University of Medicine and Health Sciences

RCSI

Peer Review Group Report

Graduate School of Healthcare Management (GSM)

June 2022

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

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1   CONTEXT FOR THE REVIEW

1.1   Introduction

This report presents the findings of a quality review of the Graduate School of Healthcare Management (GSM), at the RCSI University of Medicine and Health Sciences, which was undertaken in June 2022.

The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) was established by Royal Charter in 1784 to set and support professional standards for surgical training and practice in Ireland. RCSI has evolved considerably in the intervening years and is now both a university and a postgraduate training body in surgery and related specialties. This dual role brings many advantages to the institution, not least of which is the ability to offer education and training at all career levels (i.e., undergraduate, postgraduate & professional) in medicine, surgery and related disciplines. In fact, it is the only surgical or medical Royal College in these islands to have university status. RCSI is the largest medical school in Ireland and awards medical degrees in Ireland, Bahrain and Malaysia. RCSI also provides undergraduate degree programmes in Pharmacy and Physiotherapy in Ireland, undergraduate Nursing degree programmes in Bahrain and masters (taught and by research) and doctoral programmes variously in Ireland, Bahrain, China, Dubai and Malaysia. RCSI became a Recognised College of the National University of Ireland (NUI) in 1978. Following an institutional review commissioned jointly by the Higher Education Authority and the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland, RCSI independent degree awarding powers were activated by ministerial order in 2010 pursuant to the terms of The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (Charters Amendment) Act 2003. The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 established RCSI as a Designated Awarding Body. In 2019 RCSI received authorization to use the description 'University' and to style itself accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Amendment Act 2019.

RCSI is an independent, not-for-profit health sciences institution with charitable status in the Republic of Ireland. The institution operates a primarily self-funding model, with State funding accounting for less than 20% of total income. The model is based on the education of a substantial cohort of international students alongside Irish/EU students.

1.2   Methodology for Review

1.2.1   Purpose of the Review

The self- assessment exercise is a process by which a Unit reflects on its mission and objectives, and analyses critically the activities it engages in to achieve these objectives. It provides for an evaluation of the Unit's performance of its functions, its services and its administration. In line with the RCSI strategic plan 'Growth and Excellence' it provides assurance to the University of the quality of the units' operations and facilitates a developmental process to effect improvement.   The fundamental objectives of the review process are to:

- Review the quality of the student experience, and of teaching and learning opportunities.
- Review research activity, including management of research activity, assessing the research performance with regard to research productivity, research income, and recruiting and supporting doctoral students.
- Identify, encourage and disseminate good practice and to identify challenges and how to address these.
- Provide an opportunity for the Units to test the effectiveness of their systems and procedures for monitoring and enhancing quality and standards.
- Inform RCSI's strategic planning process.
- Provide robust evidence for external accreditation bodies.
- Provide an external benchmark on practice and curriculum.
- Provide public information on the RCSI's capacity to assure the quality and standards of its awards. RCSI's implementation of its quality procedures enables it to demonstrate how it discharges it responsibilities for assuring the quality and standards of its awards, as required by the Universities Act 1997 and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

1.2.2   The Review Process

The key stages in the internal review process are:

1. Establishment of a Self-assessment Committee.
2. Preparation of a Self-assessment Report (SAR) and supporting documentation.
3. Site visit by a peer review group that includes external experts both national and international.
4. Preparation of a peer review group report that is made public.
5. Development of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for implementation of the review report's recommendations (that is made public).
6. Follow-up to appraise progress against the QIP.

1.2.3   Membership of the Peer Review Group

- Ms Karen Jones (Chair). Registrar, National College of Ireland
- Professor Lorna McKee (External Content Expert). Emeritus Professor of Management and Health Services Research, University of Aberdeen
- Dr Joseph Collins (External Content Expert). Head of Faculty, Lifelong Learning, South East Technological University
- Dr Ghada Abaido (External Content Expert). Assistant Professor, Canadian University Dubai
- Ms Jennifer Smyth (Learner/Health Professional Representative Expert). Pharmacist
- Ms Alma Brennan (RCSI Internal Representative). Head of Organisation Change, HR Department, RCSI

1.2.4   Terms of Reference for the Peer Review Group

The terms of reference of the PRG are to:

- Evaluate critically the SAR and the supporting documentation
- Verify how well the aims and objectives of the Unit are being fulfilled, having regard to the available resources, and comment on the appropriateness of the Unit's mission, objectives and strategic plan
- Comment on how well the Unit fits with the strategic plans for the University as a whole
- Evaluate the Unit's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges as outlined in the SAR
- Discuss any perceived strengths and weaknesses not identified in the SAR
- Assess the suitability of the working environment(s)
- Comment on any recommendations proposed by the Unit in its SAR
- Make appropriate recommendations for improvement, with due consideration of resource implications

The Peer Review Group completed an online site-visit between 31st May and 2nd June 2022 and held meetings with:

- RCSI Senior Management Team
- GSM Executive Management Team
- Programme Directors
- Faculty
- Operations Team Members
- Heads/Managers of Professional Service Units
- Student Support Team Members
- Student Class Representatives
- External Relations Managers
- External Partners
- Alumni

2   INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE UNIT

The Graduate School of Healthcare Management (GSM) is a postgraduate school offering healthcare management education to healthcare and related professionals worldwide. Launched in 2021, GSM currently offers a range of academic and professional development programmes to stakeholders in Ireland and internationally. Programmes include a range of Level 9 NFQ awards (MSc and Professional Diploma programmes) alongside a suite of executive education programmes for professionals across the public, private and voluntary sectors. Based in Sandyford, Dublin, until 2021, GSM also delivered programmes at RCSI-Dubai and RCSI-Bahrain. In advance of and throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, GSM was at the forefront of digital delivery within RCSI. From 2022 onwards, it is the stated intention of GSM to remain digital healthcare education leaders, delivering credit-bearing elements of all Level 9 programmes online. Commissioned executive development programmes will however continue to be delivered both in person and virtually in line with stakeholder needs.

This is the first internal quality review undertaken by GSM. Its predecessor, the Institute of Leadership (IoL), underwent review in 2012 and was included in the RCSI-Dubai campus review in 2019. The PRG would have valued some critical reflection on the outcomes and impact of these previous reviews within the SAR. The PRG was cognisant throughout the review process that GSM as a newly established School were not only overcoming the challenges of COVID-19, but also significant changes across management, governance and personnel structures which had been ongoing since 2017. To enhance the value of this review process for GSM Executive, the PRG therefore positioned this process as a quality enhancement exercise, to aid the evolution of GSM, rather than a reflection upon the journey undertaken to date.

Over the course of the review visit, the PRG received evidence of the positive impact and changes already made by GSM Executive Management Team. The PRG was impressed by the research infrastructure achievements, including the new research strategy, policies and innovative workload allocation model to increase research capacity. The care and attention given to creating a supportive collegiate community within the newly expanded GSM team was evident and appreciated, particularly by new Faculty. It was also noteworthy from PRG interactions with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders, including external partners and alumni, that GSM was well respected, impactful and influential in terms of the continuous professional development of healthcare leaders within and beyond Ireland. GSM was delivering on its mission of 'Advancing healthcare leadership: making a difference worldwide', but these achievements were not explicit enough within the SAR. The PRG were advised that GSM was proud to be known as 'the people who care for the people who care for people'. This was reflected in the observations and discussions undertaken throughout the review.

The SAR identified a future vision beyond 2022, that positioned GSM 'as a School committed to sustainable healthcare transformation in Ireland and internationally'. The development of the first GSM Strategic Plan will be key to achieving this vision and should be prioritised. The PRG encourages GSM to build upon the RCSI brand and the legacy of the IoL, to secure a distinct competitive position within the increasingly competitive global healthcare marketplace. When developing its strategic plan, GSM is encouraged to benchmark against new and longstanding competitors, and proactively engage internal and external stakeholders to ensure decisions made around future delivery modes, markets, and programme opportunities, are evidence based and aligned with market need. The most compelling case around the impact, influence, and responsiveness of GSM to stakeholders, in addition to ideas for

future distinctiveness and market opportunities, came from discussions with alumni and external partners rather than the SAR itself. This network of key stakeholders, who are also passionate advocates of GSM, indicated a willingness to continue to engage in future strategic planning and advisory panels. The PRG are confident that continued engagement with this extensive professional network will enable GSM to enhance its position as a recognised healthcare leader and establish a wealth of evidence of its impact and influence on sustainable healthcare transformation in Ireland and globally.

2.1   Commendations

The PRG commends:

- Evidence of considerable impact and influence of GSM within RCSI and across   professional healthcare networks nationally and globally.
- GSM Executive, Faculty and Operations Team for being, student-focused, innovative, flexible and demonstrably responsive to stakeholder needs.
- The advancements made by GSM as leaders in digital healthcare education delivery and innovative and speedy response to the consequences of COVID-19.

2.2   Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- Within 2022/23, develop and launch the first strategic plan, to enhance GSM's distinctiveness and competitive position within the challenging global hybrid healthcare marketplace, and secure an international research reputation for excellence in healthcare management research.
- Consult stakeholders and benchmark programmes, student data and demographics annually against global competitors to ensure GSM remains responsive to evolving sector needs.
- Develop and publish a stakeholder engagement and communication plan to enable GSM to maximise effort, impact, and influence with key stakeholders internally and externally.
- Documents and publications should be more consistent in referencing the Graduate School of Healthcare Management (GSM) as opposed to GSM to reinforce its brand and its current and future influence on healthcare transformation nationally and internationally.

