Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Programme for Academic Units

2003-2004

DCU

**Peer Review Group Report
for
Fiontar**

Dr. Donncha O'Maidin, Department of Computer Science & Information Systems, University of Limerick (Chair)
Prof. Maureen Murphy, Department of Curriculum & Teaching, Hofstra University, Long Island, New York, USA
Prof. Brendan Whelan, Director, Economics & Social Research Institute, Dublin
Prof. Martin Clynes, School of Biotechnology, DCU
Ms. Sheelagh Wickham, School of Nursing, DCU (Rapporteur)

10 May 2004

TABLE OF CONTENTS   **PAGE**

1. INTRODUCTION

This Quality review has been conducted in accordance with a framework model developed and agreed through the Irish Universities Quality Board (IUQB) and which complies with the provisions of Section 35 of the Universities Act (1997). The model consists of a number of basic steps.

1. An internal team in the School being reviewed completes a detailed self-assessment report (SAR). It should be noted that this document is confidential to the School and to the Review Panel and to senior officers of the University.

2. This report is sent to a team of peer assessors, the Peer Review Group (PRG) – composed of members from outside DCU and from other areas of DCU, who then visit the School and conduct discussions with a range of staff, students and other stakeholders.

3. The PRG then writes its own report.

4. The School produces a response, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, in response to the various issues and findings of the SAR and PRG Reports.

5. The PRG Report and the School response are then considered at a meeting of the relevant Senior Management of the University (Deputy President, Registrar, Vice-President for Research etc.) who address recommendations in the Peer Review Group Report, that fall outside the control of the School or that require additional resources. Arising from this meeting, School and University based action plans are approved. Together, these are termed the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

6. A summary of the Quality Review is sent to the Governing Authority of the University, who may approve publication in a manner that they see fit. Following the approval of the summary report by the Governing Authority, it is published on the University website. The full text of the Peer Review Group Report is also published on the Quality Promotion Unit website.

2. PROFILE OF THE SCHOOL

Location of the Unit

Fiontar is currently located in offices in the Business School in DCU. The offices (while not all together) are in the same vicinity. Fiontar also has two computer laboratories; these are located in the Henry Grattan Building and contain approximately 40 machines. As Fiontar is now contained within the new Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, it is planned to move Fiontar staff to the Henry Grattan Building where most of the humanities faculty is based.

Staff

There are 11 full-time staff within Fiontar and 8 part-time staff. Only two members of staff hold permanent contracts, the rest are employed on a contract basis. The contracts appear to be of varying lengths.

Staff - Length of service with Fiontar

Full-time:

Ó Cearbhaill, Niall (1994) - with DCU (Oscail) previously

Ní Ghréacháín, Bláthnaid (1998)

Ní Bhrádaigh, Emer (1998)

Nic Pháidín, Caoilfhionn (1999)

Mac an Bhaird, Ciarán (1999)

Walsh, John (2001)

Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Mairéad (2001)

Ní Chonghaile, Bairbre (2002)

de Brún, Sorcha (2003)

Ó Foirréidh, Cathal (2003)

Ó Flatharta, Peadar (2003)

Part-Time/other:

Mag Cuill, Daire (1996)

uí Bhraonáin, Donla (1994). Full-time until 2001 and on a consultancy basis since

Ó Maolmhuire, Colm (1999)

Ó Carra, Colm (1999)

Mac Cárthaigh, Matt (2000)

Ní Ógáin, Niamh (2003)

Ní Ghlinn, Áine (1996). Full-time until 2001 and on a part-time basis since

Uí Dhonnchadha, Elaine (1998) full-time until 2001 and part-time since

FIONTAR staffing levels

Year	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04
Permanent							
Professor	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Snr. Lecturer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1*
Lecturer above bar	0	0	0	0	2	1	1
Contract 2-3 years							
Snr. Lecturer		0	0	0	0	0	1
Lecturer above bar		1	1	1	1	1	1
Lecturer below bar	1	2	1	4	2	2	1
Teaching Fellow		0	0	0	0	0	1
Admin V (ILO)		0	0	0	1	0	1
Contract 9-11 months							
Lecturer above bar	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
Lecturer below bar	5	4	4	1	2	2	2
Research Assistant	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Teaching Assistant	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Admin V-ILO	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Admin IV	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Secretary III	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
EU Project Staff	0	2	1	0	0	0	1
Total full-time	**9**	**13**	**12**	**11**	**12**	**11**	**11**
Part-time							
300 hours							
5-6 lecturers							

*Head of School on sabbatical leave

Programmes/Outputs

Fiontar provides two taught programmes. The third programme is awaiting accreditation.

