



## Peer Review Group Report

### Student Academic & Regulatory Affairs (SARA)

#### DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

Name of Unit	Student Academic and Regulatory Affairs					
Project Title	Internal Quality Review 2019					
Document Title	PRG Report					
This Document Comprises	DCS	TOC	Text	List of Tables	List of Figures	No. of Appendices
	1	1	27			1

Rev	Status	Author(s)	Reviewed By	Approved By	Office of Origin	Issue Date
1	Draftv1	PRG	QEO, PRG			Dec 2019
1	Final	PRG	SARA; PRG	PRG	QEO	July 2020

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>1</b>	<b>CONTEXT FOR REVIEW .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>OVERVIEW OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE UNIT.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>PLANNING, ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>FUNCTIONS, ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>SERVICE USERS AND FEEDBACK .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>ONGOING QUALITY ENHANCEMENT.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>SUMMARY OF COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>25</b>
	<b>APPENDIX 1: SITE VISIT SCHEDULE .....</b>	<b>28</b>

## 1 Context for Review

This report presents the findings of a quality review of Student Academic & Regulatory Affairs (SARA), at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI), which was undertaken in October 2019.

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 currently 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 & 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 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.

### 1.1 Methodology for Review

#### 1.1.1 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 College of the quality of the units' operations and facilitates a developmental process to effect improvement. The fundamental objectives of the review process are to:

- Monitor the quality of the student experience.
- Identify, encourage and disseminate good practice, and to identify challenges and how to address these.
- Provide an opportunity for units to test the effectiveness of their systems and procedures for monitoring and enhancing quality and standards.
- Encourage the development and enhancement of these systems, in the context of current and emerging provision.

- Inform the College's strategic planning process.
- Provide an external benchmark on practice.
- Provide public information on the College's capacity to assure the quality and standards of its awards. The College's implementation of its quality procedures also enables it to demonstrate how it discharges its 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.

### **1.1.2 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.

### **1.1.3 Membership of the Peer Review Group**

- Fiona Crozier, Independent Consultant (Chair)
- Claire Bohan, Director of Student Support and Development, Dublin City University
- Mark Hollingsworth, Director of Registry and Academic Affairs, University of Birmingham
- Kevin B. Nolan, Emeritus Professor, Royal College of Surgeons Ireland
- Jane Ratford, Head of Assessment Unit, Royal College of Physicians London
- Dale Whelehan, Doctoral student in Surgical Performance, Trinity College Dublin

### **1.1.4 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 College 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 PRG visited RCSI from 21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and held meetings with:

- The SARA management team
- Operational staff
- Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences (FMHS) undergraduate schools
- FMHS postgraduate schools
- The National University of Ireland (NUI)
- RCSI overseas campuses
- Postgraduate and professional faculties
- Strategic and operational business partners
- RCSI senior management team
- Faculty staff and students at the St Stephen's Green and Beaumont Hospital sites

## 2 Overview of the self-assessment process

The methodology for producing the SAR is described in section 1.2 of that document and comprised of:

- The convening of a cross-departmental coordinating committee.
- Three full departmental meetings.
- Individual team work on pertinent sections and a SWOT analyses.
- The use of student data and surveys of staff within the department and across RCSI.
- Four writing workshops, with the SAR available at all times on the shared drive for comment.

The final document was signed off by the Associate Director of SARA.

The senior management of SARA told the PRG that they did not feel that the SAR raised any surprises but that it allowed them to conduct a formal evaluation of the work that the last review of the Unit had engendered (the 'transformation project'). The Senior Management of SARA would have been pleased to have had more input into the writing workshops but told the panel that around 50% of staff attended these. Student involvement, beyond the use of extant data, was lacking and the panel was told that this was a difficulty across the institution – involving students in quality assurance and enhancement work is challenging, due to the nature of the programmes on which students are studying and their busy schedules. Also, Students' Union roles at RCSI are non-sabbatical which also impacts on their availability.

Operational staff agreed that they knew the process by which they could be involved in the drafting of the SAR but many of them said they were too busy to participate more fully. There was also agreement that, given the diversity of tasks in the Unit, it was unsurprising that there were 71 recommendations in the document.

The PRG believes that the SAR is a comprehensive and evaluative document containing many instances of self-criticism and reflection on how matters within the SARA remit might be improved. It is important that SARA is able to produce a workable QIP based on the recommendations in the SAR and in this report. Therefore, the PRG endorses all of the recommendations made in the SAR but advises a risk-based approach to rationalizing and prioritizing them. The PRG appreciated the care with which the SAR had been produced and also the open, honest and courteous way in which all members of SARA staff approached the interviews.

### 2.1 Commendation

- The reflective approach that was taken to the SAR and the openness and honesty with which staff approached the meetings with the review panel.

### 2.2 Recommendation

- The panel endorses the large number of recommendations contained in the SAR but advises SARA to rationalise them and prioritising those which will have the greatest impact on its work as a central Unit of RCSI and on current staff workload.

### 3 Introduction and Context of the Unit

Inspired by the RCSI mission to 'educate, nurture and discover for the benefit of human health', the mission of SARA is, 'Working together to support RCSI's community of students, graduates, trainees, candidates and academics to achieve their professional ambitions and personal goals by delivering excellent, expert services.'

The extent and complexity of SARA's role was clearly set out in its SAR. Whilst located in Dublin, the core nature of the Unit means that it supports international campuses in Bahrain and Malaysia, 19 postgraduate examination centres and a student community of over sixty nationalities and alumni. As RCSI's Registry and academic administrative hub, SARA's remit includes:

- Programme/year level end-to-end administrative support for the six years of the undergraduate medicine programme in Dublin.
- Liaison and support to PU-RCSI and RCSI Bahrain in relation to undergraduate medicine.
- Provision of 'central' administrative support to the Schools of Pharmacy, Physiotherapy and Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM) working alongside the schools' operations teams. This includes timetabling, class lists, examination logistics, administering student policies and all conferring processes.
- Provision of Registry services through the maintenance and implementation of student policies and procedures across all Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences (FMHS) programmes across all its campuses.
- Maintenance of the student record.
- Responsibility for accurate reporting of student numbers, progression and attrition.
- Administrative oversight of the Awards and Qualifications processes across FMHS for programmes mapped to the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
- Planning and delivering professional and postgraduate examinations in Ireland and twelve other countries.
- Supporting students to achieve their ambitions through CoMPPAS, RCSI's Centre for Mastery: Personal and Professional Success encompassing careers, learning access facilitation and disability, academic support, student welfare and language.