3 ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT

The SAR provided a detailed listing of the governance, management and communication structures operating across GSM. Given its size, the management and governance structures appeared comprehensive, but could be considered burdensome given proposed programme and research growth ambitions coupled with the number of new Faculty members within the Team. While the SAR documented how information flowed up from GSM into the RCSI governance and management structures, there was little critical self-reflection of how efficiently or effectively information flowed back down and across to GSM management and communications structures. GSM should reflect on the suitability and sustainability of existing structures to engage and inform GSM staff, Faculty, and stakeholders of decision-making at a GSM and RCSI level.

Given the recent research infrastructure advancements made within GSM, with a focus upon enhancing research capacity, research impact, capability, and collaborations, it was surprising that a GSM research committee had not been established or proposed in the SAR. It was clear from discussions with internal and external stakeholders that not only would an international research advisory committee have value, but it would also raise visibility, strengthen networks, promote internal and external research collaborations and create opportunities for increased income generation. Furthermore, it was unclear to the PRG if GSM was represented on the RCSI Research Committee by the Academic Director, the Head of Research and Impact, or a GSM Programme Director.

The SAR included a recommendation to consider 'a wider leadership team with defined terms of reference to include functional heads and those in positions of responsibility within the School.' This recommendation was supported by the PRG, particularly given the importance of operational leads and Programme Directors if growth ambitions in research, programmes and impact on the healthcare sector are to be achieved. The leadership team should be scaled in line with growth achievements to maintain high standards in quality.

The SAR also sought guidance from the PRG on the relaunch and composition of an Advisory Board within the Middle East that would make recommendations to RCSI-Dubai on strategic and operational activity in the region. The PRG endorsed this recommendation, as stakeholder relationships would be vital to GSM's position in the UAE GCC market following the 2021 decision to close the RCSI-Dubai campus and transition RCSI-Dubai from a teaching location to a business development hub. The PRG also recommends the establishment of a National GSM Advisory Board within Ireland, to proactively engage healthcare professionals, partners and alumni in GSM's strategic, research and programme development activities. The PRG maintains from discussions undertaken within this review, that Advisory Board members could easily be drawn from GSM's extensive, highly influential and currently under-utilised network of alumni and professional partners. The PRG was impressed with the strong expression of a wish for meaningful engagement with GSM by the alumni and external participants who contributed to the review.

Given the stated focus of GSM to be student-centred, consideration should be given to further promoting student representation on GSM committees. Furthermore, it was unclear to the PRG whether any induction or training on GSM committee structure was provided to new students or staff/Faculty committee members. A structured briefing or induction session should be provided for

all new committee members, including any Advisory Board members, to enhance their time, impact and effectiveness within GSM decision-making processes

3.1 Commendations

The PRG commends:

- The new GSM workload allocation model which was considered innovative and anticipated to be impactful in terms of research capacity building.
- The resilience and adaptability of the RCSI-Dubai Team to transition from an academic unit to a business development team and the ability of both the Dublin and Dubai-based teams to integrate and work closely since this transition.

3.2 Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- An international research advisory committee be established, with clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for internal and external committee members, to strengthen research culture, impact, collaborations, expertise, and capacity within and beyond the School.
- The membership of the RCSI Research Committee be expanded to include GSM Academic Director or GSM Head of Research and Impact.
- An expansion of the academic leadership team should be considered within the five-year strategic planning as growth ambitions are achieved to maintain quality.
- The UAE Advisory Board be refreshed and utilised as the basis of a National Advisory Board in Ireland, to ensure stakeholders inform planning and decision-making.
- Training and guidance on GSM governance and management structures be provided to all new Advisory Board and committee members to maximise effectiveness and impact.

4 STAFF AND FACILITIES

Throughout the review process, the PRG questioned the appropriateness of GSM Faculty structure to meet current and future programme portfolio and research commitments. Given the changes in the Executive structure and Faculty over the past three years, the PRG stressed the importance of Faculty recruitment, retention and wellbeing. The PRG encourages GSM to include within the new strategic plan, a phased approach to diversification to ensure the growth and expansion of the portfolio are sustainable and scalable, without negatively impacting upon GSM's reputation, quality or impact on the healthcare sector or its students.

The SAR highlights that a comparison of the current GSM student/staff ratio against RCSI and external benchmarks identifies that GSM has 'a relatively high number of students to staff'. This is before the impact of the workload allocation model is tested against the proposed expansion ambitions with microcredentials, executive education, research and scholarship and additional teaching commitments on undergraduate and new postgraduate programmes. There is clear evidence of dedication and strength within the Faculty, but core Faculty time needs to be protected as the workload allocation model is implemented and monitored, if the vision and impact of the School are to be achieved within the next strategic planning period.

The PRG believe for GSM growth ambitions to be scalable and sustainable, expansions in Adjunct Faculty and the effective utilisation (and proportionate expansion) of the excellent Operations Team are required. This was not highlighted strongly as key solutions to expansion challenges within the SAR but should be reflected on by GSM. The PRG would have welcomed more detail in the SAR regarding the demographic data on both the adjunct and operations teams. Similarly, the PRG would have welcomed more commentary on their importance to underpinning planned ambitions of the School. The SAR confirmed that Adjunct Faculty (comprised of 38 individuals, supplementing the core Faculty team of 14), were 'not listed on GSM website and have limited or intermittent involvement in the wider life of the School'. The PRG believe this is a missed opportunity given the quality and quantity of RCSI and GSM's professional network and alumni. A scalable, flexible, expert Adjunct Faculty model is essential for the proposed expansions in microcredentials, executive and Level 9 programmes. With guidance from the RCSI HR Team, an innovative Adjunct Faculty recruitment strategy should be developed, benchmarked against other HEIs and/or other comparable organisations with an international staffing model, that builds upon the stated commitment to digital-first delivery and engagement. This should include the ability to recruit non-Irish domiciled academics and healthcare professionals for digital delivery. There should also be within this strategy, an ability to transitioning some Adjunct faculty to fixed-term contracts when growth ambitions are realised. The Adjunct Faculty recruitment strategy should also align with RCSI and GSM's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) commitments and seek to reflect the internationalisation of the digital campus student population.

The PRG met the six recently recruited Faculty members. All confirmed that despite the inherent challenges of starting new roles within the pandemic, they felt welcomed and supported by their colleagues and the Executive Management Team. Programme Coordinators within the Operations Team were explicitly cited as being a valued structure for new Faculty and the professionalism of the Team was commended. The 'Module Leader Handbook' was referenced as a helpful resource for new Faculty, and it was suggested that a 'Programme Director Handbook' would also be beneficial to clarify roles, responsibilities and expectations. Both handbooks would be valuable to current and future

Faculty and Adjunct Faculty to aid transparency and consistency. GSM should also consider establishing a mentoring structure for new Faculty, with mentors secured within GSM or RCSI to enhance integration, collaboration and networking opportunities.

The challenges of induction, team building and networking within the pandemic were however cited, and it was evident new Faculty members would benefit from occasional networking opportunities where they could meet the wider GSM team in person. This would enable staff to interact beyond their own immediate team, realise new synergies, open wider dialogue and avoid any reported sense of isolation from the wider School and Institution. While noting GSM staffing structure spanned Ireland, the UK and Dubai, a cost-benefit analysis of organising a biannual or annual GSM meeting for all staff and Faculty would be worth exploring.

Retention of the core Faculty will be central to the achievement of GSM's portfolio diversification and research ambitions. The new workload allocation model, which protects core Faculty time for research, teaching and service/citizenship, is anticipated to aid Faculty retention and progression opportunities. However, more should be done to document and quantify the significant impact of the Faculty through community service and outreach. These activities directly impact on the achievement of the overall vision of GSM's contribution to the sustainability of healthcare transformations nationally and internationally, and yet are insufficiently quantified and recognised formally within GSM and RCSI promotion structures. The retention and promotion of Faculty may also be enhanced by the ability to supervise/co-supervise doctoral candidates within and/or in partnership with other schools in RCSI.

Despite largely homeworking throughout and beyond the pandemic, the current location of GSM is noted to be at Sandyford rather than St. Stephen's Green. Plans to place GSM as an 'anchor tenant' on the new St. Stephen's Green campus in 2025 were welcomed as providing an opportunity to enhance the visibility of GSM internally to RCSI staff, faculty, students, alumni and visitors. In the interim period, particularly with an increased return to campus for full-time undergraduate students, RCSI and GSM should discuss mechanisms to ensure that GSM is known by and visible to undergraduate students, RCSI alumni and partners at the St. Stephen's Green and other RCSI campuses, being a key source of future GSM students and potential Adjunct Faculty for GSM.

4.1   Commendations

The PRG commends:

- The strong collegiate and supportive culture evident across GSM for new Faculty.
- GSM Operations Team, particularly Programme Coordinators and the Executive Education Team, for their passion, flexibility, innovation, responsiveness to stakeholder needs.
- The contributions of the Faculty to RCSI undergraduate teaching and GSM Operations Team contributions to the RCSI 'Project Connect', RCSI Online and the CRM projects were impressive and impactful given the limited resources within the School.
- The engagement and influence of the Faculty and School on national and international healthcare, social care, policy and industry leaders.

