúig bliana eile amach romhainn, chinn an Bord Rialaithe ar phróiseas straitéiseach pleanála a chur ar bun. I ndiaidh próisis leathain plé agus machnaimh sa Choláiste agus le páirtithe lasmuigh, dréachtaíodh plean úr straitéiseach. Tá tréaniarracht déanta sa phlean straitéiseach stair agus traidisiúin an Choláiste a shaibhriú, cur leis an dul chun cinn a rinneadh le linn aimsir an phlean straitéisigh: *'Ar aghaidh ó 2000: Coláiste Phádraig 1999 – 2004'* agus cinntiú go bhfuil an Coláiste breá ábalta tabhairt faoi na dúshlán éagsúla atá roimhe.

Le blianta beaga anuas, tá fás agus forbairt le brath ar Choláiste Phádraig agus é ag freastal ar riachtanais oideachasúla iomlaoideacha shocháí na hÉireann. Tá borradh suntasach tagtha faoi líon na mac léinn agus na gclár: faoi láthair, tá breis agus 2300 mac léinn ag freastal ar ocht gclár deag difriúil sa Choláiste.

Shoiléirigh an ráiteas misin, a glacadh i 1999, éirim agus ról an Choláiste mar Choláiste Oideachais Caitliceach agus neartaigh sé an dílseacht maidir lena ról in oideachas oidí bunscoileanna (oideachas ginearálta agus oideachas speisialta), le céimeanna a chur ar fáil sa léann daonna, chun staidéar iarchéime agus taighde a chur chun cinn agus bheith de shíor ar thóir na foirfeachta i ngach a ndéanann sé.

Aithnítear raon príóireachtaí straitéiseacha sa phlean straitéiseach úr agus na príomhbhealaí chun iad a chur i gcrích. Tá na príóireachtaí agus na príomhghníomhartha leagtha amach i gcomhthéacs dhá roinn tosaigh: roinn amháin ag plé le forbairt úrnua an Choláiste, a luachanna, a fhealsúnacht agus an caidreamh le hOllscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath agus a ról laistigh den Ollscoil; an roinn eile ag plé leis an gcomhthéacs náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta maidir le hoideachas tríú leibhéal i gcoitinne agus le hoideachas oidí bunscoileanna go háirithe.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag an gColáiste pobal foghlama a chruthú agus an mac léinn a bheith mar lárionad sa phobal sin. I measc luachanna an phobail sin tá dílseacht d'fhoirfeacht sa teagasc agus sa léann, saoirse acadúil ar mhaithe leis an maith choiteann agus tóraíocht na fírinne, fealsúnacht iomlán oideachais mar aon le cúram na mbocht agus iad siúd atá gan ghuth. Cothaíonn an Coláiste an t-iolrachas agus luachanna eile mar thuiscint, éisteacht agus meas ar a chéile. Tá ardmheas ag an gColáiste ar mhianach, ar chomhionannas, ar chomhpháirtíocht agus ar an rud úr agus déantar sár-iarracht go mbeidh na céimithe oilte, eolach, solúbtha, meabhrach agus cruthaitheach.

Chabhraigh an nasc le hOllscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath go mór le dul chun cinn an Choláiste le deich mbliana anuas. Tá an Coláiste tugtha d'fhorbairt an chaidrimh leis an Ollscoil agus muiníneach go bhfuil neart le hofráil ag an gColáiste sa chomhpháirtíocht

chomh maith le tairbhe a bhaint aisti. Tacaíonn an Coláiste leis na príomhthéamaí acadúla go háirithe iad siúd a bhaineann le hoideachas, an fhoghlaim agus an idirnáisiúntacht, an idirchultúrthacht agus an fhorbairt shóisialta.

Chuir an Coláiste an comhthéacs ginearálta san áireamh le linn dó tabhairt faoi fhorbairt an phlean straitéisigh. Cuireadh san áireamh go speisialta príomhthreonna agus forbairtí san oideachas tríú leibhéal agus san oideachas d'oidí bunscoileanna chun go mbeadh an phlean oiriúnach agus sofhreagrach. Tá cur síos ar na forbairtí agus na treonna sin i Roinn 3.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag an gColáiste bheith ina cheannródaí mar institiúid oideachasúil Éireannach sna gnéithe lena bpléann sé agus chuige sin, tá sraith bealaí agus spriocanna aimsithe chun a chuid oibre a stiúradh le linn saol an phlean straitéisigh. Is iad na príóireachtaí atá aimsithe ná: Ról an Choláiste san Ollscoil; Foghlaim agus Teagasc; Tábhacht an Mhic Léinn; r-Fhoghlaim; Forbairt Chláir/Churaclaim; Taighde; Gnóthaí Idirnáisiúnta; Comhoibriú; Pobal níos leithne san áireamh; Comhpháirtíocht agus Naisc Straitéiseacha; Cothú Feabhais; Forbairt Foirne/Bainistíocht Oibre; Eagrú agus Struchtúr, Forbairt an Champais agus Cursaí Airgeadais. Tá béim ar leith ar na príóireachtaí a bhaineann le struchtúr gairme, le forbairt an champais agus le hairgeadas.

Aimsíodh príomhghníomhartha maidir leis phríóireachtaí sin uile agus tá spriocdhátaí leagtha síos dá gcur i bhfeidhm. Tá sé i gceist freisin go mbeidh baill áirithe foirne ainmnithe chun an fhreagracht maidir leis an gcur i bhfeidhm a ghlacadh orthu féin. Cuirfear tuairisc bhliantúil faoin dul chun cinn ar fáil don Bord Rialaithe agus déanfar measúnú oifigiúil ag deireadh an tríú bliain. Ullmhófar tuairisc ar leith faoi impleachtaí airgeadais an phlean seo. Tá sé i gceist freisin go n-ullmhóidh gach Roinn/Aonad sa Choláiste a bpleananna féin ag eascairt as an straitéis institiúide atá leagtha amach anseo.