There are six members of the senior management team for SARA, headed by the Associate Director for Academic Affairs. The Unit is organised into four teams: the Professional and Postgraduate Exams team (PPE), the CoMPPAS team, the Registry Services team and the Operations and Examinations (O&E) team.

The Associate Director is a member of Academic Council and is in attendance at the Medicine and Health Sciences Board (MHSB). Members of the SARA team also provide updates, attend and present as required at these throughout the year. In this way, the Unit feeds into the governing bodies for the degree awarding and professional training activities of RCSI and also Academic Council. The latter is responsible for the implementation of policy determined by the MHSB, and addresses all matters

concerning the administration of RCSI's Irish and international schools. This includes student admissions, assessment, progression and welfare in all degree level programmes, all of which are key responsibilities of SARA.

RCSI's international campuses are of particular importance to the context in which SARA works; medical students from RCSI Bahrain, RCSI Dublin and Perdana University-RCSI (Malaysia) synchronously complete examinations that allow for the award of one common degree. The undergraduate medicine programme operates synchronously with the medical schools in Bahrain and Kuala Lumpur, which involves planning across three time zones. In practical terms, as well as the logistics in Dublin, some staff in the Unit are engaged in regular international travel to ensure governance of the programmes and delivery of examinations at undergraduate and professional qualification levels. These are rigorously maintained across time zones and international jurisdictions, whilst ensuring that the focus on the student and the candidate is not lost.

The review panel agrees strongly with SARA's statement that this is an 'extraordinary achievement'. The panel also recognised the 'unique logistical challenges' that the Unit manages on a day-to-day basis.

### **3.1 Commendation**

- The ability of the Registry, Operations and Examinations and Postgraduate and Professional Exams teams to manage a complex national and international environment.



## **4 Planning, Organisation and Management**

The vision for SARA is to 'provide an unrivalled student and candidate journey', with two key areas falling directly under its remit:

1. Provide a seamless student and candidate experience by designing and implementing streamlined student centric processes; and
2. Support students' early career readiness.

The PRG found and heard substantial evidence from students and staff across the institution that SARA was fulfilling this role despite the many challenges it faces. These include the lack of fit-for-purpose IT systems and processes which have grown organically and in response to a growth in student numbers and the complexity of the organisation. The ability to provide this experience to students is undoubtedly due to the commitment and dedication of staff at all levels but there is a risk to continuity of business if key staff with in-depth knowledge leave or are promoted, as there are numerous manual interventions required to allow the system to function. Knowledge appears to be largely reliant on individual members of staff rather than clearly documented procedures. The review panel noted that this was a risk to the academic integrity of the institution and the student experience.

Students appear unaware of the challenges faced by staff to ensure, for example, that exam results are published in a given timeframe or that examinations take place in a professional manner, but the pressure on staff is of concern to the panel.

### **4.1 Commendation**

- SARA is commended for clearly fulfilling the vision of a 'seamless student journey.'

### **4.2 Recommendation (SMT)**

- The PRG recommends a comprehensive review of all IT systems within SARA in order to optimise staff experience and expertise.

### **4.3 Recommendation (SARA senior team)**

- Review and document all policies and processes in the SARA office with a view to introducing clear policies and procedures.

### **4.4 4.1 Postgraduate and Professional Examinations (PPE)**

PPE is a small team consisting of a Manager and three Faculty Coordinators, each of which has a specific area of responsibility, split between the Faculty of Dentistry, Surgical Examinations and Pharmacy, Radiology, Ophthalmology and the facilitation of external examinations. The team is responsible for the end-to-end delivery of membership and fellowship written and clinical examinations on behalf of the RCSI, working closely with individual Faculties to deliver their work.

In their meetings with PPE, the PRG found a professional and focussed group of individuals who were committed to delivering a seamless service to examination candidates. It was clear that the team operates very effectively in complex national and international environments. This was reflected in feedback from candidates and examiners collected during the creation of the SAR and in meetings with the Faculties where it was clear to the PRG that PPE were held in very high regard.

Whilst the work of PPE is similar to the work of the rest of the SARA team, in particular Registry and O&E, it stands alone from SARA's activity in many key ways. This has clearly been reflected in its relatively new organisational structure whereby the team reports directly to the Associate Director for Academic Affairs, which appears to be working efficiently.

It was noted that each area of PPE activity has a single coordinator and cross-working opportunities are limited due to the volume of activity in each area, creating potential single points of failure across the team. The PRG felt this presented a significant risk to PPE's ability to maintain the seamless candidate experience to which they are committed.

The PRG noted that PPE's workload had increased significantly in recent years without a similar increase in staff resources. This increase appears to have been well managed to date without a negative impact on the delivery of examinations. It was however noted that, apart from one member of the team who has changed roles since joining in 2012, no other member of the team had been in post for longer than two years, so they were unable to comment on the true impact of the growth in candidate numbers on workload.

It was recognised by the PRG that PPE's ability to continue to deliver the high level of service which they are currently able to, is largely dependent on the goodwill of its staff and a focus on careful stakeholder management. It was acknowledged by the Faculties that PPE were often informed of changes that would impact their workload rather than consulted on planned changes. The current team structure and the continuous cycle of examinations allows for little staff downtime or strategic planning. Stakeholders spoke in positive terms about PPE's ability to resolve issues quickly and their responsiveness which was a credit to the team. However, the PRG felt that the lack of time to effectively succession plan, combined with the inevitable growth in candidate numbers/examination centres posed a significant risk to PPE's ability to continue to deliver business as usual.

In light of the above, it was clear to the review panel that strategic planning and planning for change should involve those staff affected and they should be facilitated in participating in planning discussions. The RCSI must recognise and act upon the risks to the student and candidate experience related to the workload and single points of failure in SARA, which currently prevent effective input from PPE and other members of SARA staff into the planning process.

#### **4.5 Recommendation (SMT)**

- In order to minimise the risk of single points of failure in SARA, the RCSI should ensure that SARA staff are enabled to participate in strategic planning discussions and in planning for change. This may require an examination of the current staffing resource. In order to maximise on the additional value added by experienced staff, SARA IT systems need to be modernised and made fit-for-purpose for the functions fulfilled in this office.