- **BSc in Entrepreneurship with Computing/Applied Irish**
- **MSc/Graduate Diploma in Business and Information Technology**
- **Certificate/Diploma/MA in Bilingual Practice**

The BSc is provided on a full-time basis over a four-year period and the MSc is provided on a full-time basis (one year) and on a part-time basis (two years). The Certificate/Diploma/MA in Bilingual Practice is scheduled for accreditation in March. The programme will be launched in April and will come on stream in September 2004. The programme will be available in Dublin initially and will later be available on-line.

Graduates per year per course		No. of Graduates per Year					Percentage change year on year			
		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03
Student Level	Qualification	L	L	L	L	L	%	%	%	%
Postgrad Taught	MSc in Business and Information Technology			4	11	3			175	-73
	Graduate Diploma – Business and I.T.			1	1	2			0	100
	Total			5	12	5			140	-58
Undergrad Taught	BSc in Finance, Computing & Enterprise	14	18	12	17	15	29	-33	42	-12
	Total	14	18	12	17	15	29	-33	42	-12

Employment

The BSc Programme appears to have an excellent placement rate and graduates from it have found jobs across a wide variety of sectors and a number have been successful in setting up their own businesses.

The MSc/Graduate Diploma in Business and Information Technology has now been completed by 22 graduates: 5 in 2001, 12 in 2002 and 5 in 2003. Graduates from this programme have taken up posts such as the following:

- Director of the Columba Initiative (a cultural project between Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland)
- Irish Language Office, Dublin City University
- Marketing Manager with LÁ (national newspaper in the Irish Language)
- Journalist
- Television Producer
- Marketing Manager, Gael Linn
- Project Manager, Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge
- Primary School Principal

Other graduates aim at teaching, administrative and technological posts.

3. THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Co-ordinating Committee

- Dr. Peadar Ó Flatharta
- John Walsh
- Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhíchíl
- Ciarán Mac an Bháird
- Sorcha de Brún
- Bairbre Ní Chonghaile

Methodology Adopted

An internal committee was established within Fiontar to deal with the Quality Assessment/Quality Review process. The committee comprised six members representative of both academic and administrative areas of the School. As staff numbers are small this enabled all staff to participate in the process.

4. THE PEER REVIEW GROUP PROCESS

A Day for Review and Planning

An 'Open Day' was held for all Fiontar staff in September 2003 to enable them to offer their views on the school, its strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats and to present the best model for FIONTAR in the future.   All views were recorded and made available in the Self Assessment Report

Staff Meetings

A series of staff meetings (total of 9) were held to advance the process from September to December 2003. A survey of staff attitudes was carried out in December 2003 under four major headings:

- Views of Staff on Teaching and Learning;
- Views of Staff on Research;
- Views of Staff on Management and Administration of School; and
- Views of Staff on Services and Resources.

Information was acquired from other sources in the School and in the University and was collated with the aid of the Registrar's Office and the Career Services Office.

Due to the small staff numbers within Fiontar, all staff appeared to have been involved in the planning and development for the Quality Review. The final Self Assessment document was submitted to staff in February 2004

Overall Comments on the Visit

The PRG found the information supplied and the availability of relevant people satisfactory during the visit. The level of enthusiasm and commitment among both staff and students was noteworthy as well as the clear mutual respect between the two groups. The Group was very impressed by the manner in which the Acting Director had organised the Quality Assessment process and by the vision which he has helped to develop for Fiontar in his very short time in the Unit.