4.2   Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- Liaise with the RCSI HR Team to formalise and expand processes for the recruitment, induction, training and deployment of Adjunct Faculty and visiting or guest lecturers.
- Develop an Adjunct Faculty recruitment strategy to find innovative solutions to the use of non-Ireland domiciled Faculty for digital-first delivery growth ambitions.
- Increase the visibility and clarity in the number, roles and responsibilities of Programme Directors, Faculty and Adjunct Faculty across GSM handbooks and GSM website.
- Agree promotion criteria metrics within GSM and RCSI for Faculty to quantify their impact on the community and sustainable healthcare transformation nationally or internationally and ensure that all staff, current and new, are made aware of the refreshed promotion criteria.

5 TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

The PRG found evidence from those interviewed during the virtual visit that the teaching and learning delivered by GSM is of a very high standard. The staff are an experienced, enthusiastic and student-centred team who demonstrated that they reflect on and listen to the student voice. The staff are to be applauded for their creativity in ensuring high quality delivery of teaching, learning and assessment in and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The PRG would have welcomed more detail in the SAR of the portfolio of programmes available across GSM, also a more critical reflection of the importance of the Executive Education programmes to the healthcare sector nationally or internationally. Similarly, more demographic data particularly around Executive Education and the Level 9 programmes would have aided the PRG to gain more of a holistic overview of the breadth of programmes provided. While this did not necessarily impede the work of the PRG, it did raise questions about the availability and utilisation of complete and accurate datasets within GSM to aid decision-making governance and management structures. The PRG anticipates that the refreshed annual programme review process will be utilised as a structured opportunity to undertake a complete review of admissions, progression and achievement data, across the entire portfolio of programmes (not just Level 9). This should demonstrably and systematically inform decisions within GSM about teaching, learning and assessment practices across the entire portfolio of programmes. Furthermore, given the commitments outlined in the SLA to deliver Level 9 programmes digitally-first, and Executive programmes through a blended or face-to-face model, it would be beneficial if a refreshed GSM Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy be developed to enhance consistency, capacity and quality across the Faculty and student experience.

The PRG was advised throughout the process of the quality and impact of GSM teaching and learning philosophy. The constructivist approach was welcomed by Faculty, students and alumni, who were all generally very positive about the quality of their teaching, learning and assessment experience. The flexibility of the digital-delivery model throughout the pandemic was also largely supported. The range of VLE tools, such as Blackboard Collaborate and Moodle worked well throughout the transition from face-to-face to digital-first delivery, however, it was noted that the Faculty should continue to be trained and supported by IT to enhance the functionality of Blackboard Collaborate particularly, to maximise the quality of the Faculty and student experience. The PRG was reassured that the excellent supports provided to date by the RCSI IT service were anticipated to continue to underpin future digital-first and blended teaching, learning and assessment strategies.

While the online learning experience throughout the pandemic was largely positive, some challenges were experienced, with students and alumni highlighting the need for increased social networking opportunities. Students would like more student-to-student time to widen networking and social engagement opportunities which had suffered within the online environment. Networking opportunities were also noted as being important for students to efficiently and effectively complete assignments and group projects. GSM might consider how social and academic networking opportunities could be achieved at the start and/or end of each programme or each academic year, online and on-campus. Reintroducing the previously utilised model of Active Learning Sessions or 'summer schools' would also be worth considering for Level 9 programmes.

The importance of academic integrity, academic writing and referencing skill training was emphasised by students and alumni. While existing services delivered by the Library were commended, there was recognition of the demand and value of these services by both domestic and international students. International students were particularly vocal about their needs for academic writing and referencing skills, particularly at key assessment times. While students confirmed awareness of assessment schedules and marking criteria, they would welcome greater guidance from Faculty on group assignments and the allocations of group marks. Students also requested greater blocks of time between assessments, to ensure summative feedback is provided in advance of the next submission date, to ensure learnings from the feedback provided can be digested and applied to the next assessment piece.

Furthermore, while assessment governance structures appeared to be effective and clearly communicated to new and existing Faculty members, it was evident that ongoing support and guidance on academic integrity challenges would be beneficial, particularly if continuous and summative assessments remain online.

5.1   Commendations

The PRG commends:

- GSM for being leaders in the digital-first approach within RCSI while ensuring a constructivist approach is in place and that the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment experience remained high.
- The continued support provided to GSM by the RCSI IT Team to underpin pandemic and post-pandemic teaching, learning and assessment practices.
- The academic writing, referencing and integrity support services provided by the RCSI Library.
- That assessment governance structures are effective and clearly communicated to new and existing faculty members.

5.2   Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- GSM annually reviews qualitative and quantitative data across the entire portfolio of Level 9 and Executive Education programmes to inform programme and GSM decision making.
- GSM to include social and academic networking opportunities, in person or digitally, when designing or redesigning Level 9 credit bearing programmes for digital-first delivery.
- The development of a new GSM Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to enhance consistency and quality in the digital-first model of Level 9 programmes.
- The schedule of assessments across Level 9 programmes be reviewed to provide, wherever possible, summative feedback in advance of the next assignment submission date.
- A targeted approach to academic writing and academic integrity support be undertaken, to ensure those most at need of supports are targeted at key points in the student lifecycle.

6 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

GSM is a noted leader in digital-first delivery within RCSI. Pre-pandemic, MSc programmes were accredited by the National University of Ireland (NUI); the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) in Dubai, and the Higher Education Council (HEC) in Bahrain to be delivered in a blended format. All programmes were temporarily approved by NUI for fully online delivery in March 2020. In March 2022 GSM applied for all programmes to permanently transition to online delivery. Separately, in 2021 the Professional Diploma in Leading Digital Health Transformation was accredited and launched as a fully online programme.

While digital-first appears to be favoured by Level 9 students, it was clear that there is still a need for an element of non-credit weighted in-person or networking activities to enhance the overall quality of the student experience. The PRG received evidence from executive development stakeholders that in some cases there is a preference for programmes to, in part, be delivered face-to-face, as networking remained a significant benefit of the executive development experience for healthcare professionals. The PRG was reassured to see this differentiated stakeholder-led approach reflected in the proposed executive programme delivery model for 2022 onwards.

Following the decision in 2021 to cease in-country delivery at RCSI-Dubai and RCSI-Bahrain, GSM programmes were de-licenced with the CAA and HEC and teach-out arrangements deployed. When questioned by the PRG of the impact of this decision, GSM Team confirmed they had not yet seen a negative impact on existing students or applications for future online programmes. This was reassuring. However, there were some questions raised within the PRG regarding the financial or reputational direct and indirect costs to RCSI and GSM of securing then removing CAA and HEC accreditation. The PRG would recommend that data be monitored regularly to provide GSM with continued confidence that fully online Level 9 programmes would be recognised and respected in the region. The PRG emphasised the importance of reinforcing the international profile and reputation of RCSI and GSM through the RCSI-Dubai Business Unit and the UAE Advisory Panel to ensure GSM alumni, programmes and researchers are recognised and respected within the UAE and GCC.

The SAR identified within the previous IoL strategic planning process (2017-2022), 'Two new programmes developed did not gain sufficient traction in the market to launch.' While it is cited that 'individual component modules were however run as part of a government sponsored programme,' so not an entirely wasted resource, the PRG expressed concern that GSM needs to ensure decisions on its portfolio of programmes are informed by explicit evidence of stakeholder demand as well as identified market opportunity to ensure time and resources are invested effectively. This concern was discussed with the Executive Team over the course of the review and assurances given that the Executive were keenly aware of this and would leverage lessons learned to ensure future decisions are informed by market need.

The PRG noted the intention to broaden the portfolio of Level 9 programmes further with the 'development of stand-alone or cumulative microcredential modules… to broaden access to cutting-edge healthcare management knowledge and practice.' While the PRG were supportive of these benefits to healthcare professionals who wish to develop their leadership competencies and management skills with GSM, it was unclear to the PRG if the NUI would or had agreed to accredit the

ability to 'stack' learning outcomes and credits from individual microcredential programmes into an accredited Level 9 programme. Discussions with external stakeholders, students and alumni did not indicate a demand for microcredentials, but interest was expressed for continuous professional development (CPD) via the Executive Development structure for healthcare professionals nationally and internationally as well as PhD opportunities. The PRG also saw an untapped market for securing CPD demand from the RCSI and GSM alumni networks. GSM is therefore advised to ensure before significant advancements and investments are made in the design and accreditation of microcredentials rather than non-credit bearing Executive Development modules/programmes, that there is firm evidence of current and future demand from alumni, professional bodies and strategic partners.

6.1 Commendations

The PRG commends:

- The consistently high-quality student experience delivered across the portfolio of programmes.
- GSM Executive, Faculty, and Operations Team for being innovative leaders and embracing digital-first delivery in advance of and throughout the pandemic.
- The core Faculty for contributing to collaborative teaching activities within the RCSI undergraduate curriculum despite capacity challenges.
- The Executive Development Team for co-designing bespoke, flexible programmes that demonstrably meet the needs and expectations of external partners. The team has developed and maintained extensive, highly valued relationships with Executive clients.