## 4.6 CoMPPAS

The CoMPPAS department was established in 2016 and operates a flat integrated multidisciplinary team structure. Immediate line-management is provided by the Head of Student Engagement and Development, who in turn reports to the Associate Director for Academic Affairs.

CoMPPAS staffing comprise of nine FTEs:

- Head of Student Engagement and Development (1 FTE).
- Student Welfare Team (2 FTE).
- Career Development Team (currently 2 FTE, with a further FTE recently approved).
- Communications and Language (1 FTE).
- Academic Development and Learning Access and Facilitation - Disability (1 FTE).
- Administration Team (2 FTE), one of whom is based at the reception desk in St Stephen's Green, and as such provides 'first point of access' to all the services (O&E, Registry, Fees and PPE) offered.

Working Environment: SARA staff are located largely in an open-plan office, with separate accommodation for members of the CoMPPAS team. Three separate meeting rooms adjacent to the CoMPPAS open-plan office allows for private space for students to meet with staff, as required. The SAR identified challenges with the physical space, with insufficient meeting space available for staff members to meet students on a confidential basis. The PRG supports this concern and, although cognisant of the difficulty for all organisations to provide sufficient suitable spaces, suggests that the space requirements be assessed, with a view to identifying additional meeting rooms for staff/student interactions. It did note, however, that the close proximity of staff undoubtedly allows for close collaboration.

CoMPPAS staff members told the PRG that there was a high degree of referrals within the service to other members of the team but, given the high volume of students seeking advice and guidance from the service, the lack of a sophisticated 'case management' system prevents colleagues from sharing information sufficiently, to ensure that the students are receiving a seamless service and that the risk to the student is minimised. The PRG did note the development of a Microsoft Access welfare case-management database and the development of a notes function in Quercus, which, in the absence of a CRM system, provides some level of support for the team to share information.

The lack of regular team meetings was highlighted in the SAR as a challenge, which, the PRG believes, exacerbates the potential for a disjointed approach to the work of the Unit.

## 4.7 Recommendation

- As well as endorsing the recommendation by SARA that regular team meetings be introduced, the PRG also recommends the establishment of annual planning days for CoMPPAS at off-peak periods.

- The PRG recommends a review of all collaborative arrangements across RCSI which should provide an in-depth examination of the student journey with a documented overview of the 'touch points'.

#### 4.8 Operations and Examinations (O&E)

The SAR, and evidence drawn out during the site visit, make it clear that the SARA O&E team are hard-working and conscientious. To organise examinations on the scale they do, across multiple international sites, is a significant achievement. There are undoubted challenges that arise from the fact that the team is split across two sites (St Stephen's Green and Beaumont Hospital) and also that the team is still in somewhat of a state of transition. That said, academic colleagues and students considered the team to be professional, approachable and to always ensure that a good service was delivered. Where there were frustrations (e.g. from students related to the timely notification of results), it was acknowledged that this was outside of SARA's control.

There are likely to be further challenges and opportunities in the future and the College should consider moving to online exams: it is not sustainable to continue delivering 'offline' examinations into the future as digital is the direction of travel; students are already voicing this as an area in which they expect to see progress. Until there are improvements in exams processes, and while it is still necessary for staff to spend considerable time overseas, it is important to ensure that the work of staff is covered while they are away and also that they are able to access systems remotely from abroad.

It is clear that O&E delivers an exceptional service but evidence suggests that this is often in spite of – rather than because of – the systems and infrastructure with which they work with. It is not the intention of the PRG to add significantly to the number of recommendations but to endorse those already made in the SAR. The introduction of monthly O&E team meetings, for example, will undoubtedly help communication. Nonetheless, it hopes that some consideration of the issues raised by the SAR and this report will help to move the O&E team forward into a position with less inherent risk.

#### 4.9 Registry

The SAR notes that Registry 'is the regulator within RCSI and is responsible for the administration of core academic matters, including registration of students; the approval of new and review of existing programmes of study; RCSI and NUI award boards and academic conferrings; medals and prizes, and the maintenance of the student record' (SAR, p. 33). This is certainly what a Registry *should* be but this was not always evidenced during the site visit. While Registry staff are undoubtedly committed and engaged, they do not appear to be fully empowered to ensure consistent, transparent treatment for all and to help students and staff to understand their responsibilities. For example, it is apparent that there are challenges in ensuring that information is provided by some academic colleagues in adherence to agreed timelines and this adds considerable pressure within the process.

The SAR, and comments made during the PRG visit, acknowledge that there is more work to do regarding linkages between St Stephen's Green and the Beaumont Hospital site. There can still be a sense of dislocation for staff and this is a real challenge as there are no easy fixes. SARA Management understand this to be an issue and there has been activity to address it. The Associate Director and/or other Management staff might look further at good practice around multi-site working at other institutions to see what might be adopted at RCSI.

In order for an academic Unit to deliver high-value education it needs clear and streamlined delivery processes and robust quality assurance. To enable this, Registry must be able to set firm deadlines and expect academic buy-in for adherence to regulations and codes of practice. Evidence from the site visit was that there was often some uncertainty about Registry's level of authority, leading to frustration on both sides. An empowered Registry would be able to enforce deadlines and be supported to do so by Senior Management. This matter needs a firm steer from RCSI's SMT. Registry is an important link to, and point of assurance, for NUI; this alone should highlight to SMT the risks associated with issues arising in the Registry space.

#### **4.10 Commendations**

- The commitment and dedication of all teams within SARA – O&E, PPE, Registry and CoMPPAS – to RCSI, its staff and students, despite some of the significant challenges that it faces on a daily basis.
- The extent to which all teams within SARA support academic colleagues, and the academics' recognition of the Unit's professionalism.

#### **4.11 Recommendations**

- RCSI SMT should provide visible support to SARA as the 'regulator within RCSI.'
- RCSI SMT should recognise and act upon the risks to the student and candidate experience as related to the work of SARA.

## 5 Functions, Activities and Processes

SARA undertakes high risk and high-volume work and their ability to manage the complex national and international environment in which they operate is impressive and compares well with other provisions in the sector.

The importance of a well-functioning Unit like SARA to any academic institution is undeniable and, while there was evidence, during the site visit, of a certain amount of understanding from academic colleagues that they could not deliver what they do without support from professional services such as SARA, there also seemed to be, in places, a lack of appreciation. References were made to the exacting nature of some SARA work and the SAR noted the possible external perception of the Unit as balancing the supportive and regulatory. Some colleagues noted a lack of understanding of the function of SARA staff.