## I. MISSION STATEMENT (Adopted 1999)

St Patrick's College Drumcondra, a College of Dublin City University, is a Catholic College for the education of primary school teachers. The mission of the College is to enhance its role in teacher education both general and special, to provide degrees in the humanities, to promote academic research and further develop postgraduate studies, while fostering excellence in all its activities.

In pursuit of its mission the College is committed to creating a community of learning in which Catholic religious values and equity are promoted and the centrality of the student maintained. Through its activities the College Community shall view the education of children as paramount, foster the Irish language, cultivate local, national and international awareness and protect and enhance the physical and social environment for students and staff.

## I. AN RÁITEAS MISIN (GLACTHA I 1999)

Is Coláiste Caitliceach é Coláiste Phádraig, Droim Conrach (Coláiste de chuid Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath) le haghaidh oiliúint oidí bunscoile. Is é misean an Choláiste a ról in oiliúint bunmhúinteoirí (idir oiliúint ghinearálta agus shainoiliúint) a mhéadú; céimeanna sa léann daonna a thairiscint; an taighde acadúil agus an staidéar iarchéime a fhorbairt agus a chur chun cinn; agus an feabhas a chothú ina ghníomhaíochtaí uile.

Tá an Coláiste tiomanta d'fhorbairt phobail léinn ina gcuirfear luachanna creidimh Caitliceacha agus an comhionannas chun cinn, agus ina mbuanófar lárnacht na mac léinn. Le linn do Phobal an Choláiste tabhairt faoi na gníomhaíochtaí éagsúla seo samhlófar tábhacht ar leith le hoideachas páistí, cothófar an Ghaeilge, tabharfar aire don fheasacht áitiúil, náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta, agus déanfar an timpeallacht fhisiciúil agus shóisialta a chaomhnú agus a fheabhsú do na mic leinn agus don fhoireann araon.

## II. The College / *An Coláiste*

St Patrick's College was established in 1875 as a Catholic College for the education of teachers. Since then, our graduates have made a distinguished contribution to Irish schools and Irish children as well as to the wider educational, social and cultural life of the country. The College is the *alma mater* of a large proportion of Irish primary teachers.

In recent years, the College has grown and developed in response to the changing needs of Irish society. Today, it offers nineteen different programmes in education and humanities at undergraduate and postgraduate level, up to and including PhD. The largest of these programmes is the BEd degree which has a student enrolment of more than 1200.

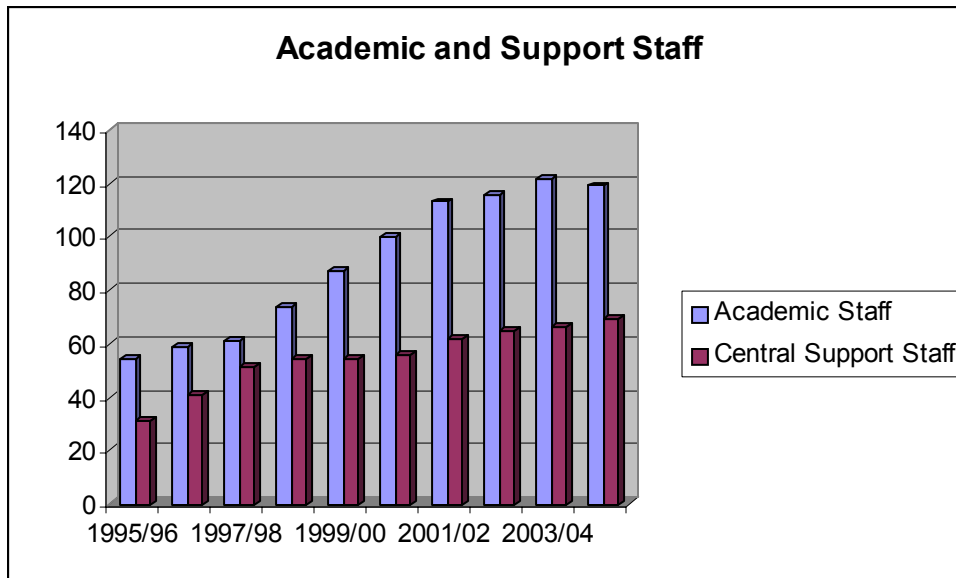
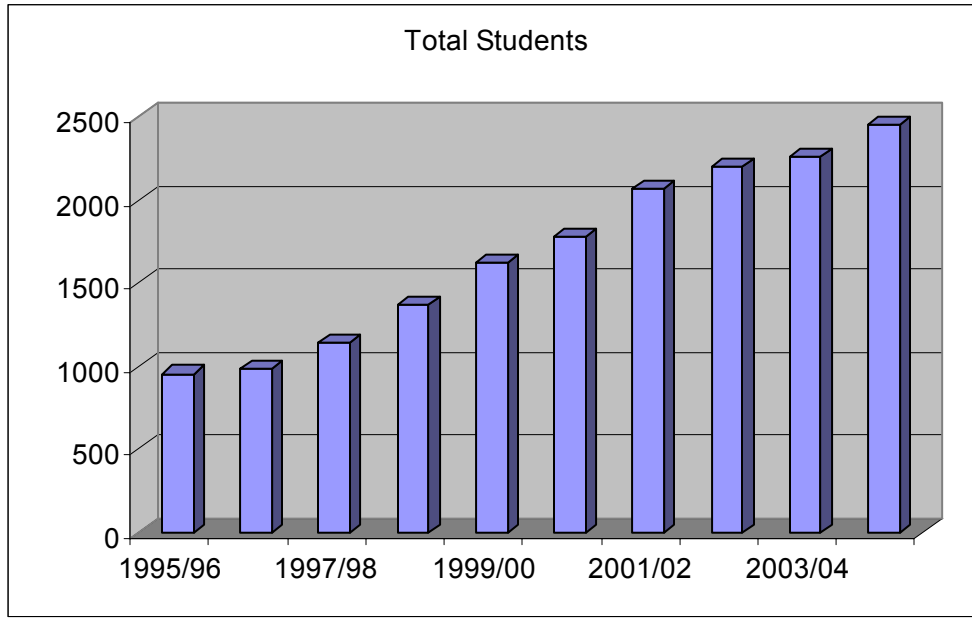
### COLLEGE PROGRAMMES