6.2 Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- That on-campus engagement or networking opportunities are explored for digital-first programmes with due consideration given to parity of experience and opportunity for the international student body.
- Evidence of programme demand, relevance and quality be analysed within the annual monitoring process to demonstrably inform programme development and delivery decisions.
- A cost-benefit analysis and market research exercise be undertaken before expansions in Level 9 credit bearing, non-credit bearing continuous professional development programmes and PhDs.
- RCSI and GSM alumni networks and professional bodies and external partners be targeted to inform the evolution of GSM portfolio of programmes to ensure GSM is the recognised provider for continuous professional development by alumni and partners nationally and internationally.

7 RESEARCH ACTIVITY

The research vision and commitments presented in the SAR are considered clear, concise and achievable given the recent calibre of new Faculty appointments alongside the introduction of the faculty workload allocation model. The SAR documented the research achievements of the current Faculty alongside the research income generated by GSM between 2017 and 2021. The PRG advises that key performance indicators and metrics for research activities, impact and income generation be included in the next GSM Strategic Plan. These will be of benefit to GSM to demonstrate its influence and impact on the sustainable transformation of healthcare leadership internally and globally, as well as for use by individual Faculty members within GSM and RCSI professional development and promotions process.

Historically, the PRG noted Faculty within the IoL were teaching-focused, so were largely unsuccessful within the RCSI promotions process. The introduction of the new workload allocation model and the new strategy and policies for research within GSM should enhance the ability of GSM Faculty to gain recognition and reward for their teaching, scholarship and research impacts on the national and international healthcare leadership community.

The PRG noted that GSM is impactful in terms of national and international healthcare policy and practice, although more could be done to enhance visibility internally and externally. Faculty were noted to be involved in a wide range of impact activities 'from publishing opinion pieces in national newspapers, to other media coverage/work, research reports, organising policy events and providing training' within Ireland, the UK, Australia, and the UN. Faculty and GSM Executive Management Team were also noted to hold positions of esteem nationally and internationally reinforcing the PRG's view that the School maintains an impressive sphere of influence and impact.

Recent positive developments in the research infrastructure were welcomed, and opportunities for further expansion and profile raising in relation to the utilisation of seed funding; the capturing of research activities by Faculty and Adjunct Faculty within RCSI's RIMS repository; as well as participation in RCSI level Research Events and the RCSI Research Committee were encouraged. The inclusion of a GSM member on the RCSI Research Committee was also identified as important by the PRG alongside the establishment of a GSM Research Advisory Committee to enhance research governance and management structures. The PRG were confident these activities would continue to enhance the visibility of the research activities within GSM and enhance opportunities for research collaborations within and beyond RCSI.

As expressed previously in this report, there was interest expressed by some students, alumni and external partners for research skill modules/courses, as well as Level 10, PhD programmes to be included within GSM portfolio of programmes. A cost/benefit analysis of these potential opportunities being made available within GSM should be completed as part of stakeholder consultations for the new Strategic Plan. The ability to include doctoral supervision into the workload allocation model for faculty was also considered to be beneficial in terms of Faculty retention and career progression internally and externally. The opportunities for co-supervision of doctoral students and growth of interdisciplinary research across RCSI were also cited as potential areas for expansion and leverage of additional resources.

7.1 Commendations

The PRG commends:

- The impressive sphere of impact and influence of GSM Faculty research nationally and internationally.
- The strong development of internal policies and structures to advance research and impact, underpinned by the appointment of a Director of Research.
- The research vision and commitment of the Director of Research and the Executive Management Team to enhance research culture, capacity and capability.
- The range of innovative opportunities and infrastructure investments identified to enhance the visibility, capacity, reach and impact of researchers within the School and RCSI.

7.2 Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- That key performance indicators and metrics for research activities, impact and income generation be included in the new GSM Strategic Plan at a School and Faculty level.
- As above, an International Research Advisory Board be established to support GSM.
- Prioritise assessing how to establish a distinctive global research position and thus attract significant grant income and doctoral students.
- GSM increase the visibility internally and externally of Faculty research activities, influences and impacts on the healthcare profession nationally and internationally. Deliberative efforts to collate and communicate research and impact activities will be needed.
- The increased utilisation and visibility of RCSI and GSM Research Support Services and funding to increase opportunities for Faculty to be included within large, funded research projects.

8 MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

The PRG noted from the SAR that 'the School and GSM Team recognise the value of these quality enhancement exercises and embrace the opportunity to engage in the self-assessment process and benefit from the discussion with the expert panel members.' Given this was the first GSM review, the PRG believed an opportunity to present a more critical analysis of the School's evolution from the IoL was not presented. However, many of the SAR recommendations and the SWOT analysis presented within the SAR reflected the views of the PRG which illustrates the robustness of the self-reflective process undertaken by the School. The PRG were also appreciative of the willingness to engage in open and sometimes challenging conversations throughout the site visit and believes this report and its recommendations have benefited from the candour shown.

The PRG welcomed the refresh of the annual programme monitoring process for Level 9 programmes. The need to demonstrate the utilisation of qualitative and quantitative data to inform decision making at a programme and School level as well as benchmark experiences across the School has been referenced throughout this report. The PRG also supports the recommendation within the SAR to 'close feedback loops' to document how student feedback demonstrably informs decision making for current and future students. The School is also advised to close feedback loops with key external stakeholders and partners, particularly once the National and International Advisory Boards are launched, to ensure the impact and value of stakeholder time is clearly documented and disseminated.

The student class representatives that met the PRG during the site visit were very impressive and enthusiastic about the quality of their experience within GSM. They confirmed GSM's willingness to listen and respond proactively to the views, needs and experiences of students. The class representatives did however confirm they were not provided with any formal training to equip them for success in their duties as class representatives. Given the inherent burdens on their time as professionals and part-time digital learners, GSM is encouraged to secure proportionate training for class representatives from within RCSI or externally via the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) to strengthen the impact and engagement of students in decision-making.

8.1 Commendations

The PRG commends:

- The contributions made by GSM Team to the 'Better RCSI' initiative and 'Project Connect.'
- The proactive innovative approach demonstrated by GSM academically and operationally to embrace the digital-first delivery model.
- The evidence presented of GSM responding to the views and experiences of its students.

8.2 Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- Qualitative and quantitative data be analysed within the refreshed annual monitoring process to demonstrably inform decision making at a programme and School level.
- Proportionate training for class representatives be secured from within RCSI or externally via the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).
- GSM close feedback loops not only with students but also to external stakeholders including Advisory Board members, to demonstrate the value and impact of their time.

9   SUPPORT SERVICES

The PRG were impressed by the level of support provided to GSM by the RCSI Library and IT Teams. It was clear both services would be vital to the future success of GSM, particularly given the commitments to continue digital-first delivery for Level 9 programmes. It was not clear to the PRG if the resource impacts of the digital-first positioning had been factored into budgeting allocations for the School given the increased costs of access to e-books and journals. The value and importance of Library services for academic integrity, academic writing and referencing skills were emphasised by both students and alumni.

The SAR identified that the RCSI HR Team were in the process of exploring models for remote working for staff domiciled within and outside of Ireland. While welcoming the flexibility of remote working to date, challenges were noted in terms of the effectiveness of the onboarding and payroll process.

The PRG were supportive of the establishment of the new CRM and recognised the benefits a CRM could have for effectiveness in stakeholder engagement and communications as well as to capitalise on RCSI and GSM alumni and partner networks. The CRM was also identified as a valued resource by for RCSI-Dubai Team in terms of stakeholder engagement and business development opportunities. New operations support for research growth and impact was also welcomed and opportunities for links with RCSI Research and Innovation seen as an area of strength.

9.1   Commendations

The PRG commends:

- The support provided by the Library in terms of academic integrity.
- The achievements and commitments of the IT Department to support GSM's digital-first agenda for Level 9 programmes.
- The establishment of the new CRM system.

9.2   Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- GSM Executive Management Team engage the HR Department in the identification of innovative solutions to increase the internationalisation of Faculty including the recruitment, training and onboarding of non-Irish domiciled Adjunct Faculty for digital-first delivery.
- The scalability and sustainability of Library support structures for academic writing skills, reflective writing, referencing and academic integrity be regularly reviewed to ensure the capacity is in place to underpin GSM growth and diversification strategy for teaching, learning and research.
- GSM engage in dialogue with the SARA COMPASS Team to maximise the range of counselling and support services available to GSM's part-time students.

10 EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The impressive impact and influence of GSM internally and externally was noteworthy throughout this review process and provides GSM with a sound baseline for future success. The ability of GSM to contribute effectively to 'sustainable healthcare transformation in Ireland and internationally' will be achieved through the strategic utilisation of internal and external relationships and networks.

The PRG encourages GSM to ensure it captures, documents and disseminates on its website and marketing materials, evidence of its significant impact within and beyond Ireland. Alumni expressed enthusiasm and willingness to provide personal case studies and videos to attest to the value and impact of the Level 9 programmes. External stakeholders also confirmed the tangible positive impacts that the Executive Education programmes has on the profession; on the future pipeline of female leaders through the Johnson & Johnson Future Leaders initiative; and on the impact of the HSE Sláintecare initiative. External partners also identified areas of potential programme expansion, into the fields of public health, research skills, and compassionate leadership.