It is unfortunate that RCSI is not able to access the networking opportunities provided by membership of the Irish Universities Association (IUA): the Associate Director may wish to reach out to colleagues in similar institutions to set up opportunities for staff to network and share good practice. A more self-confident approach from SARA would be beneficial in making clear to colleagues the benefits that SARA brings to the institution and this needs to be complemented by support from SMT in championing the Unit, supporting improvements to systems and processes in the O&E area and underlining the authority of Registry as the gatekeepers of the academic student experience.

### 5.1 Postgraduate & Professional Examinations (PPE)

PPE manages a number of complex high-stakes examinations effectively and efficiently, and currently enjoys the full support of the Faculty staff, examiners and examination candidates. Both candidate and examiner feedback collected during the compilation of the SAR was overwhelmingly positive which closely reflected the commitment and professionalism the PRG saw from the team itself in stakeholder meetings.

It was clear to the PRG that PPE currently delivers a high-quality service to all stakeholders despite a number of potential barriers to delivery.

The PRG noted that the delivery model currently employed by PPE is very resource intensive, combining both exam-day, on-site support for clinical examinations and the day-to-day coordination of back-office processes for the end-to-end delivery of assessments. This puts a significant amount of pressure on the individual Faculty coordinators to deliver a wide range of high-quality services on a cyclical basis.

The PRG was concerned to hear about exam delivery systems that were not integrated, entailed a high level of manual data entry or transfer, and were inaccessible to the Faculty coordinators during the significant periods of time they were working away from the office. Whilst some stakeholders seemed reassured by the manual nature of systems, the PRG recognised that increasing candidate numbers and reliance on standalone legacy systems presented a significant risk to business continuity.

The PRG concurs that investment in an examination management system should be prioritised but recommends that the RCSI SMT reflect on the reputational impact a further lack of investment will have on the candidate experience (see recommendation under 4.5).

The PRG noted that a significant section of the SAR is devoted to recommendations relating to the management of the pool of examiners for postgraduate and professional examinations. The concerns raised in the SAR focus on examiner recruitment, training, management and retention. These concerns were not reflected in examiner feedback or meetings the PRG held with stakeholders. However, the PRG recognises that this does not necessarily mean that the concerns are not valid.

An effective examiner pool is critical to the delivery of PPE within RCSI, and PPE has clearly identified a number of risks relating to its management. When the PRG met with PPE they seemed uncertain of what influence they could/should have in this area.

Within the recommendation in section 2 of this report, the PRG highlights the need for PPE to rationalise and review the recommendations relating to PPE examiners and prioritise the areas where they can have the most impact.

Workload in PPE has already been covered in section 4. However, the growth in candidate numbers, coupled with lack of infrastructure investment is likely to have a detrimental impact on staff wellbeing and retention if it is not addressed.

PPE should be proud of the work that they do and should be given the support to develop and modernise their processes, engage in the planning of this development and therefore, in turn, address risks to the candidate experience.

## **5.2 CoMPPAS**

The Centre for Mastery: Personal, Professional and Academic Success (CoMPPAS) is a multidisciplinary centre of excellence and was established to 'facilitate continuous growth and skills advancement for future healthcare leaders'. Its objective is to promote and deliver an integrated and highly responsive student support experience across the student lifecycle that facilitates and resources the student in their journey to academic, personal and professional success.



**Figure 6 Overview of RCSI Centre for Mastery: Personal, Professional & Academic Success**

Despite its recent inception, both staff and students across the institution appear to be very aware of the activities of the department and highly complimentary of the impact on the student experience, with one student unreservedly exclaiming he ‘loved them’ and that every student should work with them! Use of social media and high-quality publications increase visibility of the service and ensures that students are aware of the supports available if required.

The Unit offers student welfare, careers advice, supports for students with disabilities, academic support, language support and outreach activities addressing student wellbeing. The service offering is largely grouped around supporting students along their academic journey, rather than covering other aspects of their lives such as financial difficulties. Counselling and psychiatry are provided through CoMPPAS via the RCSI Counselling Service and the CoMPPAS Student Assistance Programme (CSAP), which is off-site and which provides a very comprehensive suite of services to the students and is highly regarded by students. Students can access these services directly or by referral.

As appears to be the case in other departments in SARA, the CoMPPAS department is reliant on a small team of individuals who specialise in particular areas. Particular concern was expressed around the academic development and disability function, which is delivered by a single member of the team. In this context, continuity of service delivery is problematic if the member of staff is on leave. It was not clear from discussions, however, whether students are experiencing long waiting lists to avail of this service. The PRG believes that it could be beneficial to review the academic support resources to ensure that students are being adequately supported in their academic skills development.

The PRG heard about a number of student wellbeing campaigns organised by the team, which are rolled out at different times in the year. These initiatives span a number of student-related areas such as mental health, resilience, self-help and suicide awareness. Campaigns are delivered in collaboration with other Units such as the Students’ Union but the panel were not given the impression that collaboration was forthcoming from all student support functions in the institution. It would appear



that collaboration from student clubs and societies in such ‘student wellbeing’ campaigns could only enhance the impact for the student body.

The PRG was informed about the increased focus on career development within the College and was provided with evidence of substantial online materials for students. The careers agenda, however, does not appear to be central to the institution and the current staffing levels would appear to be inadequate to deliver on the careers mission. The panel welcomes the addition of a member of staff to this team.

CoMPPAS provides a high-quality multi-disciplinary service for students of RCSI and is well managed. With the complexity of the student population and the high percentage of international students on campus, this functionality is key to student success and wellbeing. In this context, the panel recommends the following:

### **5.3 Recommendations**

- An assessment of their IT systems, particularly a CRM system to allow for the safe and confidential sharing of information and reporting.
- A re-evaluation of their physical space, to allow for confidential conversations with students and staff wellbeing.
- The development of strong KPIs and an examination of the impact of minimum staffing levels on student waiting times.
- Greater collaboration with student bodies to ensure student-centred practices.

### **5.4 Operations and Examinations**

As already noted, the O&E team do an excellent job in challenging circumstances. It is understood that a complete review of the assessment process is underway with the aim of co-creating new SOPs and timelines and this is welcomed.