TIMETABLE FOR REVIEW VISIT TO FIONTAR (2003-2004)

Day 1 (Wednesday 3 March 2004)

14.00 – 15.30	Meeting of members of the Peer Review Group Briefing by Director of Quality Promotion. Group agrees final work schedule and assignment of tasks for the following two days
16.00 – 17.30	Consideration of Self-Assessment Report with School Quality Committee
19.30	Dinner for members of the Peer Review Group, Acting Head of School and School Quality Co-ordinating Committee

Day 2 (Thursday 4 March 2004)

09.00 – 09.30	Meeting with Vice-President for Research
09.30 – 12.00	Further consideration of Self-Assessment Report and other inputs from other School staff, as appropriate, including administrative/ technical/ support staff, as appropriate. Time will be allowed for private meetings of members of the Peer Review Group and members of staff. • Individual Meetings with Staff • Group representing Computing • Group representing Entrepreneurship/Finance • Group representing Applied Irish/Terminology Research • Group representing Management
12.30 – 13.00	Visit to core facilities of School
13.00 – 14.00	Brief Discussion with the Director of Quality Promotion (if required)
14.00 - 17.00	Meetings with representative selections of: Students/Recent Graduates/Employers, as appropriate The Peer Review Group meet the following: • Recent Graduates • Employers • Undergraduate students. • Taught/Research Postgraduates
17.30 – 18.30	Meeting of Peer Review Group to identify remaining aspects to be clarified and to finalise tasks for the following day
19.30	Working private dinner for members of the Peer Review Group

Day 3 (Friday, 5 March 2004)

09.00 – 09.45	Meeting with President, Deputy President, Secretary, Vice-President for Learning Innovation (Registrar), Director of Human Resources and, Director of Finance (Director of Quality Promotion in attendance)
09.45 – 10.30	Visit to O'Reilly Library, meeting with the Director of Library Services and subject librarian
10.30 – 11.00	Visits to facilities such as Lecture Theatres, Computer Laboratories etc. as appropriate
11.00 – 11.30	Meeting with the Dean of the Faculty
11.30 - 12.00	Meeting with permanent Head of School (on sabbatical leave).
12.00 – 12.30	Meeting with Acting Head of School to clarify any outstanding issues
12.30 – 13.30	Brief Discussion (if required) with the Director of Quality Promotion followed by working (sandwich) lunch for members of Peer Review Group
13.30 – 16.00	Preparation of 1st Draft of Final Report
16.00 – 16.30	Exit presentation to ALL staff of the School to be made by the Chair of the Peer Review Group or other member of the Peer Review Group as agreed, summarising the principal findings of the Peer Review Group

Overview of Site Visit

Overall it was a very full agenda for the two and a half days. The timetable for the meetings was adequate; there was some slippage on Thursday morning resulting in some delays and pressure on a number of meetings in the afternoon but overall the PRG felt they had sufficient time. The majority of the work conducted by the PRG was carried out through the medium of Irish.

Staff were all very enthusiastic and open during meetings. There was a willingness to share and discuss issues relating to Fiontar. The staff are very proud of the achievements of Fiontar and are anxious to continue such work. The acting Director Dr. Peadar O'Flatharta had clearly provided powerful leadership in the review process and his presentation of his vision for the future of Fiontar was thoughtful and creative.

The PRG group met with the students on Friday afternoon. The students appeared confident and while they identified some issues about recognition of Fiontar within DCU they were enjoying the courses. With the exception of one mature student, all undergraduate students were school leavers.

The post graduate students were also positive and the comment of one MSc student who said the post graduate programme had allowed him "to reinvent himself" summarised/encapsulated the benefits the post graduate students appear to obtain from the course.

Methodology

Dr. Donncha O'Maidin was elected as chairperson for the PRG. Sheelagh Wickham acted as rapporteur.

Due to the small numbers involved in Fiontar the PRG met with all relevant people together. The only deviation from this was the visit to the Fiontar computer facilities where Dr. Donncha O'Maidin and Professor Maureen Murphy visited the laboratories while the rest of the PRG started to put together the exit PRG response.

The PRG divided the elements of the report broadly between them. However, as the PRG stayed together during the review visit and the report was circulated and commented upon by all PRG members, it is a consolidated effort.

The broad areas of responsibility were:

- Dr. Donncha O'Maidin - Programmes and Instruction
- Professor Maureen Murphy - Social and Community Services
- Professor Brendan Whelan - Organisation and Management of the School
- Professor Martin Clynes - Scholarship and Research
- Ms. Sheelagh Wickham - Staffing, Accommodation and Resources

Information was sourced from:

- The Self Assessment Report;
- Meeting with staff, students, and employers;
- External Examiners Report; and
- Fiontar literature and publications including "University Education in Irish, Challenges and Perspectives" and Foclóir Fiontar

The Fiontar Self Assessment Report was comprehensive and its content was validated in the discussions that were held by the PRG with staff, students and others. Access to additional items, e.g. external examiners reports, was made available promptly when requested. The appendices were extensive and included sufficient detail.