- Bachelor of Education
- Bachelor of Education (International)
- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Arts (International)
- Certificate in Religious Studies
- Certificate in Education (In Service)
- Graduate Certificate in Education of Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Graduate Diploma in Learning Support
- Graduate Diploma in Special Education
- Diploma in Education (In Service)
- Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary Teaching)
- Master of Education (Taught)
- Master of Arts in Education (Research)
- Masters in Religious Education (Primary) – with Mater Dei
- Masters in Special Educational Needs
- Master of Arts (Taught)
- Master of Arts (Research)
- Doctorate in Education (EdD)
- PhD

The student population is approximately 2300 and the full-time academic staff complement is currently 112. Arising *inter alia* from the College's commitment to encouraging mature and second chance learners, the composition of the student body is more diverse than ever before. Twenty five percent of places on the BA programme are reserved for mature and second-chance learners and access programmes have been put in place for both BA and BEd.

The growth of student and staff numbers in recent years is illustrated in the following

diagrams: Growth in Student and Staff Numbers



The College is a publicly funded institution under the aegis of the HEA. Its governance is entrusted to a governing body appointed by the Patron, the Archbishop of Dublin, and

representative of the main stakeholders, the education, arts and business community. The current chairperson is Dr Michael Herity. Other members are listed in Appendix 3. The administration of the College was placed in the care of the Vincentian fathers until 1999 when Dr Pauric Travers, the first lay President, was appointed.

In addition to the main teaching and administration buildings, the attractive urban campus of 11.1 hectares includes the historic Belvedere House, College chapel, College library, student union offices, an Educational Disadvantage Centre, an Education Centre for Teachers, a Junior and Senior School, the Educational Research Centre, the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education and a Crèche.

The provision of new teaching accommodation and refurbishment of existing buildings is the centre-piece of a campus development plan developed by the College in consultation with the HEA and DES. Approval for the first phases of this work has been received and detailed design work will commence shortly.

### **Educational Tradition and Values**

The primary ethos of the College is educational. The motto chosen by the founders of the College "*Intellectum da mihi Domine*" – (*O Lord, give me understanding*) has found new application with each successive generation.

A sense of community was and remains a distinguishing feature of the College. The shared values of that community include a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning; academic freedom within the confines of truth and the common good; a belief in the dignity and importance of the child and the teacher in society; an espousal of an holistic tradition of education and the need not simply to train but to educate the teacher; a commitment to the humanities; and a concern for the poor, the disadvantaged and the voiceless, as befits a College in the tradition of St Vincent de Paul.

The College cherishes diversity and seeks to promote tolerance, understanding and mutual respect. In pursuing our mission and serving the needs of Irish society, we value excellence, equity, community and innovation.

The College believes that those principles which have served it well in the past will provide continuity and stability in responding in a flexible and timely way to the changing educational needs of Irish society and current and future demands in the area of initial teacher education, teacher professional development and the humanities.

Arising from its history and traditions, the College has developed a philosophy of education which is embodied in its programmes in education and humanities at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. We are committed to a broad intellectual culture as a requirement for all of our students. Our educational vision combines a belief in both the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and for practical, professional purposes.

The College aims to produce graduates who are skilled and knowledgeable, intellectually rigorous, well equipped and flexible, resourceful, reflective and creative. Our graduates should be recognised for their love of ideas and their sense of responsiveness to the needs of society.

The cultivation of critical educative judgement is the central aim of the College's education programmes. In line with the conviction that this can only prosper within a wider formation of the person, we promote a broad holistic education and seek to afford students the opportunity to develop understanding, discrimination and empathy in and across a range of intellectual disciplines.

### **The University**

In 1993, St Patrick's became a College of Dublin City University. All College programmes are accredited by, and all students of the College are students of, the University. This linkage has been an important catalyst in the rapid development in College programmes in the last decade.

Both the College and the University are committed to building on the existing partnership in the period ahead. Discussions on a revised linkage agreement which will facilitate increased collaboration within the context of the institutional autonomy of the College are at an advanced stage.

The University has contributed to the shaping of this strategic plan; the College, in turn, has contributed to the drafting of *Leadership through Foresight*, the Strategic Plan of the University, and subscribes to the aims and priorities outlined. The College embraces the priority academic themes identified by the University and, in particular, Education and Learning and Internationalisation, Inter-culturalism and Social Development and will collaborate with colleagues across the University including the other linked Colleges in advancing them.

### III. Context for Planning 2006-2010

#### Comhthéasc Pleanála 2006-2010

The environment in which the College operates is dynamic and changing. The third level sector in general and teacher education in particular have been subject to considerable change in recent years: the pace of such change is likely to increase in the period ahead. In responding to such changes, we recognise the need to be more flexible, strategic and proactive.