Issues with Quercus as a system were noted and the risks associated with unsuitable IT systems is something that the College SMT needs to understand and act upon. However, it is clear that challenges are not solely systemic, as granular detail behind Marks and Standards – which drive the building of the calculators in Quercus – is not always available from academics at the time in the cycle when it is required. This points to a process issue and is something that needs to be addressed. As stated above, SARA needs to be empowered to receive the necessary information on time and, if this critical information is not received, then the matter needs to be addressed through the management structure.

There was a perception from senior IT colleagues during the visit that SARA staff are often too busy to engage appropriately with IT Department in planning systemic changes; this is not something which cannot be ignored as it will not resolve current issues. SARA staff must be able to appropriately engage and the IT Department must utilise SARA’s user expertise and knowledge for there to be any form of beneficial improvement. If capacity is genuinely an issue, then a resource needs to be provided to enable SARA engagement or problems will continue and, potentially, increase in the longer term. The use of Excel for examination calculations is a significant risk from the perspective of both resilience and

data accuracy. It is also inefficient. SARA needs to be enabled to engage in the development of IT systems and processes to mitigate or eliminate this risk. Training for staff in Excel, while important in the short to medium term, does not address the problems associated with working in this way. See also recommendation under 4.2.

The challenge associated with academic colleagues making late changes to marking schemes or providing marks after set deadlines was clearly evident to the PRG. It is vital that a Unit such as SARA is able to set and enforce deadlines and it is not reasonable to expect this to be done by frontline staff. Addressing this matter will mitigate the risks inherent in this ad hoc way of working, improve the student experience, and reduce the workload pressures on SARA staff.

The purpose and value of a separate Quality and Operations (Q&O) team in the School of Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences SPBS is not clear. There are issues relating to the administration of examinations and exam boards in SPBS (e.g. in Semester 2 2018/19) which have led to dissatisfaction. It was not clear from the SAR, nor from the site visit, if these issues were caused by, exacerbated by, or the basis of the formation of the SPBS Q&O team. Given the amount of recent change, it is not recommended to make structural changes to the operational set-up but this is something which the Associate Director for Academic Affairs should keep under review.

## 5.5 Recommendations

- The panel recommends that a clear calendar of academic deadlines be created for all stakeholders in key processes through the year (e.g. submission of examination results; issuing of examination results etc.).
- That SARA is explicitly empowered to enforce agreed deadlines or to escalate missed deadlines to an appropriate senior authority.

## 5.6 RCSI Registry

Registry clearly does an exceptional job in what is a challenging environment. Registry is, by definition an area which must on occasion challenge academic colleagues and/or students; it requires adherence to deadlines and procedures in order to facilitate the academic journey. It is a truism that the work of a Unit like SARA is only really noticed when it goes wrong and this was certainly something apparently felt by the staff on the ground as evidenced by the site visit. The appreciation of staff by academic staff and students is mentioned throughout this report. Further College recognition (perhaps in the form of a prize for professional services staff), along with opportunities for promotion and professional development, would go some way towards addressing the turnover of staff. This issue was raised in several meetings, and the challenges it raises in an environment where it can take a full year's cycle to understand processes and procedures cannot be underestimated.

The administration of Appeals, Exceptional Circumstances, and Disciplinary Committees is a complex and challenging area of work. The number of Exceptional Circumstances claims increased significantly in the 2018/19 academic year and this should be recognised in terms of staff achievement in dealing with this caseload. It should also be monitored to ensure that any trend is adequately resourced.

The challenges around the Quercus system were a recurring theme and have been noted above. In addition to student administration, reporting from Quercus is a challenge and this presents a real risk

as incorrect information can adversely impact a student's experience and outcome. For an institution that would see itself as at the forefront of healthcare education, archaic and inefficient data tracking is unacceptable. Business Information represents a tangible asset to an academic Unit and should be used to inform trends and developments. Once again this requires support from SMT to ensure that priorities are aligned and understood across RCSI divisions at a strategic and risk-management level.

Ultimately, and as already noted, Registry has a key role to play in ensuring academic integrity – and thus the value proposition and student experience of RCSI. To do this they need to be able to set appropriate deadlines, and expect these to be met. Registry needs to be able to either enable delivery of the academic programme and pedagogic innovation or explain to academic colleagues the limitations set by professional and regulatory bodies. To do this, Registry needs to operate from a position of respected professional expertise and this should be the lived reality for the College, cascading from senior colleagues down. SMT needs to provide visible support to SARA as the guardians of academic regulations and governance within RCSI.

It was further noted during the discussions that there is no student representation in Disciplinary proceedings. This is the norm in other institutions across Ireland and should be considered as a possibility.

## **5.7 Recommendations**

- That RCSI considers introducing a Professional Staff Recognition Award to award staff for exceptional service.
- That the College assures itself that the importance of Business Information is well understood and taken seriously. Robust and appropriate information systems should be introduced with the full engagement of SARA at an early stage.
- That SARA is explicitly empowered to enforce agreed deadlines or to escalate missed deadlines to an appropriate senior authority.

## **6 Management of Resources**

SARA and its constituent teams are dedicated, hard-working and strive, despite challenges, to fulfil their mission of providing an unrivalled student and candidate journey. The transformation from its predecessor has been dramatic. From the SAR report and interviews with all stakeholder groups it became clear that all the SARA teams deliver outstanding service to candidates, students and staff.

The nature of its work necessitates close co-operation (sometimes at weekends and out of hours) with several other Units such as Conference and Events, Bookings, Estates and Facilities, Department of Anatomy, the Simulation Department and overseas colleagues. All of these collaborations work very efficiently thanks to excellent planning and goodwill.

In relation to staffing, recruitment/replacement planning is carried out via meetings with the appropriate HR officer with budgets submitted to SMT for approval. A five-year financial plan is adopted. There seems to be some lack of consultation/collaboration between departments whose plans overlap (e.g. IT and SARA) and this should be addressed. A source of stress is the staff turnover and lack of overlap between outgoing and new employees with resultant loss of expertise in the relevant areas. Back-filling to alleviate this problem is not a satisfactory solution.

There was much concern expressed at meetings with the SARA teams regarding work overload; having to work at very short notice late into the evenings; having to work at home during time off; lack of promotion opportunities and other rewards and no real opportunities for PDP despite statements that this is supported by the College. In order to undertake any form of PDP, cover would be needed from other members of SARA for the members taking courses. Time off in lieu for late night or weekend work is reportedly not feasible as there appears to be no time to avail of it. Despite these difficulties, the dedication of the teams was commendable as confirmed in student and staff surveys and in interviews during the visit.

