



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Quality Review of Nursing & Midwifery

12-14 March 2018

External Reviewers:

Prof. John Baker, University of Leeds, UK
Prof. Debbie Marie Carrick-Sen, University of Birmingham, UK
Prof. Patricia M. Davidson, Johns Hopkins University, USA

Internal Facilitator:

Prof. Anne-Marie Healy, Head of School of Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences, Trinity.

Table of Contents

1.	Reviewers' Report	3
2.	Response from the Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery	11
3.	Response from the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences	18

Executive Summary

The School of Nursing & Midwifery (SONM) is one of four Schools located within the Faculty of Health Science alongside the Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences and Dental Science.

The Review Team is invited to assess and make recommendations to the University on the quality of the School's education provision and specifically in relation to:

- i) The School strategy in terms of its fitness-for-purpose to respond to College strategies including School goals with respect to growth in online and international/global education.
- ii) The quality and academic standards of the curriculum/pedagogical approaches that underpin the delivery of postgraduate taught programmes, postgraduate research programmes and postdoctoral development.
- iii) The quality of the School's learning resources and learning environment including the physical infrastructure available for teaching and learning (internal and external to campus).
- iv) The quality of the School's research strategy, including its associated research centres, and engagement in College research themes.
- v) The effectiveness of the School's governance, management and administration structures and resourcing (financial, facilities, human) to deliver on its academic mission.

The review team met with college leadership, faculty, students and staff. Trinity College has an excellent brand and solid reputation as a leading provider of nursing and midwifery education and research excellence and as a thought leader locally, nationally and internationally. There was strong evidence of integration in the clinical ecosystem which is crucial for a practice based school. Specific recommendations are made to maintain and leverage this position.

On the basis of this review we recommend the following:

Recommendation 1:

There is a critical need for the central administration, particularly the Academic Registry, to have a contemporary and realistic appreciation of business models in funding for nursing and midwifery. There is a malalignment between administrative processes and the business model representing significant risk to Trinity in terms of market share, reputation and material risk.

Recommendation 2:

Following a period of rapid growth there is a need to consider the balance between undergraduate and postgraduate teaching missions as well as close competitor analysis domestically. Alignment of the need for an agile business model and Trinity College administrative processes needs to be achieved. Considering space and accommodation needs is critically important. There is a substantial reputational risk associated with the current limited and inadequate teaching, learning and staff accommodation.

Recommendation 3:

Foster a strategic vision to promote interdisciplinary research and practice leveraging the diversity of Trinity College. There are likely further opportunities for integration and meaningful collaborations across the teaching and research missions.

Recommendation 4:

Investment in the recruitment and development of faculty to address the teaching, research and service mission of the SONM is important. As in many nursing and midwifery schools, there is a dependence on a small number of high performing individuals with limited consideration of succession planning. Affirmatively, attracting PhD students in Nursing and Midwifery is of high importance for future workforce planning.

Recommendation 5:

Partnerships and linkages locally, nationally and globally should be aligned with strategic priorities and be focused on negotiated goals and outcomes. The internationalization focus should be further integrated within the research mission.

Recommendation 6:

Continuing to advance the marketing and communication plan is necessary to position the school in the market and leverage brand positioning building on strong QS rankings. Convening a strategic advisory board may assist in positioning the SONM.

Recommendation 7:

Longitudinal key performance indicators, including funding, publications and impact measures should be provided for future reviews to enable a more detailed review of progress.

Recommendation 8:

Although there have been considerable advances in the research enterprise within the SONM, there is the potential to invest more in the research ecosystem, particularly in the pre-award phase. Support with grant writing, budgets and other operational aspects of the grant administration system may leverage further benefits.

Introduction

The School of Nursing and Midwifery (SONM), Trinity College Dublin, is ranked 1st in Ireland and 25th in the world in the QS International Rankings and is the leading institution within Ireland for nursing and midwifery education and research. The Trinity SONM develops leading-edge nurses and midwives who are the future leaders in their professions.

External Reviewers members want to commend faculty and staff for the support provided during the visit. It is evident that faculty are committed to excellence in scholarship and research and the morale and commitment of the staff was high. They demonstrated great interest in listening to our comments and reflections throughout the week. Students who met with us were positive and eager to share their experiences within the program. Faculty research presentations during the visit reflected important and innovative areas of inquiry and collaborative relationships with other researchers. We also congratulate the faculty on their position in the QS subject rankings 2018 and commend the leadership of Professor Anne- Marie Brady and her team.

Like most schools of nursing and midwifery, there is a delicate balance between the teaching and research missions. Drawing upon our meetings and consultations we make the following high level observations focussing on what we consider to be the most critical issues. We have summarised our reflections within the brief of the review and have summarised our reactions to the scope of the review.

We did not review granular level data related to individual faculty performance or performance of individual business units.