Within RCSI, the SAR confirms that the 'GSM is committed to the establishment and development of strong collaborative relationships with key internal stakeholders integral to the achievement of the mission and strategic goals of the School'. In this regard, the PRG saw evidence of proactive citizenship of GSM staff and Faculty, within RCSI, with notable contributions made in relation to operational effectiveness as well as undergraduate curriculum design and delivery.

The PRG identified throughout the course of the review that significantly more could be done to capitalise upon the RCSI and GSM alumni Networks, including consideration of leveraging alumni expertise in an adjunct teaching capacity. These networks are very impressive with alumni holding important leadership roles across the profession nationally and internationally. GSM is encouraged to further utilise these alumni networks as a core source of lifelong learners. The School should work with RCSI Undergraduate Programme Teams and Schools to maximise visibility of GSM portfolio of programmes to existing undergraduate students prior to their graduation. RCSI students and alumni should be proactively targeted for Level 9, Executive and microcredential programmes. Alumni should also be invited to avail of free taster sessions and master classes to ensure GSM is recognised as the provider of choice for continuous professional development and networking opportunities across the healthcare profession in Ireland and beyond. GSM programmes are also considered by the PRG to be an invaluable resource for professionals in private practices.

Overall, the PRG is confident that GSM is in a prime position to do more in terms of its leadership role in healthcare transformation nationally and internationally. Its impact and influence must be quantified, captured and communicated more efficiently, to enhance its competitiveness and distinctiveness to future students, stakeholders, staff, faculty and strategic partners.

10.1 Commendations

The PRG commends:

- GSM for 'punching above its weight' in terms of institutional, national and international impact and influence.
- The responsiveness of the Executive Education Team to the needs of external partners.

10.2 Recommendations

The PRG recommends:

- GSM captures and disseminates evidence of its impact (statistics, case studies, videos, podcasts etc.) on alumni and stakeholders nationally and internationally via its website and marketing materials. There is scope for GSM to build a clear and innovative communications strategy to ensure it showcases its achievements both internally and externally.
- GSM continues to contribute to RCSI governance and management structures to enhance its visibility and identify teaching and research collaborative opportunities.
- Maximise the potential of the RCSI and GSM alumni networks for lifelong learning, continuous professional development, adjunct faculty and research opportunities.

11 SUMMARY OF COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Commendations

1. Evidence of the considerable sphere of impact and influence of GSM within RCSI and across professional healthcare networks nationally and globally.
2. GSM Executive, Faculty and Operations Team for being, student-focused, innovative, flexible and demonstrably responsive to stakeholder needs.
3. The advancements made by GSM as leaders in digital healthcare delivery and innovative and speedy response to the consequences of COVID-19.
4. The new GSM workload allocation model which was considered innovative and anticipated to be impactful in terms of research capacity building.
5. The resilience and adaptability of the RCSI-Dubai Team to transition from an academic unit to a business development team and the ability of both the Dublin and Dubai based teams to integrate and work closely since this transition.
6. The strong collegiate and supportive culture evident across GSM for new Faculty.
7. GSM Operations Team, particularly Programme Coordinators and the Executive Education Team, for their passion, flexibility, innovation, responsiveness to stakeholder needs.
8. The contributions of the Faculty to RCSI undergraduate teaching and GSM Operations Team contributions to the RCSI 'Project Connect', RCSI Online and the CRM projects were impressive and impactful given the limited resources within the School.
9. The engagement and influence of the Faculty and School on national and international healthcare, social policy and industry leaders.
10. GSM for being leaders in the digital-first approach within RCSI while ensuring a constructivist approach is in place and that the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment experience remained high.
11. The continued support provided to GSM by the RCSI IT Team to underpin pandemic and post-pandemic teaching, learning and assessment practices.
12. The academic writing, referencing and integrity support services provided by the RCSI Library.
13. That assessment governance structures are effective and clearly communicated to new and existing faculty members.
14. The consistently high-quality student experience delivered across the portfolio of programmes.
15. GSM Executive, Faculty, and Operations Team for being innovative leaders and embracing digital-first delivery in advance of and throughout the pandemic.
16. The core Faculty for contributing to collaborative teaching activities within the RCSI undergraduate curriculum despite capacity challenges.
17. The Executive Development Team for co-designing bespoke, flexible programmes that demonstrably meet the needs and expectations of external partners. The Team has developed and maintained extensive, highly valued relationships with Executive clients.
18. The impressive sphere of impact and influence of GSM Faculty nationally and internationally.
19. The strong development of internal policies and structures to advance research and impact underpinned by the appointment of a Director of Research.
20. The research vision and commitment of the Executive Management Team to enhance research culture, capacity and capability.
21. The range of innovative opportunities and infrastructure investments identified to enhance the visibility, capacity, reach and impact of researchers within the School and RCSI.
22. The contributions made by GSM Team to the 'Better RCSI' initiative and 'Project Connect.'
23. The proactive innovative approach demonstrated by GSM academically and operationally to embrace the digital-first delivery model.
24. The evidence presented of GSM responding to the views and experiences of its students.

25. The support provided by the Library in terms of academic integrity.
26. The achievements and commitments of the IT Department to support GSM's digital-first agenda for Level 9 programmes.
27. The establishment of the new CRM system.
28. GSM for punching above its weight in terms of institutional, national and international impact and influence.
29. The responsiveness of the Executive Education Team to the needs of external partners.

11.2 Recommendations

1. Within 2022/23, develop and launch the first strategic plan, to enhance GSM's distinctiveness and competitive position within the challenging global hybrid healthcare marketplace, and secure an international research reputation for excellence in healthcare management research.
2. Consult stakeholders and benchmark programmes, student data and demographics annually against global competitors to ensure GSM remains responsive to evolving sector needs.
3. Develop and publish a stakeholder engagement and communication plan to enable GSM to maximise effort, impact and influence with key stakeholders internally and externally.
4. Documents and publications should be more consistent in referencing the Graduate School of Healthcare Management (GSHM) as opposed to GSM to reinforce its current and future influence on healthcare transformation nationally and internationally.
5. An international research advisory committee be established, with clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for internal and external committee members, to strengthen research culture, collaborations, expertise, and capacity within and beyond the School.
6. The membership of the RCSI Research Committee be expanded to include GSM Academic Director or GSM Head of Research and Impact.
7. An expansion of the academic leadership team should be considered within the five-year strategic planning as growth ambitions are achieved to maintain quality.
8. The UAE Advisory Board be refreshed and utilised as the basis of a National Advisory Board in Ireland, to ensure stakeholders inform planning and decision-making.
9. Training and guidance on GSM governance and management structures be provided to all new Advisory Board and committee members to maximise effectiveness and impact.
10. Liaise with the RCSI HR Team to formalise and expand processes for the recruitment, induction, training and deployment of Adjunct Faculty and visiting guest lecturers.
11. Develop an Adjunct Faculty recruitment strategy to find innovative solutions to the use of non-Ireland domiciled Faculty for digital-first delivery growth ambitions.
12. Increase the visibility and clarity in the number, roles and responsibilities of Programme Directors, Faculty and Adjunct Faculty across GSM handbooks and GSM website.
13. Agree promotion criteria metrics within GSM and RCSI for Faculty to quantify their impact on the community and sustainable healthcare transformation nationally or internationally given it is the stated vision of the School for use within the promotions process, and ensure that all staff, current and new, are made aware of the refreshed promotion criteria.
14. GSM annually reviews qualitative and quantitative data across the entire portfolio of Level 9 and Executive Education programmes to inform programme and GSM decision making.
15. GSM to include social and academic networking opportunities, in person or digitally, when designing or redesigning Level 9 credit bearing programmes for digital-first delivery.
16. The development of a new GSM Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to enhance consistency and quality in the digital-first model of Level 9 programmes.
17. The schedule of assessments across Level 9 programmes be reviewed to ensure wherever possible summative feedback is provided in advance of the next assignment submission date.

18. A targeted approach to academic writing and academic integrity support be undertaken, to ensure those most at need of supports are targeted at key points in the student lifecycle.
19. That on-campus engagement or networking opportunities are explored for digital-first programmes with due consideration given to parity of experience and opportunity for the international student body.
20. Evidence of programme demand, relevance and quality be analysed within the annual monitoring process to demonstrably inform programme development and delivery decisions.
21. A cost-benefit analysis and market research exercise be undertaken before expansions in Level 9 credit bearing, non-credit bearing continuous professional development programmes and PhDs.
22. RCSI and GSM alumni networks and professional bodies and external partners be targeted to inform the evolution of GSM portfolio of programmes to ensure GSM is the recognised provider for continuous professional development by alumni and partners nationally and internationally.
23. That key performance indicators and metrics for research activities, impact and income generation be included in the new GSM Strategic Plan at a School and Faculty level.
24. As above, an International Research Advisory Board be established to support GSM.
25. Prioritise assessing how to establish a distinctive global research position and thus attract significant grant income and doctoral students.
26. GSM increase the visibility internally and externally of Faculty research activities, influences and impacts on the healthcare profession nationally and internationally. Deliberative efforts to collate and communicate research and impact activities will be needed.
27. The increased utilisation and visibility of RCSI and GSM Research Support Services and funding to increase opportunities for Faculty to be included within large, funded research projects.
28. Qualitative and quantitative data be analysed within the refreshed annual monitoring process to demonstrably inform decision making at a programme and School level.
29. Proportionate training for class representatives be secured from within RCSI or externally via the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).
30. GSM close feedback loops not only with students but also to external stakeholders including Advisory Board members, to demonstrate the value and impact of their time.
31. GSM Executive Management Team engage the HR Department in the identification of innovative solutions to increase the internationalisation of Faculty including the recruitment, training and onboarding of non-Irish domiciled Adjunct Faculty for digital-first delivery.
32. The scalability and sustainability of Library support structures for academic writing skills, reflective writing, referencing and academic integrity be regularly reviewed to ensure the capacity is in place to underpin GSM growth and diversification strategy for teaching, learning and research.
33. GSM engage in dialogue with the SARA COMPASS Team to maximise the range of counselling and support services available to GSM's part-time students.
34. GSM captures and disseminated evidence of its impact (statistics, case studies, videos, podcasts etc.) on alumni and stakeholders nationally and internationally via its website and marketing materials. There is scope for GSM to build a clear and innovative communications strategy to ensure it showcases its achievements both internally and externally.
35. GSM continues to contribute to RCSI governance and management structures to enhance its visibility and identify teaching and research collaborative opportunities.
36. Maximise the potential of the RCSI and GSM alumni networks for lifelong learning, continuous professional development, adjunct faculty and research opportunities.