The PRG recognised from the beginning of its deliberations the challenging goal Fiontar has set itself. It aims to teach complex topics in business, computing and entrepreneurship at an appropriate academic level, in a context where teaching materials in Irish are scarce to non-existent. This means that the staff must make particular efforts to create such materials themselves and constantly have regard to issues such as translation and terminology.   In these circumstances, if Fiontar is to succeed it needs particular understanding and support from the University.

Review Group's view of the Self-Assessment Report

The Self Assessment Report was very comprehensive and contained good detail of School activities. The Report was written and presented to the PRG in Irish with an English translation available if requested. The meetings with Fiontar staff, graduates, students and employers, validated the Self Assessment Report. Two areas where further detail was requested related to the rationale and development of the change in the undergraduate B.Sc and details of the external examiners and samples of the reports. The external examiner documents were supplied to the PRG before the visit concluded.

There was sufficient detail laid out in the tables and appendices of the Self Assessment Report and it contained a clear presentation of Fiontar's history and current situation. The Self Assessment Report was validated by the meetings with Fiontar staff and students.

5. FINDINGS OF THE REVIEW GROUP

Background and Context

The PRG found Fiontar an active dynamic School. It has a strong emphasis on teaching and the development of the student to enable the graduate to function well in employment. The School is continuing to actively monitor and adapt to the changing market and educational environment, an example of this can be seen in the development of the change in the structure of the undergraduate B.Sc. in 2001-2 and the recent development of the new programmes.

While there appears to be a perception by Fiontar of isolation within the University and a perception that "Fiontar is different" by some of the staff and students within the University, students appear to be well integrated and the School is represented on University Committees e.g. RAP. Also there is a number of informal interdisciplinary links between Fiontar and other units within DCU. VP of Research highlighted this and emphasised the need for Fiontar to improve "networking" within the University although this is clearly more difficult for a school with such a high proportion of temporary staff. The President and senior management of DCU expressed a strong commitment to support and develop Fiontar in the future. The President summed up their recognition of Fiontar when he said, "Fiontar epitomises the ethos of DCU"

Strengths:
▪ Fiontar has a strong sense of identity.

Weaknesses:
▪ Lack of obvious "Irish" ethos within Dublin City University.

Organisation and Management of the School

An interdisciplinary School can be difficult to locate within a Faculty. Fiontar (which had stood independently as a School without any Dean or other support) has recently been incorporated into the Faculty of Humanities. Care must be taken to ensure that the placing of Fiontar with Humanities does not weaken the development of links with Computing and Business and especially the core focus on enterprise development

within the undergraduate degree. There should be ample opportunity/encouragement for staff to publish within respected academic outlets in their basic disciplines.

The matter of the small number of permanent staff and the use of short-term contracts was an issue that came up frequently in discussions with staff. The Fiontar staff felt the large number of short-term contract staff within the School had a negative impact on the future planning and development both on an individual and School basis. The PRG recognises the problems posed by this situation and feels that it should be addressed.

The staff numbers within Fiontar are small and workload is allocated by the Head of School taking into consideration staff commitments to research etc. There appears to be no common tool within the Faculty to allow for a clear and visible record of the workload allocation.

Initially when Fiontar was established there was an "advisory board" made up of internal and eternal people. This group contributed to developmental ideas for the School.

Strengths:
- Committed and enthusiastic staff

Weaknesses:
- No uniform workload measurement
- Lack of clear Faculty support in the past

Programmes and Instruction

The student numbers within Fiontar are small. The majority of students undertaking the undergraduate degree appear to be school leavers with a very small percentage of mature students. The programmes, including practical aspect (INTRA), interdisciplinary, national language and entrepreneurial skills are excellent. Congratulations must be given to the staff on the innovative and varied INTRA programme for students who undertake the Fiontar programme. With the move of Fiontar to the Humanities Faculty, it is very important that the "business" element of the degree continues to receive sufficient attention, as it appears to make a large contribution to employment opportunities for graduates. There is a very limited amount of "service" teaching between Fiontar and other Schools.