Space

Space and facilities for teaching and research are of critical concern. The current teaching facilities are limited and cannot accommodate current undergraduate student numbers. There is good evidence to suggest that the demand for undergraduate student places will increase. Currently, the largest lecture theatre available does not accommodate the student body. Approximately 20% of students are required to go into an overspill room with the lecture, video linked. This limits student learning and experience. Students report a desire to have a 'Trinity experience,' however within current available accommodation, this is limited. In addition, teaching staff and researchers are situated within four different locations. This will limit effective communication, team working and success going forward. There is a substantial reputational risk associated with the current limited and inadequate teaching, learning and staff accommodation.

Recommendations

- Consider options to co-locate teaching and research staff and active engagement in the estates planning cycle. The integration and synthesis of the teaching, research and practice mission is considered optimal.
- Need to consider limiting the number of undergraduate students unless appropriate teaching space is negotiated or developed.
- Alternatives for space need to be considered, particularly within an online strategy, and a business model developed.

Academic Registration Process

There were substantial concerns identified regarding current academic registration processes and communication. We were told in one instance at the commencement of the subject, up to 30% of students did not have identification, and had no access to Blackboard on the first day of teaching. In

another case, an additional student took 8 months to complete the registration process which we understood to be managed by the Academic Registry. The registration process for postgraduate students is often complex and multifaceted with a large percentage of students self-funding in a step-wise approach and/or part funded through a bureaucratic healthcare provider and/or charity organization. Due to the required complexity, alignment with large centralized processes are often unsuccessful and required many individual 'work arounds' to be developed. There were numerous examples of many required 'work arounds' within the SONM at Trinity College. Individual 'work arounds' require substantial resource investment and lead to immense frustration and an uncoordinated approach. An escalation process is in place, but currently under utilised. After time, the acceptance of 'work arounds' become the cultural norm and attempts to review and improve systems, processes and communication breakdown. This appears to be the case within the SONM and the Academic Registry.

Recommendations

- There is a need to understand current systems and processes required by SONM students and the Academic Registry, and furthermore, understand associated root causes and limitations. Facilitated stream mapping processes are likely to be helpful.
- There is a need to increase effective communication and relationships between academic registration and SONM.
- There is an urgent need to understand the business model and align business processes between academic registration and the SONM.

Online/E-learning

Trinity College, including the SONM, has agreed an implementation plan to develop online learning for 20% of teaching material although there is not a strong justification for this figure. Despite this being an aspirational and valued goal, there is concern regarding current understanding of differences between online access to teaching and learning material (e.g. lecture capture) and e-learning. Further the term 'blended learning' is often used to describe a combined approach of face to face teaching and e-learning, rather than online access to material. Dedicated creative staff with advanced technological knowledge and skills is required to successfully develop and implement an effective e-learning strategy. The processes and rationale for centralized online development is not clear

Recommendations

- Current proposal of 20% online access to material should be considered within a pedagogical and market framework not an arbitrary cut-off
- Develop SONM 'working' agreed definitions of online, e-learning and blended learning.
- Develop a SONM blended and/or e-learning strategy and consider developing whole modules using this approach, rather than attempting to cover all modules. Selection of initial e-learning modules to develop should be aligned to internationalization strategy and planned international student recruitment.

Nursing

Professor Carrick -Sen was asked to review midwifery, in particular. Although we were not asked to provide specific input into nursing courses, we consider a greater emphasis on community and transitional models of care should be considered. There is also a challenge to accommodate a strategic focus where course demand is driven by the health system. Considering rationalizing of a diverse nurse postgraduate program should be considered.

Midwifery

Teaching, learning and research within midwifery was aligned and successful with a primary focus on normality and breastfeeding. This is a good alignment, however with increasing complexity, 1:2 pregnant/birthing women are now classified as moderate-high risk and therefore consideration is required, as to whether the midwifery provision should expand current expertise and focus. Appropriate topics include complexity/vulnerability or birth related uro-gynaecology including perineal tissue damage and repair.

Clinical chairs

The proposal to appoint four joint clinical chairs is significant and commended. They will assist in increased value and effective partnership working with healthcare provider organisations. Due to the complexity of the role involving multiple key stakeholders and at times, differing priorities, these roles can be difficult to appoint to and sustain. Synergy between research and clinical activity, agreed joint KPIs and access to networks/support are key for success.

Recommendations

- To maximise potential success of the new chairs, support (administrative support, research assistant) and appropriate financial arrangements should be in place.
- Consider use of the AUKUH organisation guide <http://www.aukuh.org.uk/index.php/affiliate-groups/nmahps/transforming-healthcare> to inform and support developments and roles.
- Consider one (or more) of the chairs joining the AUKUH implementation network on behalf of a healthcare provider organisation (email Professor Carrick-Sen d.carrick-sen@bham.ac.uk for more information if required).
- SONM may wish to consider setting up its own implementation network to support the chairs locally.