### **6.1 Enabling technologies/IT systems**

There was very heavy criticism of the inefficiencies of the enabling technologies/IT systems, in particular Quercus (only one person spoke well of this) and the frustrations that arose from these. If these inefficiencies were corrected, the work carried out by SARA could more accurately be gauged. SARA staff should be facilitated to participate in the planning and project meetings that impact on their work area, such as those in IT.

### **6.2 CoMPPAS**

The SARA Staff are accommodated in a large, bright, open-plan office, although the CoMPPAS staff office is cramped. There is some space for confidential consultations with students, but this is reported to be insufficient. Soundproofing in the main office needs to be improved.

### **6.3 Commendations**

- Competent hard-working team intent on providing a seamless student/candidate experience. SARA provides excellent support to academic colleagues and this is reflected in their recognition of SARA's professionalism.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

- See recommendations under sections 4 and 5 above.

## 7 Service Users and Feedback

### 7.1 Feedback from students

Student feedback on SARA in 2016 showed only moderate satisfaction with its services, which SARA addressed by developing student-centric processes and promoting student self-service. A QIP was devised and shared with Academic Council to galvanise its support. Since then, evaluation results have been improving year-on-year. Student satisfaction with CoMPPAS was very positive indeed as confirmed by the free text comments in the SAR document, which were corroborated by comments during meetings at the site visit. Examples include:

*'XXXX was extremely helpful when I required her guidance on a personal matter that was affecting my college performance. She also checked in with me over the Christmas break, which I greatly appreciated'.*

*'Very comprehensive resources. Counselling services are by far the best student support services in the country. Well done.'*

Sudden and frequent changes to timetables were a source of much annoyance to students with SARA Office the brunt of this. At Academic Council the CEO addressed the issue and emphasised the need to avoid timetable changes. Lockdown dates for timetables were introduced as a result and greater timetable stability occurred. From meetings of the PRG with student focus groups it is clear that the problem, although lessened, still exists; for example, students commented on occasions when staff did not arrive for their lecture – it was discovered that this is often due to timetabling errors.

### 7.2 Staff comments

Staff comments in the survey were also very favourable, particularly with respect to CoMPPAS where the only concern amongst staff was the level of their awareness of the services available and how to direct students to these.

### 7.3 Stakeholder feedback

Feedback from stakeholders on all aspects of SARA's work was generally good. Nonetheless, from the stakeholder feedback received, the O&E team in particular has identified four main areas of concern to be addressed: earlier and more accurate examination schedules; timetable structure and stability; lack of timely responses to emails and examination congestion.

The number of respondents from surgical and dental candidates was poor (30.6% and 42.8%, respectively) but strongly positive. PG dental and surgical examiners were very positive on all aspects of the organisation and running of the examination.

### 7.4 Commendation

- Feedback from stakeholders suggests that SARA continually strives to improve services, some of which are already of a very high standard.

**7.5 Recommendation:**

- The Unit should raise awareness amongst Faculty about the services available, particularly in CoMPPAS, and should work with students as stakeholders to address the concerns they raise.

## 8 Ongoing Quality Enhancement

### 8.1 Major projects

Quality assurance and enhancement are well organised and managed through SARA's QA processes within the College. They are coordinated by the Quality Enhancement Office (QEO) in Dublin in association with the Universities Act, (1997). A large amount of the work conducted by SARA is focused on major projects in order to improve the experience for students and staff alike. These initiatives are done in conjunction with College-led projects such as #BetterRCSI.

One of the largest projects that the SARA team has embraced is the reinvigoration and improvement of the Quercus system. This system is used for management of admissions, registration and fees for the majority of RCSI's undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Its interface and usability is pivotal for the staff and student experience of RCSI functions. It is recommended that Quercus be used for its prime functionality going forward and that alternative processes be placed to support the additional functions that are required. Engagement with academic staff to adhere to deadlines established by SARA is also pivotal to this process. There are a series of remaining issues with Quercus including difficulty in producing meaningful data outputs as well as the sustainability of the use of the service due to poor understanding amongst all staff of its ability. Training programmes, led by Quercus champions within the subsections of SARA will assist with this process. This process and programme can be established as recommended through the establishment of a QIP working group amongst the Unit. Further engagement with initiatives such as #BetterRCSI will assist in streamlining some of the IT services provided and cross-pollination of work provided by support structures should be embedded to ensure a streamlined 'seamless' student experience journey.

An incident management framework was established within the Unit in 2017 to investigate, report on and manage incidents and near misses in SARA. While this initiative is welcomed, and was introduced in good spirit to promote a positive organisational culture, uptake and experience of the initiative has not been good. Only over a third of SARA staff have found the initiative to be useful in reducing a 'no blame' culture in the department. Sustainability of the framework may be supported through a campaign within the Unit to reduce the pressure staff are facing with regards to error-making. This will support collegiality amongst staff and reduce the risk of burnout. Similarly, seeking feedback from staff within the Unit on how the initiative can be made less burdensome should be considered – including a move away from paper-based recording.

One of the largest projects undertaken by SARA is the 'Clinical Placement Improvement Project'. This student-facing project is extremely positive and will likely have a major impact on the student experience when completed. It also shows the responsiveness of SARA staff to student feedback and timely action to same. It has been hugely successful to date, with positive feedback from all stakeholders. Clinical placement provision is currently a manual process using Excel which is highly time consuming and likely contributed to the stark amount of changes (905) in the Med 5 programme as referenced by the SAR team. As part of this initiative, and in line with the vision of this project to provide a seamless student journey, SARA staff should consider seeking feedback and input from students to its design and implementation going forward. This could be captured through formal liaison with Student Union officers or by organising a series of focus groups across programme years to understand what changes will make the most impact to the student experience. This could be done in conjunction with the recently signed Student Partnership Agreement in RCSI. In addition, further engagement with clinical academics is required for the successful embedding of this process and efforts should be made to increase academic-led changes through greater transparency and dissemination of project outputs. An automated clinical placement planning tool is extremely innovative, and SARA should consider implementing one with the view to incorporating student



preferences; student choice is a huge opportunity to provide a tailored educational experience, whilst remaining compliant with medical council regulations.

## 8.2 Other projects

Outside of the major projects being conducted to enhance quality in SARA, there are several other examples of a quality culture within the Unit's sub-areas. In PPE there has been successful implementation of initiatives such as an applicant management system for Fellowship examinations in Dentistry. Feedback from candidates engaged in examinations has been extremely positive and staff should be commended for their efforts to enhance the quality of services they provide.