The PRG compliments Fiontar on the active development programme, new programmes etc.

Strengths:
- Attractiveness of programme within the employment community
- Innovative intra placements contribute to the richness of the student experience

Weakness:
- Limited utilisation of DCU marketing department
- Limited variety of access to programmes, particularly undergraduate
- Lack of service teaching by Fiontar staff

Scholarship and Research

There is a strong need to put in place an **effective research strategy** which leads to a flow of publications in well-regarded academic journals. (The relative absence of such output is a weakness at present). The research strategy needs to be very carefully thought out in an interdisciplinary environment. It is not just a question of freeing research-active staff from some teaching or other duties. It also involves developing an appropriate model for research within Fiontar. In particular, we were struck by the extent to which staff appear to see a complete disjuncture between applied, income-generating projects (where Fiontar has been remarkably successful) and "pure" or "personal" academic output. We recommend that serious attention be given to defining one or two major projects/programmes to be funded from outside sources which would lead to (a) a policy-oriented report or reports for the client and (b) a stream of academic papers based on the same data within the various core disciplines. This would require a high degree of co-ordination, co-operation and team working by members of Fiontar staff. It would, however, yield dividends in terms of raising Fiontar's profile within the relevant policy community and also winning academic recognition. The "individual scholar in an office" model does not seem to us to be a suitable paradigm for Fiontar. For instance, "the economic and social development of the Gaeltacht" could be one such theme that would form the basis of a research programme.

Congratulations to Fiontar on a very successful conference in February last and the publication of the conference Proceeding and Terminology dictionary

Strengths:
▪ Fiontar has a history of attracting funding from external sources.

Weaknesses:
▪ The relative absence of research publications in well regarded academic journals. The current output is a weakness at present.

Staffing, Accommodation and Resources

There are 11 full-time staff within Fiontar and 8 part-time staff. Only two members of staff hold permanent contracts, the rest are employed on a contract basis. The contracts appear to be of varying lengths. Administration support is given by a Grade 3 Administrator who is also on a temporary contract. (There are plans to fill the Grade 4 administration post within the School as soon as possible).

Fiontar is currently housed within the Business School but with the move of the School to the Humanities Faculty, there are plans to move Fiontar staff to the Henry Grattan Building. Fiontar computer facilities are housed within this building.

Strengths:
▪ Enthusiastic well motivated Staff

Weaknesses:
▪ Very low ratio of permanent to temporary staff
▪ Lecturers' overworked doing non-instructional tasks, i.e. providing own teaching materials
▪ Large number of short-term contracts for staff
▪ Lack of "permanent" staff

Social and Community Services

The Irish Language Office works closely with Fiontar staff. Fiontar has been innovative in the development of teaching aids such as the business terminology dictionary. Such innovations have been used by the Department of Education and other bodies.

Fiontar's community outreach programmes are two: Gaeltacht and local. Fiontar students have spent time in the Gaeltacht as a unit, and Fiontar students and staff have provided an outreach computer programme to Gaelscoil students in the Dublin area. These initiatives can be further developed but they indicate a recognition of their mission to two of their target impact areas."

Fiontar has built up a good track record in carrying out research and consultancy work for various policy agencies, especially those concerned with the Irish language.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

P1: A recommendation that is important *and* requires urgent action.
P2: A recommendation that is important, but can (or perhaps must) be addressed on a more extended timescale.
P3: A recommendation which merits serious consideration but which is not considered to be critical to the quality of the ongoing activities in the School.

- S: School
- F: Faculty
- U: University Executive/Senior Management

Background and Context

P2 While there is a number of informal interdisciplinary links between Fiontar and other units within DCU, the PRG emphasised the need for Fiontar to improve "networking" within the University. *(Action S, F, and U)*

P2 While there appears to be a perception by Fiontar of isolation within the University and a perception that "Fiontar is different" within the University, students appear to be well integrated and the School is represented on University Committees e.g. RAP. Also there is a number of informal interdisciplinary links between Fiontar and other units within DCU. PRG recommends institutionalising some of these links. *(Action S)*