This section will identify the main features in the external environment which are likely to impact on the operation and development of the College in the period ahead and which have to be taken into account in the development of this strategic plan. Some of these features are common to the third level sector as a whole; others are specific to the College and the area of teacher education.

#### **Developments/Trends Across the Third Level Sector**

The policy context in which Irish third level institutions operate and to which they must respond is both national and international. A number of converging and complementary trends and developments can be identified which shape the operational environment.

Higher education is increasingly global and competitive. The overall policy objective which all institutions must advance has been set by the Lisbon Declaration (2000) which aims to make Europe 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy' by 2010. Progress towards achieving this goal demands systematic response from all levels of the education system.

The trend towards internationalisation, globalisation and greater mobility has been reflected in the Bologna Declaration (1999) which aims at the creation of a European Higher Education Area by 2010. Globally, it is estimated that there are approximately 1.6 million overseas students in tertiary education and this is expected to accelerate. Measures currently being taken to bring a new vision and framework to the internationalisation of Irish education will make a significant impact on Universities and Colleges in the period of this strategic plan.

A related trend nationally and internationally which St Patrick's College welcomes and embraces is the growing emphasis on the need for transparency, accountability value for money and responsiveness to national needs. A Quality Assurance culture is now firmly embedded across the third level sector, including the College. More recently, new performance management systems are being introduced alongside the agreed Quality Assurance framework; both will expand and develop in the period ahead.

The emphasis on accountability has been accompanied by a decreasing State investment in real terms. This highlights the necessity to develop alternative sources of funding and commercialisation strategies while at the same time asserting the distinctive responsibilities of the State in relation to funding of teacher education.

Limited resources, increased competition and the demand for improved performance have contributed to a widespread recognition of the value of partnerships, collaborations and strategic alliances at local, national and international levels. We are committed to pursuing such partnerships.

The opening up of access to tertiary education to all sections of society is a well-established national priority. There is a widespread recognition that progress in this regard has been disappointing and that a systematic national approach which mobilises all institutions is required. Because of the importance of schools and teachers in this enterprise, the Colleges of Education have a significant role to play and we will do so energetically.

The concept of life-long-learning has been widely accepted; there has been less serious attention given to its implications in terms of how Colleges function and how learners engage with their learning. It seems certain that an increasing proportion of student populations will be mature and second chance learners who demand more flexible forms of engagement, course organisation and delivery. The College is already engaged in significant initiatives in this area which it will expand. Modularisation and e-learning will assume even greater importance in this regard. There will be a related growth of student numbers at postgraduate level, in response to a national need for increased numbers of research students up to doctoral and post-doctoral levels identified *inter alia* in the **OECD Review of Higher Education in Ireland** (2004).

#### **Developments/Trends in Teacher Education**

All of the above trends impact directly or indirectly on teacher education. In addition, there are related and distinct trends which are more specific in shaping the environment in which the College operates. Some of these are outlined below.

The adoption of a new strategic plan for the College is timely. Nationally and internationally, the environment is propitious with the coincidence of a number of major reports, initiatives and trends. The OECD report on **Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers** (2005) and the ongoing EU initiative on **Improving Education of Teachers and Trainers** provide a context which is supportive. In Ireland, a decade of unprecedented modernisation and reform of curriculum and of the legislative framework has culminated in the significant reviews of teacher education at first and second level and the establishment of a Teaching Council. The reviews of teacher education, in particular, pose significant challenges which we are well placed to meet.

In Ireland and abroad, there is growing evidence of teacher education once more becoming a significant agenda item. The College will advance that debate and contribute to the development of policy and practice in a proactive manner. Too often, the voice of teacher education as a sector within third level and within the education system as a whole has been muted. St Patrick's College is committed to working together constructively with policy makers, other teacher educators, management bodies, principals, teachers and schools, for the benefit of all children.

It is clear from that there is a significant international emphasis on the importance of teachers and teaching. There is a related impetus to protect and promote quality which has been given

focus *inter alia* by international comparative studies including the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

Nationally, the brief of the newly established Teaching Council includes accreditation of teacher education programmes which have been constantly evolving in response to identified needs. Ongoing curriculum reform under the auspices of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) continues to impact on the nature and content of teacher education programmes. The report of the Expert Review Group on Teacher Education has already had an impact and is likely to continue to do so as Colleges respond to its recommendations. St Patrick's College will continue to address issues of focus, content and overload on the BEd. Full resolution of problems of curriculum overload requires implementation of the recommended additional year devoted to education and school-related experience.

Since the publication of the Review of Teacher Education, new issues have arisen or been presented in sharper focus which need to be addressed in College programmes. These include:

- School leadership and ethos
- Recognition of importance of addressing issues of educational disadvantage at school level
- Increased emphasis on assessment and outcomes in literacy and numeracy
- Significant developments in the area of special education needs and early childhood education (CECDE/OECD report 2004).
- Digital technologies
- e-Learning: specific challenges for teacher education
- Values, citizenship and human rights education
- Greater recognition of rights of children and parents
- Inter-cultural, multi-cultural and development education
- Language learning and national policy on language
- The possibility of specialisation in the Primary Sector
- Trend towards internationalisation
- Growing emphasis on life-long learning.

Our involvement in teacher education extends across the continuum of teacher education including initial, induction, early and continuing professional development. The need for a coherent framework which spans this spectrum and provides clarity in relation to the role of different partners and providers has long been identified. Such a framework would ensure the most effective use of resources and facilitate meeting the growing demand particularly for accredited professional development.

The success of the National Pilot Project on Induction of Newly Qualified Teachers has once again emphasised the need for a formal system of induction. We are committed to contributing to any such system on a partnership basis.