The CoMPPAS service is extremely positively received by students, and the services they provide undoubtedly promote a positive experience for RCSI students. The plan to update the iBook to all student laptops from 2020 is a clear example of making their services accessible and transparent for all students. The RCSI career readiness programme and the Professional and Academic Student Support (PASS) programme were documented in the SAR but the panel did not find any evidence of these interesting initiatives being actioned. CoMPPAS has been responsive to areas for development across the College including their leadership in addressing policy gaps in relation to fitness to study. There is clear evidence of forward planning and strategy within the Unit, and they have successfully secured ESF funding to expand their range of reasonable accommodations. Their projects all ensure a student-centred approach to support structures thus ensuring a positive teaching and learning experience for students.

Finally, O&E must be commended for the dedication to their role which was evident throughout the review process. It is clear that the team is extremely responsive, often at last minute, to cater to the needs of students and academics alike. This is most evident through their provision of examinations before the Christmas period to ensure students have sufficient time to recover from a busy academic term. In addition, the team has a strong sense of collegiality and their input should be further sought in project implementation on a more regular basis to reduce the risk of last minute task completion.

## 8.3 Commendations

- A strong and efficient workforce which is extremely responsive and adaptive to feedback.
- A forward-thinking and reflective team who have valuable thoughts on how to improve the service provided.
- Successful completion of several initiatives across the Unit which has had a huge impact on experiences for student and staff alike.
- A core support structure in the College which is successfully fulfilling its own mission and vision while complementing that of RCSI as a higher education institution.
- A service that is highly regarded by students, both for efficiency and approachability, as evident through formal and informal feedback mechanisms.

## 8.4 Recommendations

- Quercus should be used for its prime functionality going forward, with college-wide engagement from all staff on how best to use it appropriately.
- SARA should train and champion individuals within departments to promote Quercus sustainability.
- SARA should establish a QIP Working Group with appropriate representation, to address internal quality issues, such as the incident management framework, as well as externally influenced quality issues. This group will also work on the QIP arising out of this review.
- It is recommended that SARA formally establish a stronger relationship with the student body in co-design and implementation of student-facing projects such as the Clinical Placement Improvement Project.

## 9 Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

### 9.1 Commendations

- The reflective approach that was taken to the SAR and the openness and honesty with which staff approached the meetings with the review panel.
- The commitment and dedication of all teams within SARA – O&E, PPE, Registry and COMPPAS - to RCSI, its staff and students, despite some of the significant challenges that it faces on a daily basis.
- The extent to which SARA supports academic colleagues, and academics' recognition of the department's professionalism.
- The ability of the Registry, Operations and Examinations and Postgraduate and Professional Exams teams to manage a complex national and international environment.
- SARA is commended for clearly fulfilling the vision of a 'seamless student journey.'
- Competent hard-working team intent on providing a seamless student/candidate experience. SARA provides excellent support to academic colleagues and this is reflected in their recognition of SARA's professionalism.
- Feedback from stakeholders suggests that SARA continually strives to improve services, some of which are already of a very high standard.
- A strong and efficient workforce which is extremely responsive and adaptive to feedback.
- A committed team who is always seeking to improve their work, both through efficiency and focus to ensure a seamless student experience in RCSI.
- A forward-thinking and reflective team who have valuable thoughts on how to improve the service provided.
- Successful completion of several initiatives across the Unit which has had a huge impact on experiences for student and staff alike.
- A core support structure in the College which is successfully fulfilling its own mission and vision while complementing that of RCSI as a higher education institution.
- A service that is highly regarded by students, both for efficiency and approachability, as evident through formal and informal feedback mechanisms.

## 9.2 Recommendations

- The panel endorses the large number of recommendations contained in the SAR but advises SARA to rationalise them and prioritise those which will have greatest impact on its work as a central Unit of RCSI and on current staff workload.
- (SMT): The Panel recommends a comprehensive review of all IT systems within SARA in order to optimise staff experience and expertise.
- That RCSI's SMT recognise and act upon the risks to the student and candidate experience as related to the work of SARA, specifically in relation to IT systems and staff workload.
- An assessment of ComPPAS IT systems, with particular consideration for a CRM system to allow for the safe and confidential sharing of information and reporting.
- It is recommended that Quercus be used for its prime functionality going forward, with college wide engagement from all staff on how best to use it appropriately.
- It is recommended that SARA should train and champion individuals within departments to promote Quercus sustainability.
- In order to minimise the risk of single points of failure in SARA, the RCSI should ensure that SARA staff are enabled to participate in strategic planning discussions and in planning for change. This may require an examination of the current staffing resource. In order to maximise on the additional value added by experienced staff, SARA IT systems need to be modernised and made fit-for-purpose for the functions fulfilled in this office.
- (SMT) In order to minimise the risk of single points of failure in the SARA department, the College should ensure that SARA staff participate in strategic planning discussions and in planning for change.
- (SMT) SMT should provide visible support to SARA as the 'regulator within RCSI.'
- The panel recommends that a clear calendar of academic deadlines be created for all stakeholders in key processes through the year (e.g. submission of examination results; issuing of examination results etc.)
- SARA should be explicitly empowered to enforce agreed deadlines or to escalate missed deadlines to an appropriate senior authority.
- Introduce a professional award of excellence for professional and administrative staff.
- (SARA senior team): Review and document all policies and processes in the SARA office with a view to introducing clear policies and procedures.
- The development of strong KPIs in ComPPAS and an examination of the impact of minimum staffing levels on student waiting times.

- The panel recommends a review of all collaborative arrangements across RCSI which should provide an in-depth examination of the student journey with a documented overview of the 'touch points.'
- The department should raise awareness amongst faculty about the services available, particularly in CoMPPAS, and should work with students as stakeholders to address the concerns they raise.
- As well as endorsing the recommendation by SARA that regular team meetings be introduced, the panel also recommends the establishment of annual planning days for CoMPPAS at off peak periods.
- A re-evaluation of CoMPPAS physical space, to allow for confidential conversations with students and staff well-being.
- Greater collaboration with student bodies to ensure student-centred practices.
- It is recommended that SARA formally establish a stronger relationship with the student body in co-design and implementation of student-facing projects such as the Clinical Placement Improvement Project.
- It is recommended that a QIP working group be established with appropriate representation to address internal quality issues, such as the incident management framework, as well as externally influenced quality issues.