APPENDIX 1: SITE VISIT SCHEDULE

IN ADVANCE | Wednesday 25 May 2022

Date	Time	Dur. Mins	Mtg. No.	Mtg. Title
25 May 2022	14.30 – 16.30	30 mins	1	**Welcome and Introduction for PRG; Housekeeping and guidance for virtual review** Head of Quality Enhancement Office & Quality Reviews Manager
		10 mins		Break
		80 mins	2	**Private Planning Meeting for PRG**

WEEK OF VIRTUAL SITE VISIT | Day 1 | Tuesday 31 May 2022

Date	Time	Dur. Mins	Mtg. No.	Mtg. Title
	09.00 – 09.25	25 mins		PRG: Review of preparatory work
	09.25 – 10.25	60 mins	3	**Meeting with Executive Management Team** Meeting Theme: Review of strategic planning, future developments of the School, governance structures, resourcing and space. Relevant SAR Sections: 1, 2, 3
Tuesday 31 May		**10-minute break between meetings**		
	10.35 – 11.25	50 mins	4	**Meeting with Programme Directors** Meeting Theme: Academic Programmes and Curriculum; curriculum development, review and enhancement. Relevant SAR Sections: Chapter 5, 7, 9
	11.25 – 11.45	**20 mins**		**Break for PRG**
	11.45 – 12.05	20 mins	5	**External Relations Partner 3**
		10-minute break between meetings		
	12.15 – 13.05	50 mins	6	**Meeting with Faculty** Meeting Theme: Teaching, Learning & Assessment; challenges; resourcing; Executive Development Programmes Relevant SAR Sections: Chapter 4
Tuesday 31 May	**13.05 – 13.45**	**40 mins**		**Break for PRG**
	13.45 – 14.30	45 mins	7	**Meeting with Operations Team** Meeting Theme: Admissions, DEL coordination, programme coordination, regulatory management, professional services partners Relevant SAR Sections: Chapter 3, 4, 8
		15-minute break between meetings		

Tuesday 31 May	14.45–15.30	45 mins	8	**Meeting with Heads/Managers of Professional Services Units** Meeting Theme: Current support and resources provided; impact of the potential growth of the School on service supports; collaboration and planning for the future. Areas for consideration: IT, Library, SARA, Estates, Finance, Fees, HPEC, HR, Marketing, Website team, CRM Team. Relevant SAR Sections: 7, 8, 9
	15.30 – 16.00	30 mins	9A	**Meeting with RCSI SMT (HR & Research)** Meeting Theme: RCSI strategy and strategic direction of the School. Plans for the future and management of resources. Research development. Relevant SAR Sections: 1,2,3
	16.00 – 16.30	30 mins		PRG Review of afternoon meetings; draft commendations & recommendations; planning for next day

WEEK OF VIRTUAL SITE VISIT | Day 2 | Wednesday 1 June 2022

Date	Time	Dur. Mins	Mtg. No.	Mtg. Title
Wed 1 June	08.45 – 09.15	30 mins		PRG: Review of preparatory work
	09.15– 10.00	45 mins	9B	**Meeting with RCSI SMT** Meeting Theme: RCSI strategy and strategic direction of the School. Plans for the future and management of resources. Research development. Relevant SAR Sections: 1,2,3
15-minute break between meetings				
Wed 1 June	10.15 – 11.00	45 mins	10	**Meeting with Student Class Representatives** Meeting Theme: Experience as students of the School; teaching, learning and assessment; Year 2 projects; student supports; student engagement opportunities within the School and RCSI; student feedback; ongoing quality enhancement. Relevant SAR Sections: 4,5,7
	11.00 – 11.30	**30 mins**		**Break for PRG**
	11.30 – 12.15	45 mins	11	**Research** Meeting Theme: Experiences of research staff of the School; developing and growing a research culture; challenges and future potential; research supports in RCSI Relevant SAR Sections: 6
15-minute break between meetings				
Wed 1 June	12.30 – 13.15	45 mins		PRG Planning Meeting

	13.15 – 14.00	45 mins		**Break for PRG**
	14.00 – 15.45	105 mins	12	**External Relations** Meeting Theme: Partnership for future growth. Topics that may be raised by the PRG: how can we support each other further; how can we improve further engagement for the benefit of our students Relevant SAR Sections: 9
	14.00 – 14.30	30 mins	12A	**External Relations GSM Staff**
	15-minute break between meetings			
	14.45 – 15.15	30 mins	12B	**External Relations Partner 1**
	15.15 – 15.45	30 mins	12C	**External Relations Partner 2**
	15-minute break between meetings			
	16.00 – 16.30	30 mins	13	**Meeting with GSM EMT** Meeting Theme: Opportunity for additional questions or clarification on items arising from discussions with stakeholders.
	16.30 – 17.00	30 mins		PRG Review of afternoon's meetings; draft commendations & recommendations; planning for next day

WEEK OF VIRTUAL SITE VISIT | Day 3 | Thursday 2 June 2022

Date	Time	Dur. Mins	Mtg. No.	Mtg. Title
	09.00 – 09.15	15 mins		PRG: Review of preparatory work
	09.15 – 09.45	30 mins	14	**Student support; student engagement; student feedback and ongoing quality enhancement.** Meeting Theme: Provision of student supports; opportunities for student engagement within the school and across RCSI; how student feedback informs quality enhancement processes and initiatives. Relevant SAR Sections: 7
Thursday 2 June	**10-minute break between meetings**			
	09.55 – 10.40	45 mins	15	**Alumni** Meeting Theme: Experience as students of the School; student supports; student feedback; career impact. Relevant SAR Sections: 4,5,7,9
	10.40 – 13.20	140 mins		PRG meeting to finalise commendations and recommendations.
	13.20 – 14.00	**40 mins**		**Break for PRG**

	13:45 – 14.15	30 mins	16	**PRG meeting with QEO for clarification and discussion of main findings**
	14.15 – 14.35	20 mins	17	**Meeting with Head of Unit & QEO to present main findings**
	14.40 – 15.00	20 mins	18	**Closing presentation to Unit staff**

Internal Quality Review

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Graduate School of Healthcare Management

January 2023

DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Name of Unit	Graduate School of Healthcare Management
Project Title	Internal Quality Review
Document Title	Quality Improvement Plan – January 2023

Rev	Status	Author(s)	Reviewed By	Approved By	Office of Origin	Issue Date
1.0	Draft	GSM EMT	GSM, QEO	GSM	GSM	
1	Final	GSM EMT	GSM, QEO, SMT	GSM, SMT	GSM	8 Feb 2023

Quality Improvement Plan – December 2022

Recommendation in order of priority	SAR Reference PRGR reference	Response / Action Planned	Responsibility for Action	Resources Implications	Deadline / timeframe	Measurement / Benchmarking	Outcome / Status
Within 2022/23, develop and launch the first strategic plan, to enhance GSM's distinctiveness and competitive position within the challenging global hybrid healthcare marketplace, and secure an international research reputation for excellence in healthcare management research.	11.2.1	GSM will work with the University and wider stakeholders to develop a strategic plan to meet the identified challenges.	EMT	EMT, Faculty, GSM Professional Services , wider University and external stakeholders.	Q2 2024	• Finalised strategy by deadline advised	
Consult stakeholders and benchmark programmes, student data and demographics annually against global competitors to ensure GSM remains responsive to evolving sector needs.	11.2.2	Benchmarking exercise will be conducted and global competitors identified. Annual benchmarking will follow to identify market trends and needs. External partners will be sought to support this strategic initiative.	EMT	EMT, GSM Professional Services	Q2 2024	• Annual benchmarking report	
Develop and publish a stakeholder engagement and communication plan to enable GSM to maximise effort, impact and influence with key stakeholders internally and externally.	11.2.3	As part of a new strategic plan GSM will outline a process for improved inclusion of, and engagement with, local and international stakeholders with a view to informing the growth, development and future direction of the School.	EMT	EMT, RCSI Dubai Business Hub	Q2 2024	• Stakeholder engagement plan	
Documents and publications should be more consistent in	11.2.4	Since launch of the new Graduate School of Healthcare Management in 2021, GSM has been preferred and used through internal and	EMT	EMT	November 2022	N/A	Complete