The project has also emphasised the need for partnerships between Colleges and schools and demonstrated the enormous potential of mentoring in initial teacher education and early professional development. We will continue to take a lead role in the area of mentoring.

Responses to such issues as are identified above should be informed by the evidence of educational research. The past decade has seen an unprecedented growth in investment in research at third level. However, investment in educational research has fallen behind. The Colleges of Education have a role in promoting and undertaking such research. St Patrick's College has an established track record in this area through the work of the Educational Research Centre and College staff generally; we are committed to expanding significantly our involvement in this field.

The needs of Irish schools have changed in nature and magnitude in recent years. Societal change, immigration and multi-culturalism, curriculum reform, advent of information technology and digital media, increased awareness of special needs have all increased the demands on schools and teachers and, in turn, teacher education.

To ensure that it responds effectively to this changing national and international environment, the College has agreed a number of strategic priorities and related actions. These are outlined in the chapters which follow.

#### **IV. Strategic Priorities / *Príoireachtaí Straitéiseacha***

St Patrick's College aims to remain the foremost Irish educational institution in the area of teacher education and the humanities. We have identified a series of strategic tracks and goals which we will pursue vigorously and which will guide our work during the period of this plan. These derive directly from our mission and value statement and are informed by the context in which we operate. They seek to ensure the enhancement of the College's reputation internationally as a centre of excellence in education and to facilitate the creation of a learning community which is pro-active, dynamic, accessible, supportive and responsive to national needs.

##### **The University**

As a College of Dublin City University, St Patrick's supports the wider mission of the University and embraces the broad goals and priorities incorporated in its strategic plan. The strategic tracks and goals outlined here seek to complement and advance that plan.

Within the context of our institutional autonomy, the College is committed to playing an active role within the University. In particular, we will seek to advance the strategic goals of both the College and the University through active collaboration and through the sharing of resources as appropriate. Achievement of the same career structure and promotional opportunities for staff enjoyed by our University colleagues will greatly facilitate the efforts of the College in this regard.

##### **Learning and Teaching**

Our understanding of how learners – be they infants, pupils, students or adults – learn has been significantly enhanced in recent years. At the same time, there has been a renewed acknowledgement - evidenced by the recent OECD report on *Attracting, Retaining and Developing Effective Teachers* - that teachers and teaching matter.

St Patrick's College has built a well-deserved reputation over many years for its expertise in all aspects of teaching and learning. We will now build on that reputation by creating and sustaining a learning community characterised by its espousal of best practice and recognised as a centre of innovation and excellence in this area. In particular, we will take a more active public role in the generation and dissemination of knowledge and understanding in relation to curriculum development and learning and teaching at all levels of the education system.

##### **Centrality of Student**

The College affirms the centrality of the student as a core value of the institution. We value the dignity of each student in a context that seeks to uphold their rights and respects their integrity as persons. We will identify measures which will promote this tradition and foster a sense of belonging to the College community.

In partnership with students and staff, the College will strive to create the best possible environment so that students will grow intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and culturally. We will seek to maintain the highest standards in learning and teaching, physical infrastructure, pastoral support, student services and social, recreational and cultural activities.

The College welcomes the growing diversity of the student population and is proud of the quality of pastoral care provided to all students. An active policy of promoting and supporting participation by mature and second chance learners has been pursued. We are firmly committed to widening access to the institution and supporting and extending initiatives to this end. This will create challenges to the culture of the institution and the organisation of learning which we are committed to addressing by ensuring that the necessary supports are in place to support an increasingly diverse student cohort.

### **e-Learning**

The College is and will continue to be actively engaged in the promotion of innovative use of digital technologies in Education. The College also embarked on the integration of digital pedagogies into selected programmes, particularly in the area of continuing professional development and post-graduate programmes. We favour a blended approach to digital learning. It is our intention that technological innovation will be an integral part of the student experience in St Patrick's College. A project team charged with facilitating digital teaching and learning through a combination of infra-structural and pedagogical supports will move this area from its current project base to a closely integrated function of the College.

### **Programme/Curriculum Development**

Over the past decade the number of programmes offered by the College has grown dramatically at undergraduate and postgraduate level, up to and including EdD and PhD. We will review and revise these programmes and develop new ones, promote curriculum development in relevant areas and ensure that first class library and other facilities are in place to support these activities.

In doing so, we will bear in mind a range of overlapping and complementary considerations - notably our mission in the area of teacher education and humanities including Irish language and culture; the central importance of initial teacher education programmes; the commitment to being involved across the teacher education continuum including induction, early and continuing professional development; the desirability of developing postgraduate research programmes and the need to respond flexibly to national needs in areas including religious education and ethos, early childhood education, special education, educational disadvantage, inter-cultural and development education and educational leadership and management.

### **Research**

Research is an essential part of the work of the College as a knowledge generating institution. We are committed to promoting high quality disciplinary, inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional research in line with the mission of the College, and to ensuring that educational practice is shaped by high quality research. This research will

demonstrate that the human element and the intellectual and cultural capital that reside in education and humanities are key elements in a technology-driven information society. A key priority is to increase the visibility of the College as a leading institution in relevant areas of research. We will offer leadership in setting the research agenda in teacher education, primary education and other relevant areas of education and the humanities.

We will enhance our research capability through continued development of the Educational Research Centre; research infrastructure elsewhere in the College; staff development; research funding; strategic partnerships and other initiatives.

The research focus of the College will be sharpened and channelled along specific lines in accordance with the mission of the College and national needs. While support will be available to all staff, the support system will be graduated to reward and encourage outstanding researchers. Both an individual and collaborative research culture will be promoted and supported.