P1 DCU policy relating to Irish language needs to be clarified. University needs to have a more significant "Irish" presence on campus. Need for positive discrimination. PRG recommends that Fiontar provide input to this process. Increase the visibility of Irish in DCU e.g. increase Irish signage around the University. Include within all DCU job advertisements a welcome for those who are fluent in Irish language. Care taken to optimise the deployment of such staff so that services in Irish can be provided to staff, students and the public, thereby helping DCU to meet its statutory and legal obligations. *(Action , F, S)*

Organisation and Management of the School

P2 Location of Fiontar within Humanities faculty. Care must be taken to ensure that the placing of Fiontar with Humanities does not impede the relationship and development of further links with Computing and Business. *(Action S, F)*

P2 Reactivation of advisory Group of internal and external people to make up an "advisory board" to support and develop Fiontar. *(Action F)*

P2 Fiontar and Faculty to develop a mission statement recognizing the direction and ethos. *(Action S, F)*

P3 Development of workload allocation tool *(Action F)*

P2 PRG recommends that Fiontar develop a timetable of meetings with support services within the University to develop collaboration, perhaps naming a "link" person from Fiontar for each service.

Programmes and Instruction

P1 Review of Fiontar marketing strategy.   Recommend the increased utilization of University marketing office and the goodwill around the University. Need to broaden access, e.g. mature students, access etc. Active programme targeted at such groups.   Consideration should be given to new methods of marketing e.g. contact through Irish language networks etc. Explore the possibility of offering "stand alone" modules for professional development at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. *(Action S, F)*

P1 Need for marketing strategy and support from University Offices.   *(Action U)*

P1 Two current developments which offer Fiontar particular opportunities are the changing nature of industry within the Gaeltacht and the new Act that requires all government departments and agencies to provide a service through Irish. Fiontar is well placed to capitalise on these in the provision of programmes, possibly offering "stand alone" modules. *(Action S)*

P2 PRG recommends that Fiontar should monitor the risk of dilution of the business element in the degree course as this had contributed greatly to the attractiveness of graduates to the employment community. *(Action S)*

P2 Work on a marketing plan, i.e. develop electronic portfolio. (*Action S, F, U)*

P2 Need to continue to explore alternative delivery of programmes (*Action S)*

Scholarship and Research

P1 There is a strong needs to put in place an effective research strategy that leads to a flow of publications in well-regarded academic journals. *(Action S)*

P1 PRG recommends that serious attention be given to defining one or two major projects/programmes to be funded from outside sources which would lead to (a) a policy-oriented report or reports for the client and (b) a stream of academic papers based on the same data within the various core disciplines. *(Action F, S)*

P3 Congratulations to Fiontar on its recent conference. It is recommended that Fiontar continues such flagship initiatives and that the University support such activities. *(Action S)*

Staffing, Accommodation and Resources

P1 The low ratio of permanent to temporary staff causes concern and could inhibit Fiontar's development. The PRG recommends the **urgent** appointment of another permanent lecturer at senior level. It also recommends Fiontar draw up a five-year plan aiming to have a minimum of 50% permanent staff within the School at the end of that period. The PRG welcomed the commitment of the President to Fiontar and see an opportunity to make this support visible by supporting the appointment of more permanent staff. *(Action U)*

P1 Need to increase the number of staff with PhD. The PRG acknowledges that there is some existing support for this in the form of workload distribution practice. However, we recommend some additional resources from Faculty in the form of funding, short sabbatical etc, *(Action F,)*

P3 Need to develop "mentoring" for staff new to teaching. *(Action S)*

P1 Regulations to allow contract staff the possibility of access to all research funding grants. Due to the current skill mix, it appears that some staff within Fiontar are prohibited from applying for various funding schemes within the University. This needs to be reviewed and a special case made. *(Action U)*

P1 Due to the current skills mix there is a need for Fiontar to make a series of individual plans to support staff in completing PhD studies. *(Action S)*

P3 Need for more support from the University for Fiontar staff, e.g. orientation for new staff. *(Action U)*

P1 Recognition of the unique onus that falls on Fiontar staff to develop instructional material for courses and the provision of appropriate support for such efforts. *(Action S, F, U)*

Social and Community Services

P1 PRG recommends the broadening of access Fiontar programmes e.g. mature students or the "Access programme".

P1 PRG recommends the continued contribution of Fiontar to the development of education as was demonstrated in the development of teaching materials e.g. the terminology dictionary and the conference at the start of 2003.