## Appendix 1: Site Visit Schedule

### S.A.R.A. Internal Quality Review - Site Visit Schedule 21 – 24 October 2019

#### Evening prior to site visit – 21<sup>st</sup> Oct

<b>Dur. mins</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Meeting Theme</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>1600 – 1630</b>	Welcome & Introduction for PRG Director of Quality and Quality Reviews Manager	PRG, QEO	Robert Smith Room
<b>90</b>	<b>1630 – 1845</b>	Private planning meeting for members of the Peer Review Group	PRG	Robert Smith Room
	<b>1900 – 2100</b>	Dinner	PRG, QEO	To be confirmed

**Day 1 – Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October**

<b>Dur.</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Meeting No.</b>	<b>Meeting Theme</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Venue</b>
	<b>0845</b>		Review of preparatory work. Tea/coffee on arrival		
<b>60</b>	<b>09.10 – 10.10</b>	<b>M1</b>	<b>Meeting with SARA Management Team</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> Current strategy, challenges and future direction Organisational design, governance, management, quality, resources, staff and facilities Collaboration, interdependence, teamwork, quality and empowerment	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
<b>50</b>	<b>10.15 – 11.05</b>	<b>M2a</b>	<b>Meeting with Operational Staff</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> working environment, career development and opportunities, empowerment, team work, collaboration and support, reward and recognition	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room or Presidents Meeting Room
<b>20</b>	<b>11.10 – 11.30</b>		Tea / coffee. Private meeting time for PRG		Robert Smith Room
<b>50</b>	<b>11.35 – 12.25</b>	<b>M2b</b>	<b>Meeting with Operational Staff</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> working environment, career development and opportunities, empowerment, team work, collaboration and support, reward and recognition	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room or Presidents Meeting Room
<b>40</b>	<b>12.30 – 13.10</b>		Lunch & private meeting time for PRG		Robert Smith Room
<b>30</b>	<b>13.15 – 13.45</b>	<b>M3</b>	<b>Meeting with Faculty Medicine &amp; Health Sciences Undergraduate Schools– School of Medicine</b>	PRG; see list of attendees	Presidents Meeting Room Via VC to Boardroom Beaumont
<b>25</b>	<b>13.50 – 14.15</b>	<b>M4</b>	Tour of Unit Facilities: 123 St Stephen's Green	PRG	

45	14.15 – 15.00	M5	Meeting with Faculty Medicine & Health Sciences Undergraduate Schools – PBS & Physiotherapy	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
30	15.10 – 15.40	M6	Meeting with NUI	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
20	15.40 – 16.00		Tea/coffee Private meeting time for PRG		Robert Smith Room
50	16.10 – 17.00	M7	Meeting with Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences Postgraduate schools and programmes Theme/focus: Section 5,6 and 7	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
60	17.00 – 18.00		Review of afternoon's meetings.		Robert Smith Room
	19.00 – 21.00		PRG Dinner if required	PRG	Hotel



**Day 2 – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October**

<b>Dur. mins</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Meeting No.</b>	<b>Meeting Theme</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Venue</b>
25	08.30		Private meeting time for PRG	PRG	Robert Smith Room
40	09.00 – 09.40	<b>M7</b>	<b>Meeting with RCSI overseas campuses:</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> Support	PRG; see list of attendees	Presidents Meeting Room Via VC
45	09.50 – 10.35	<b>M8</b>	<b>Meeting with Postgraduate &amp; Professional Faculties</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> Service Level Agreements, funding, resources, future developments	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
20	10.40 – 11.00		Tea/coffee private meeting time for PRG		
40	11.00 – 11.40	<b>M9</b>	<b>Meeting with Business Partners: Strategic</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> Relationships, service levels, interdependence, success inhibitors, recommendations	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
45	11.45 – 12.30	<b>M10</b>	<b>Meeting with RCSI Senior Management Team:</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> Alignment with RCSI strategy, support, collaboration, future developments	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
40	12.40 – 13.25	<b>M11</b>	<b>Meeting with Business Partners: Operational</b> <b>Theme/focus:</b> Relationships, service levels, interdependence, success inhibitors, recommendations	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
30	13.30 – 14.00		Lunch & private meeting time for PRG	PRG	Presidents Meeting Room
30	14.00 – 14.30		<b>Travel to Beaumont</b>		

			Panel split. Half remain in SSG and half travel to Beaumont Hospital.		
<b>St. Stephen's Green Schedule Wednesday afternoon</b>					
50	14.10 – 15.00	M12	Meeting with faculty staff	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
60	15.15 – 16.15	M14	Meeting with students (medicine pre-clinical, pharmacy & physiotherapy)	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
20	16.20 – 17.00		Tea / coffee. Private meeting time for PRG.	PRG; see list of attendees	Robert Smith Room
<b>Beaumont Hospital Schedule Wednesday afternoon</b>					
45	14.45 – 15.30	M15	Meeting with faculty staff	PRG; see list of attendees	Boardroom ERC Beaumont
60	15.40 – 16.40	M16	Meeting with students (clinical years) Tea/coffee/biscuits served during meeting	PRG; see list of attendees	Boardroom ERC Beaumont
20	16.40 – 17.00	M17	Tour of facilities		Boardroom ERC Beaumont
50	17.10 – 18.00		Travel back to St. Stephen's Green		
	19.00 – 21.00		PRG Dinner and a chance to discuss key issues (if required)	PRG	Hotel

**Day 3: Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Meeting Theme</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b>08.45 – 12.45</b>	Private meeting time for PRG – discussion and finalisation of Commendations and Recommendations for all sections.	PRG	Robert Smith Room
<b>10.30</b>	Tea / coffee.		Robert Smith Room
<b>08.45 – 12.00</b>	Private meeting time for PRG – discussion and finalisation of Commendations and Recommendations for all sections.	PRG	Robert Smith Room
<b>12.00 – 12.15</b>	Private meeting with QEO	PRG; QEO	Robert Smith Room
<b>12.15 – 12.30</b>	Meeting with SARA Senior Team & QEO	PRG,QEO; SARA Management Team	Robert Smith Room
<b>12.40 – 13.00</b>	Exit presentation to all Unit Staff	PRG,QEO; SARA Management Team; All SARA staff	Nightingale LT
<b>13.00 – 14.00</b>	Light Lunch and Private meeting with QEO		Robert Smith Room
<b>14.00</b>	Review ends.		