The College will refine and extend its areas of particular research expertise and exploit the commercial potential of these as appropriate.

We will aim to consolidate our status as a centre of excellence for post-graduate research in education and humanities and will continually update our research programmes and seek to attract significant numbers of research students from Ireland and abroad.

### **International**

The College values the international dimension in its work and the benefits to be derived from sharing experiences and wisdom with colleagues and students from other countries. We will energetically promote international awareness and develop the international dimension in all our activities, confident that we have much to contribute as well as to gain in this arena.

In a global age and an increasingly multi-cultural Ireland, the College sees international cooperation as a key factor in its future development. Through judicious partnerships with

appropriate institutions abroad and the development of an international dimension in our programmes, the College aims to foster international understanding and increase opportunities for students and staff.

The College is committed to promoting development education. We have traditionally worked closely with similar organisations and institutions in developing countries. We will increase the range of activities in this area and foster institutional links and capacity building in teacher education.

### **The Wider Community/Inclusion**

The College is committed to forging links with the wider community and to responding to the needs of an increasingly diverse society. In keeping with our values and traditions, we will seek to create an inclusive College which fairly reflects Irish society and to maximise participation by all groups. We are committed to diversification in entry to all College programmes; to enhancing our contribution in the area of inter-cultural, development and citizenship education; to the development of existing access and other initiatives and the launch of new ones in areas including special needs, disability, disadvantage, mature and second chance learners.

### **Collaboration, Partnership and Strategic Links**

Collaboration and partnership within and between educational agencies are both mutually beneficial and necessary. Internally, the College is committed to a partnership approach between all categories of staff and students. Externally, we are committed to developing partnerships actively at local, national and international level. In doing so, we will take a focussed approach, concentrating on strategic linkages central to our mission.

### **Quality Improvement**

The College is committed to maintaining and enhancing quality in all its activities including teaching, research and administration. To this end, we have embraced the University Quality Assurance framework. During the lifetime of this plan, all Departments and units will have completed at least one cycle of quality review and an overall institutional review will be undertaken.

We will continue to support this process and the quality improvement plans which derive from it. A key priority will be to mainstream this process to make it an integral and ongoing part of the culture of all College units and activities.

The College accepts the importance of external collaboration in this area and of being informed by best practice elsewhere. We will seek to benchmark our activities against similar institutions in Ireland and internationally.

### **Staff Development/Performance Management**

The College has actively pursued an improved career structure for all staff which would acknowledge merit and achievement and reflect best practice in the University sector. The achievement of a University career structure including professorships is an urgent priority.

To ensure that it can respond quickly and flexibly to an ever-changing environment, we are committed to supporting and promoting an active staff development policy for all grades of College staff. This will respond to individual and institutional needs and range across the spectrum from short courses to diploma and degree level programmes. Particular care will be taken to ensure most effective use of resources by linking a range of existing initiatives under the headings of Strategic Planning, Quality Assurance, Support for Teaching, Performance Management, Promotion of Research, Training of Trainers and Fee Remission.

Having devised and piloted an appropriate system of performance management, the College will now roll out the agreed model and on-going training will be provided for all staff. Important elements of the system will be the identification of individual and departmental needs in the area of staff development and the promotion of equity and transparency in workloads.

### **Organisation and Structure**

The College has undergone considerable reorganisation and restructuring in recent years. We are committed to ensuring that the structure and organisation are and continue to be such as to facilitate most effectively the work of the College. With this in mind, it is proposed to group existing Departments in two Faculties: Education and Humanities, each headed by a Dean. The College will also review and improve structures in the administrative and support areas to maximise effective engagement of all staff.

### **Campus Development**

The provision of appropriate physical infra-structure on campus is a *sine qua non* of this plan. The current campus facilities were imaginatively modernised in the 1960s and 1970s for a student population of approximately 800. They now serve a population of almost three times that number. In the meantime, there has been little or no meaningful capital investment. In many areas, campus facilities fall short of what is required for the delivery of quality programmes. The lack of progress in this area was the most significant failure in the implementation of the previous College Strategic Plan. The success of the current plan is dependant on a significant initiative in this area. Implementation of the campus development plan agreed by the College in consultation with the Department of Education and Science and the Higher Education Authority is an urgent priority.

**Finance**

The financial climate in which third level institutions operate is precarious and changing. It is widely recognised, most recently by the OECD report on Higher Education, that increased funding is essential for future development and improved quality. At the same time, the prospects for significantly increased funding from the State are uncertain. However the position of the Colleges of Education is distinctive: while part of third level, they impact on first and second level and serve the needs of schools and teachers in a direct manner. Their activities impact directly in areas of national priority including early childhood, disadvantage and special needs.

The strategic tracks and goals identified here assume the achievement of increased funding. To achieve this the College will pursue a strategy of actively seeking to diversify its income streams while arguing vigorously for enhanced funding from the State particularly in relation to activities and initiatives central to government policy.

## **V. Implementation/Key Actions** ***Feidhmiú/Príomhghníomhartha***

In this section, key actions are identified in relation to each of the College strategic priorities outlined above. These actions provide a template for implementation of the College strategic plan and the realisation of its goals. It is intended that the list should be indicative rather than exhaustive. Within the broad framework provided by the plan, some actions may be amended or adapted while additional new actions will be agreed during the course of implementation. Individual faculties, departments and units will adopt action plans which embrace and advance the institutional priorities stated.

In the case of each key action identified, a target date for completion is indicated. In cases where multiple actions are involved, more than one completion date is indicated. While the plan covers the period 2006-2010, most actions are expected to be completed by the end of year 3. It is proposed that there should be a full review at the end of that year, with revised actions and priorities being identified where necessary. The fifth year of the cycle will be devoted to the preparation of a new plan.