Quality Improvement Plan – December 2022

Recommendation in order of priority	SAR Reference PRGR reference	Response / Action Planned	Responsibility for Action	Resources Implications	Deadline / timeframe	Measurement / Benchmarking	Outcome / Status
referencing the Graduate School of Healthcare Management (GSHM) as opposed to GSM to reinforce its current and future influence on healthcare transformation nationally and internationally.		external publications. After consultation the School feel it is more appropriate to retain current naming to avoid another change (from GSM to GSHM) so soon after its launch.					
An international research advisory committee be established, with clearly articulated roles and responsibilities for internal and external committee members, to strengthen research culture, collaborations, expertise, and capacity within and beyond the School.	11.2.5	The School will explore the establishment of an International Research Advisory committee during the 2022/23 academic year.	AD, Head of Research	GSM Academic Director, Faculty, Research Coordinator	Q3 2024	• International Research Advisory committee established	
The membership of the RCSI Research Committee be expanded to include GSM Academic Director or Head of Research and Impact.	11.2.6	GSM will explore membership of the RCSI Research Committee and other University research groups.	EMT	GSM Head of Research	Q2 2025	N/A	Completed
An expansion of the academic leadership team should be considered within the five-year	11.2.7	GSM has worked hard over the last 18 months to expand its leadership capacity with the appointment of 5 senior lecturers and a new Academic Director. As part of the Schools	AD	EMT	Q4 2023	• Academic Resourcing Plan as part of the GSM Business Plan	

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Quality Improvement Plan – December 2022

Recommendation in order of priority	SAR Reference PRGR reference	Response / Action Planned	Responsibility for Action	Resources Implications	Deadline / timeframe	Measurement / Benchmarking	Outcome / Status
strategic planning as growth ambitions are achieved to maintain quality.		strategic plan, GSM will consider the development of future leadership potential within the school in respect of research, teaching, executive education and engagement. Internally, leadership development will be promoted through the PDP process and a dedicated staff development fund to recognise the potential and needs of faculty (to date funds have been made available for teacher training and director level training courses). More broadly, promotion and recruitment will be directed at identifying and retaining future leaders, including succession planning in respect of roles such as Academic Director.				• Process for management of staff development fund	
The UAE Advisory Board be refreshed and utilised as the basis of a National Advisory Board in Ireland, to ensure stakeholders inform planning and decision-making.	11.2.8	GSM will explore the establishment a new School Advisory Board in 2022/23 comprised of national and international stakeholders. This may incorporate stakeholders from the UAE advisory board, in addition to industry leaders, alumni, policy makers, pedagogy experts and collaborative partners. The board will meet at regular intervals to inform the strategic direction of the School.	EMT	EMT, GSM Professional Services	Q1 2024	• Established School Advisory Board with agreed Terms of Reference	
Training and guidance on GSM governance and management structures be provided to all new Advisory Board and	11.2.9	Training will be provided to all members.	AD, OM	AD, GSM Professional Services	Q1 2024	• Training documentation and plan	

Quality Improvement Plan – December 2022

Recommendation in order of priority	SAR Reference PRGR reference	Response / Action Planned	Responsibility for Action	Resources Implications	Deadline / timeframe	Measurement / Benchmarking	Outcome / Status
committee members to maximise effectiveness and impact.							
Liaise with the RCSI HR Team to formalise and expand processes for the recruitment, induction, training and deployment of Adjunct Faculty and visiting guest lecturers.	11.2.10	GSM will work with RCSI HR to consider new models for the effective recruitment, training and deployment of adjunct and related faculty on an international basis.	EMT, HR	EMT, GSM Professional Services, HR	Q1 2024	• Agreed process for recruitment, training and deployment of adjunct • Adjunct faculty recruitment	
Develop an Adjunct Faculty recruitment strategy to find innovative solutions to the use of non-Ireland domiciled Faculty for digital-first delivery growth ambitions.	11.2.11	GSM will work with RCSI HR, international partners and the new advisory board to consider how best to identify, recruit, train and retain adjunct talent in a way that meets the needs of both the school and the individuals involved.	HR	EMT, GSM Professional Services, HR	Q1 2024	• Adjunct recruitment strategy • Adjunct faculty recruitment	
Increase the visibility and clarity in the number, roles and responsibilities of Programme Directors, Faculty and Adjunct Faculty across GSM handbooks and GSM website.	11.2.12	GSM is in the process of redesigning webpages and other documentation in line with this recommendation in consultation with the University web content team.	AD, OM	Web Content Team, Website governance group, GSM Professional Services	Q1 2024	• Updated staff information on website	
Agree promotion criteria metrics within GSM and RCSI for Faculty to quantify their impact on the community and sustainable healthcare transformation	11.2.13	GSM will work with RCSI HR and the promotions committee to establish how the comparable measures are to be employed in the assessment of social science promotion cases vis-à-vis clinical promotions. Work in this area will inform	SMT, EMT	EMT, HR	Q4 2023	• Promotional criteria updated and approved	

Recommendation in order of priority	SAR Reference PRGR reference	Response / Action Planned	Responsibility for Action	Resources Implications	Deadline / timeframe	Measurement / Benchmarking	Outcome / Status
nationally or internationally given it is the stated vision of the School for use within the promotions process, and ensure that all staff, current and new, are made aware of the refreshed promotion criteria.		professional development processes, recruitment and retention of talent.					
GSM annually reviews qualitative and quantitative data across the entire portfolio of Level 9 and Executive Education programmes to inform programme and GSM decision making.	11.2.14	End of Module Review forms capture key findings from a range of quantitative and qualitative sources including • the Module Survey data (from QEO) • the module grades • Internal moderator's report. Furthermore, the School is committed to the implementation of the Annual Programme Review process whereby quality improvement actions are identified for each of the programmes.	GSM Academic Committee	MLs, PDs, AD, PCs, QEO	Q4 2023	• Completed EMR forms for Modules • Completed APR forms for Programmes	
GSM to include social and academic networking opportunities, in person or digitally, when designing or redesigning Level 9 credit bearing programmes for digital-first delivery.	11.2.15	Faculty and Operations work actively with the Head of Online Learning and HPEC in the design and development of online offerings in order to ensure best practice in terms of engagement strategies and networking opportunities. This will be factored into all programmes as part of the GSM suite.	TALC, RCSI Online team	TALC, RCSI Online team	Ongoing	• Case study of examples of social and academic networking opportunities	
The development of a new GSM Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy to enhance consistency and	11.2.16	GSM commits to developing a new Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy building on its successful DEL plan and the outcomes of the strategic plan. This process will be led by the	GSM Academic Committee	GSM, AD, GSM Faculty	Q1 2025	• Agreed GSM Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy	

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RCSI

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quality in the digital-first model of Level 9 programmes.		Academic Director in conjunction with the Academic Committee and other key stakeholders.					
The schedule of assessments across Level 9 programmes be reviewed to ensure wherever possible summative feedback is provided in advance of the next assignment submission date.	11.2.17	GSM works to provide timely feedback to all students. Wherever possible feedback is provided before the first assignment in the next module. Where this is not possible on an individual level (due to short turnaround times and growing cohort numbers) the school undertakes to provide early collective feedback on the main issues arising from assignments with a view to advancing student learning. The School also provides dedicated assessment clinics on every module.	EMT, GSM Academic Committee	GSM, AD, GSM Faculty	Ongoing	• Assessment and Feedback schedules agreed by GSM AC and made available to students.	
A targeted approach to academic writing and academic integrity support be undertaken, to ensure those most at need of supports are targeted at key points in the student lifecycle.	11.2.18	GSM has revised and improved its academic writing and support provision with dedicated sessions during orientation; online materials on best academic practice, critical writing and integrity; group sessions on academic skills, and; the offer of 1-2-1 sessions for students who wish or need to improve their academic work.\n\nFrom 2022/23 this provision is scaffolded such that there is a high level of support through semester 1, which reduces as skills and abilities develop. Provision is available to all students regardless of location, presage factors and course level.	GSM Academic Committee, GSM Professional Services,	Faculty, PCs, RCSI Online Team, RCSI Library, RCSI Academic Integrity Working Group	Q1 2023	• Catalogue of comprehensive online resource\n• Group sessions on academic skills,\n• 1-2-1 sessions for students	

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That on-campus engagement or networking opportunities are explored for digital-first programmes with due consideration given to parity of experience and opportunity for the international student body.	11.2.19	To ensure equity and parity of experience for all students, given the global demographic of the school's student body, GSM will explore options for engagement and network opportunities that facilitate all students – e.g. pilot of the X2O immersive virtual classroom experience that can offer hybrid learning and engagement opportunities. We will continue to explore novel opportunities to support alumni and student networking (e.g. local celebratory events in ME, International alumni events).	OM, AD	Faculty, GSM Professional Services, RCSI IT team, Virtual Classrooms	Q1 2024	• Establishment of X20 virtual classroom • Organised in person events	
Evidence of programme demand, relevance and quality be analysed within the annual monitoring process to demonstrably inform programme development and delivery decisions.	11.2.20	See 11.2.14 above	TALC	See 11.2.14 above	See 11.2.14 above	See 11.2.14 above	See 11.2.14 above
A cost-benefit analysis and market research exercise be undertaken before expansions in Level 9 credit bearing, non-credit bearing continuous professional development programmes and PhDs.	11.2.21	GSM will engage in a business proposal process with cost- benefit analysis performed for all new offerings considered for development and present this to SMT for risk determination and decision making.	EMT	EMT, GSM Professional Services	Ongoing	• Business Case Proposal	
RCSI and GSM alumni networks and professional bodies and external	11.2.22	Alumni and related stakeholders will be included within the new School Advisory board from 2022/23. Alumni and networking events will be	EMT	EMT, Alumni, Faculty, School Advisory Board,	Ongoing	• Evidence of market data and demand	