When the Plan has been formally adopted, individual members of staff will be designated with responsibility for the implementation of each action. A report on progress will be presented annually to Governing Body.

<b>Action</b>	<b>By end year</b>	<b>Person/ area with responsibility for implementation</b>
<b>THE UNIVERSITY</b>		
Review existing and agree revised linkage with the University	1	
Designate staff member to promote and co-ordinate College collaboration across the University	1	
Actively manage linkage to maximise potential for collaboration	1,2,3	
Develop collaborative projects in e.Learning, Learning and Teaching, Access and Disadvantage, Research, Marketing and other relevant areas	1,2,3	
Provide funding and associated budget line to support collaborative projects	2,3	
<b>LEARNING AND TEACHING</b>		
Adopt new College strategy on Learning and Teaching	1	
Establish Centre for Study of Learning and Teaching	2	
Instigate and support systematic research on all aspects of Learning and Teaching.	2,3	
Advance and actively participate in national and international networks on Learning and Teaching.	1,2	

Promote initiatives to disseminate best practice in the area of Learning and Teaching	1, 2	
Undertake a lecture and publication series in this area	2	
Continue and develop mechanisms for acknowledging excellence and innovation in Learning and Teaching	1,2	
Develop structures to facilitate and support collaborative and interdisciplinary initiatives in this area	2	
Enhance and develop the library's role in the learning and teaching environment	1,2,3	
Provide and adequately resource infrastructure necessary for supporting these activities	1,2	
<b>CENTRALITY OF THE STUDENT</b>		
Adopt a student charter	1	
Integrate all student services through the establishment of a Student Services Committee and appointment of a Student Services Officer	2,3	
Review College structures to maximise student involvement in all aspects of College life	2	
Improve student medical services	1,2	
Review and improve student induction	2,3	
Develop mechanisms to acknowledge outstanding contributions by students in students clubs, societies, the Student Union and community work	2	
Encourage and support production of student publications	2	
Develop an integrated procedure for addressing students problems and complaints	2	
Systematically improve facilities and support services for students including postgraduate students	1,2,3	
<b>e-LEARNING</b>		
Establish EOLAS project on a permanent basis and provide resources necessary	1,2	
Develop College infrastructure to support innovation in this area	1,2,3	
All programmes to incorporate active use of IT	2	
Incorporate a blended approach into all in-service programmes	2	
Offer a number of new continuing professional development courses using on-line learning as predominant mode	2,3	
Develop innovative use of Moodle, smartMeeting and other appropriate software to facilitate e-Learning activities	2	
Extend the use of on-line technologies in induction programme, continuing professional development programmes, masters degrees, and EdD	2	
Respond to needs of targeted groups and organisations in the education field by development of a number of bespoke courses	2,3	
Exploit commercial potential of on-line learning through marketing of appropriate courses	2,3	

<b>PROGRAMME/CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Continue review of BEd degree to ensure greater focus and coherence and to expand range of subjects available	1,2	
Promote case for a four year BEd	1,2	
Develop role of mentoring in teaching practice at initial teacher education level and enhance role of schools and teachers in the work of the College	1,2	
Review and develop Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary) to maximise flexibility and focus	2	
Complete audit of existing initial teacher education courses to ensure students are well prepared for all teaching settings and challenges including Gaelscoileanna, denominational and multi-denominational schools and special needs.	2	
Review and revise as necessary structure and content of BA to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of students	2	
Expand induction project and contribute actively to national system of induction for newly qualified teachers	1	
Expand range and reach of early and continuing professional development courses	2,3	
Review MEd with a view to ensuring that it continues to respond to the professional development needs of teachers	3	
Expand significantly the number of research students in Education and Humanities	1,2,3	
Develop commercial potential of academic and professional courses and increase annually the income from such courses	1,2,3	
Develop existing and introduce new courses in areas of national need including early childhood education, special education, educational disadvantage and inter-cultural education	2,3	
Launch new cross curricular initiative in Human Rights Education	2	
Establish new curriculum development unit within Education department to work closely with Learning and Teaching initiative	2	
Encourage, and contribute to, development of national language policy	1,2,3	
Develop integration of library-based information and skills training as part of College curriculum	1,2,3	
<b>RESEARCH</b>		
Adopt updated institutional strategy for research identifying key priorities	1	
Initiate and complete a number of large scale projects in areas relevant to College mission	1,2,3	
Enhance mechanisms for acknowledging and rewarding outstanding achievement in research and scholarship	1	
Continue to promote and develop support for individual collaborative and inter-institutional research	1,2	
Enhance support for outstanding researchers in priority areas	2,3	
Improve infrastructure and resources to support research activity including proposal writing and to sustain research community	1,2,3	

Develop ancillary support services for research students		
Advance developments in status and governance of Educational Research Centre to ensure its continued role as a centre of excellence in the area of educational research, particularly assessment and testing	1,2,3	
Maximise revenue generated from research and consultancy	1,2,3	
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>		
Adopt development plan for international affairs	1	
Review existing links with a view to developing closer relationships at all levels with appropriate institutions abroad	1	
Enhance support for incoming and outgoing international students	1,2,3,	
Double number of College students participating in international programmes	3	
Identify and address significant obstacles to participation of College students on international programmes	1,2	
Promote and expand International BA and BEd	1,2,3	
Significantly increase the number of fee-paying international students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels	2,3	
Develop Summer courses for visiting international students	2	
Identify specific College courses in high demand internationally and promote and market them effectively	2,3	
Develop and adequately resource international office	1,2	
Designate a Director of International Affairs as a senior post of responsibility	1	
Expand contribution of College in relation to teacher education in developing countries with particular focus on capacity building in a number of Colleges of Education	1,2,3	
<b>The Wider Community/Inclusion</b>		
Continue to develop the Access programmes to increase the number of participating students	1,2,3	
Extend outreach programmes and continue to develop ongoing work with primary and post- primary schools and other groups	1,2,3	
Launch Human Rights/Citizenship Education Initiative	2	
Review Learning and Teaching, including learning support, to ensure they continue to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body	2	
Continue to promote and support high quality staff and student research in areas such as special needs, educational disadvantage and intercultural issues	1,2,3	
Complete audit of existing BEd and Graduate Diploma to ensure students are well prepared to teach in a multi- cultural setting	2	
<b>COLLABORATION, PARTNERSHIP AND STRATEGIC LINKS</b>		
Embed and enhance role of Partnership within the institution at all levels	1	
Develop specific collaborations with the University	1,2,3	
Expand existing national and international collaborations including joint programmes and promote new ones	1,2,3	

Promote closer relationship with schools, education centres and other relevant educational organisations	1,2,3	
<b>QUALITY IMPROVEMENT</b>		
Continue rolling programme of Quality Review and Improvement	1,2,3	
Organise institutional review	3	
Develop mechanisms to mainstream the work of quality assurance	2	
Actively participate in national and international networks to ensure best practice in relation to quality assurance	2,3	
Develop mechanisms for benchmarking activities against similar institutions in Ireland and internationally	3	
<b>STAFF DEVELOPMENT/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT</b>		
Pursue all avenues available to enhance career structure and opportunities for all staff	1,2,3	
Produce a consolidated manual of staff development policies and procedures	1	
Enhance the staff development function of HR Office	2	
Simplify procedures for identification of staff needs and responding to them	1,2	
Extend range of staff development courses available internally and externally	2,3	
Provide ongoing training for and embed new performance management system at all levels in the College	1,2,3	
Co-ordinate performance management and staff development processes	2,3	
<b>ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE</b>		
Reorganise joint faculties into new faculties of Education and Humanities each headed by a Dean	1	
Adequately resource faculties and devolve budgets as appropriate	1,2,3	
Establish programme board structure for BA and BEd	1	
Review and improve structures in administration and support areas to ensure optimum engagement and representation of all staff	1	
Adopt policy and procedure in relation to communications at all levels, internally and externally	2	
<b>CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT</b>		
Adopt rolling programme for refurbishment and upgrading of College buildings and Belvedere House	1	
Enhance campus facilities for students and staff	1,2,3	
Develop Library and IT facilities	2,3	
Develop facilities for postgraduate students	2	
Enhance gymnasium facilities and take steps to facilitate their more effective management	1,2	
Enhance teaching and laboratory facilities	1,2,3	

<b>FINANCE</b>		
Adopt strategy for diversification of College funding	2	
Establish a College Foundation	2	
Develop commercial activities in professional services and related areas	2,3	
Significantly expand numbers of international students	2,3	
Promote awareness among policy makers of distinctive role and needs of Colleges of Education	1,2,3	

## Appendix 1

### Membership of Strategic Planning Committee

Dr Pauric Travers

Dr Liam MacMathúna/Olivia Bree

Martin Ward

Roddy Day

Marian Hackett

Dr Mark Morgan

Dr Raymond Topley

Gay Barry

Dr Alan Titley

Dr Daire Keogh

Dr Sean Carey

Bernie Donnelly

John Hammond

Ciaran Cunniffe (2004-05) and Shane Davis (2005-06)

Dr Eithne Guilfoyle

Dr Mary Shine Thompson

## Appendix 2

### Groups/individuals that were consulted as part of the Strategic Planning process:

#### Internal

- College Academic, Administrative and Support Staff
- Governing Body
- Representative samples of students from all College programmes

#### External

- Recent College Graduates
- Department of Education and Science Inspectorate
- Department of Education and Science, Teacher Education Section
- CPSMA (Catholic Primary Schools Management Association)
- INTO (Irish National Teachers Organisation)
- IPPN (Irish Primary Principals' Network)
- Representatives of University Education Departments
- Education Centre - St Patrick's College and Blackrock
- National Parents Council (Primary)
- National Centre for Guidance in Education
- IATSE (Irish Association for Teachers in Special Education)
- ILSA (Irish Learning Support Association)
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
- Teaching Council
- PCSP (full version of name)
- Educate Together
- Gael Scoileanna
- Arts Council
- Representative Group of Primary Teachers and Principals from small, medium and large schools in urban and rural settings

## Appendix 3

### Membership of Governing Body

Mr Michael Herity (Chairperson)  
Rev Desmond Beirne  
Ms Olivia Bree (In attendance – 2005-06)  
Dr Patrick Burke  
Mr Séan Cromien  
Mr Shane Davis (2005-06)  
Mr Roddy Day  
Dr Therese Day  
Dr Joseph Dunne  
Ms Sarah Farrell (2005-06)  
Ms Helen Fleming  
Ms Marian Hackett  
Dr Thomas Kellaghan  
Dr James Kelly  
Dr Liam Mac Mathúna  
Dr Mark Morgan (in attendance)  
Professor Máire P Ní Chatháin  
Rev. Seamus O'Brien  
Mr Patrick O'Keefe  
Rev Kevin O'Shea  
Dr Margaret Reynolds  
Ms Ben Staunton-Collins (in attendance)  
Dr Pauric Travers  
Prof Ferdinand Von Prondzynski  
Mr Martin Ward  
Ms Brigid Weir.

The SPCD Strategic Plan 2006-2010 is at  
<http://www.spd.dcu.ie/main/administration/president/planning.shtml>