Recommendation in order of priority	SAR Reference PRGR reference	Response / Action Planned	Responsibility for Action	Resources Implications	Deadline / timeframe	Measurement / Benchmarking	Outcome / Status
partners be targeted to inform the evolution of GSM portfolio of programmes to ensure GSM is the recognised provider for continuous professional development by alumni and partners nationally and internationally.		employed as two-way channels which both disseminate the work of the School and provide opportunities for information and intelligence gathering in respect of learning, research and market needs. This will inform research priorities in respect of grand challenges; long term educational needs in respect of masters and diploma programmes, and; more responsive modes of engagement such as executive education and micro-credentials.		GSM Professional Services, RCSI Dubai		• Programme Feedback	
That key performance indicators and metrics for research activities, impact and income generation be included in the new GSM Strategic Plan at a School and Faculty level.	11.2.23	As part of the development of the strategic plan, GSM will incorporate KPIs and targets in line with the business plan as approved by SMT.	EMT, Head Of Research	EMT, Head of Research, Research Coordinator	Q2 2024	• Suite of KPIs	
Prioritise assessing how to establish a distinctive global research position and thus attract significant grant income and doctoral students.	11.2.25	Over the course of 2022 there has been a step change in the research income attracted to the school and the outputs produced by new and existing faculty. Building on this progress, and with advice from the International Research Advisory Committee, the School will work to refine its research positioning in local and global context, establishing key targets from 2023/4 for inputs and outputs. Doctoral student supervision will be pursued where it is to the benefit of students and supervisors; is in line the School strategy, and;	AD, Head Of Research, International Research Advisory Committee	AD, Head of Research, International Research Advisory Committee, Research Coordinator	Q1 2025	• Impact Case Studies	

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		where it demonstrably contributes to the University's drive to Lead Better Health.					
GSM increase the visibility internally and externally of Faculty research activities, influences and impacts on the healthcare profession nationally and internationally. Deliberative efforts to collate and communicate research and impact activities will be needed.	11.2.26	Work is already underway to increase the visibility of GSM's research. A new Research page has been developed for the website and will grow over the coming year. Internal visibility would be facilitated by inclusion on the RCSI research committee (recommendation 6) while the School is actively pursuing greater involvement in RSCI wide research events (eg conference) and cross-school PhD supervision.

PhD supervision and number growth will only be pursued where it advances the research of the school and benefits society, PhD students and supervisors. It will not be pursued as a revenue-based growth activity.

Internationally, the School collaborates in research from the global north to south, Ireland to the USA, local care-providers and international corporations, voluntary organisations and global bodies such as WHO. The International Research Advisory Committee and strategy will see a formalisation and develop of these strands. | SMT, AD, Head of Research, | Head of Research, Research Coordinator | June 2025 | • GSM website
• Graduating PhD students
• FMHS Annual Report | |

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Recommendation in order of priority	SAR Reference PRGR reference	Response / Action Planned	Responsibility for Action	Resources Implications	Deadline / timeframe	Measurement / Benchmarking	Outcome / Status
		In 2022 a research coordinator was employed to assist the Head of Research and Impact with the collation of research and impact activities.					
The increased utilisation and visibility of RCSI and GSM Research Support Services and funding to increase opportunities for Faculty to be included within large, funded research projects.	11.2.27	The combination of increased School visibility in the research life of RCSI, a new series of research development events, and dedicated GSM funding for conferences, seedcorn and personal development will be directed at increasing involvement in large grants.	EMT, Head of Research	Head of Research, Research Coordinator	Ongoing	• Scheduled events • Training attended	
Qualitative and quantitative data be analysed within the refreshed annual monitoring process to demonstrably inform decision making at a programme and School level.	11.2.28	See 11.2.14	TALC	See 11.2.14	See 11.2.14	See 11.2.14	See 11.2.14
Proportionate training for class representatives be secured from within RCSI or externally via the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).	11.2.29	GSM will source appropriate training for class representatives to be secured from within RCSI or externally via the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP).	EMT, GSM Professional Services	GSM Professional Services	Q2 2024	• Training attended	
GSM close feedback loops not only with students but also to external stakeholders including	11.2.30	GSM will present End of Module Reports and Annual Programme Reviews, once established to External Examiners.	EMT, GSM Academic Committee, Head of Examinations	Faculty, PCs	Ongoing	• Minutes of Exam Board meetings • Minutes of Advisory Board Meetings	

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Advisory Board members, to demonstrate the value and impact of their time.		Once established the Advisory Board will be updated on matters that they have contributed to as appropriate					
GSM Executive Management Team engage the HR Department in the identification of innovative solutions to increase the internationalisation of Faculty including the recruitment, training and onboarding of non-Irish domiciled Adjunct Faculty for digital-first delivery.	11.2.31	GSM will work with RCSI HR on the internationalisation of faculty within the constraints of visa regimes and alternative employment models.	HR	EMT, HR	Q1 2024	• International faculty recruited and retained	
The scalability and sustainability of Library support structures for academic writing skills, reflective writing, referencing and academic integrity be regularly reviewed to ensure the capacity is in place to underpin GSM growth and diversification strategy for teaching, learning and research.	11.2.32	The Academic Director and Head of Operations will meet with the library team bi-annually to review services, ensure the library is appropriately informed of developments and any changes in service demands.	AD, OM	Library team, GSM Faculty, GSM Professional Services	Completed	Bi-annual meeting with Library team, Uninterrupted online library services available to students	
GSM engage in dialogue with the SARA COMPASS Team to maximise the	11.2.33	GSM have begun a dialogue with the COMPPAS team in relation to available services. All GSM students have access to Spectrum Health	AD, OM	Spectrum Services, GSM Faculty, GSM	Q2 2024	• Proactive international sensitive supports	

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range of counselling and support services available to GSM's part-time students.		Service- a 24/7 counselling and mental health service with scaled up supports on a needs basis. Students also have access to the new Spectrum Life App & Service, a best in class digitally enabled wellbeing offering through their wellbeing platform and app providing 24/7 access to hours of clinically curated self-help content and wellbeing resources. The content focuses on nutrition, mindfulness, fitness, and a range of other area's to focus on. A communication strategy to promote supports will be developed. Training for supporting distressed students will also be sought for GSM staff in order that they can identify distressed student presentation in an online context.		Professional Services		- promoted and available to students. - Services available for distressed student.	
GSM captures and disseminates evidence of its impact (statistics, case studies, videos, podcasts etc.) on alumni and stakeholders nationally and internationally via its website and marketing materials. There is scope for GSM to build a clear and innovative communications strategy to ensure it showcases its achievements	11.2.34	GSM will work with marketing, communications and alumni department to capture impact stories and communicate these to stakeholders, alumni, prospective students and business development partners. GSM also contribute and site on the external stakeholder working group and will continue to share internally for wider dissemination information on the evidence of our impact through these routes. As per 11.2.26, the International Research Committee will actively work to promote the impact of GSM's research impact through the website and other appropriate channels.	EMT, GSM Professional Services, Head of Research	EMT, GSM Professional Services, Head of Research, Research Coordinator	Ongoing	- Visibility of impact on website - Other published materials	

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both internally and externally.							
GSM continues to contribute to RCSI governance and management structures to enhance its visibility and identify teaching and research collaborative opportunities.	11.2.35	GSM will continue to contribute to the full range of appropriate University bodies and committees as appropriate.	EMT, GSM Professional Services, GSM Faculty	EMT, GSM Professional Services, GSM Faculty	Ongoing	• Terms of References including committee memberships • Minutes of appropriate meetings	
Maximise the potential of the RCSI and GSM alumni networks for lifelong learning, continuous professional development, adjunct faculty and research opportunities.	11.2.36	GSM will continue to work with the Alumni department to explore novel opportunities to support alumni and student networking (eg local celebratory events in ME, International alumni events). Alumni and related stakeholders will be included within the new School Advisory board from 2022/23. Alumni and networking events will be employed as two-way channels which both disseminate the work of the School and provide opportunities for information and intelligence gathering in respect of learning, research and market needs.	EMT, Alumni Dept, GSM Professional Services	EMT, GSM Professional Services, Alumni	Ongoing	• Impact Case Studies • Scheduled Events • Evidence of market research	

Glossary of Acronyms:	
EMT	Executive Management Team
AD	Academic Director

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OM	Operations Manager
PC	Programme Coordinator
TALC	Teaching & Learning Committee
HR	Human Resources
ML	Module Leaders
PD	Programme Directors
QEO	Quality Enhancement Office