Summary according to charge of the quality review team

- i) The School strategy is appropriate to College strategies including School goals with respect to growth in online and international/global education. This will require investment in strategy and resources.
- ii) The quality and academic standards of the curriculum/pedagogical approaches that underpin the delivery of postgraduate taught programmes, postgraduate research programmes and postdoctoral development are sound with appropriate mechanisms for evaluation.
- iii) The quality of the school's learning resources and learning environment is challenging for teaching and learning and is potentially a challenge in a competitive local environment
- iv) The quality of the School's research strategy, including its associated research centres, and engagement in College Research Themes is sound with the potential to expand and align with national and international research priorities.

Strengths

Numerous strengths were evident to the External Reviewers during the visit. These strengths should be used to recruit excellent faculty and outstanding students.

- The SONM carries with it a strong nursing "brand" and is known throughout the world as an excellent school of nursing.
- The SONM attracts outstanding students both nationally and internationally.

- Faculty are committed to excellence in teaching.
- Faculty are involved in numerous collaborative activities with others across the campus that lead to an enriched academic environment.
- There is a core group of faculty that are successfully engaged in research and able to obtain funding.

Challenges

During the External Reviewers visit a number of challenges were discussed during our sessions with faculty and staff. These challenges are commonly found in schools of nursing today.

- Faculty recruitment is challenging and could result in challenges in building the next generation of nursing and midwifery faculty.
- The SONM is having some difficulty attracting external funding.
- Research faculty are having difficulty obtaining external funding. Infrastructure supporting grant writing and support pre- award (grant submission) and post- award (monitoring and reporting) is necessary.
- Limited infrastructure support for grant writing and submissions make it difficult for research faculty to be successful.
- The physical environment limits collaboration and recruitment due to limited accommodations and the separation of research and teaching faculty.
- Internationalisation strategy needs to be further elucidated.

Opportunities

Several possibilities for continued growth among faculty and experiences for students exist in the SONM. An important consideration is to strategically define what success will look like to the School in the short, medium and long term. Building specific indicators into the strategic could strengthen the commitment to research and scholarship.

- Considerable investment has been made in faculty obtaining doctoral degrees, investing in the next stage of faculty development will be important.
- Infrastructure support to include new services can result in increased research productivity. Services to be considered include: grant writing, budget development, biostatistics consultation, grant submissions.
- SONM wide resources should be explored that could increase support for faculty research.
- Opportunities to increase internal and external faculty partnerships can strengthen the expertise of faculty.
- Building of the PhD program- particularly affirmatively targeting nursing and midwifery students to build capacity is important.
- Joint positions with other Departments/Centres could strengthen the community of research scholars. These could include joint post graduate positions as well as junior faculty positions.
- The research of the faculty is highly geared for demonstration of impact- more investment in documenting the impact of faculty research on clinical practice and policy.

Recommendations:

On the basis of this review we recommend the following:

- **Recommendation 1:**

There is a critical need for the central administration, particularly the Academic Registry, to have a contemporary and realistic appreciation of business models in funding for nursing and midwifery. There is a malalignment between administrative processes and the business model representing significant risk to Trinity in terms of market share, reputation and material risk.

- **Recommendation 2:**

Following a period of rapid growth there is a need to consider the balance between undergraduate and postgraduate teaching missions as well as close competitor analysis domestically. Alignment of the need for an agile business model and Trinity College administrative processes needs to be achieved. Considering space and accommodation needs is critically important. There is a substantial reputational risk associated with the current limited and inadequate teaching, learning and staff accommodation.

- **Recommendation 3:**

There is an opportunity to foster a strategic vision to promote interdisciplinary research and practice leveraging the diversity of Trinity College. There are likely further opportunities for integration and meaningful collaboration.

- **Recommendation 4:**

Investment in the recruitment and development of faculty to address the teaching, research and service mission of the SONM is important. As in many nursing and midwifery schools, there is a dependence on a small number of high performing individuals with limited consideration of succession planning. Affirmatively, attracting PhD students in nursing and midwifery is of high importance for workforce planning.

- **Recommendation 5:**

Partnerships and linkages locally, nationally and globally should be aligned with strategic priorities and be focused on negotiated goals and outcomes. The internationalization focus should be further integrated within the research mission.

- **Recommendation 6:**

Continuing to advance the marketing and communication plan of the SONM is necessary to position the school in the market and leverage brand positioning building on strong QS rankings. Convening a strategic advisory board may assist in positioning the SONM.

- **Recommendation 7:**

Longitudinal key performance indicators, including funding, publications and impact measures should be provided for future reviews to enable a more detailed review of progress.

- **Recommendation 8:**

Although there have been considerable advances in the research enterprise within the SONM, there is the potential to invest more in the research ecosystem, particularly in the pre-award phase. Support with grant writing, budgets and other operational aspects of the grant administration system may leverage further benefits.

Summary

The SONM is celebrating its 21st anniversary in Trinity College Dublin in 2017/18. This is a unique opportunity to highlight its contributions to the community and to health care, and to engage further with its alumni. The SONM is also in a unique position to contribute to the design and conduct of clinically and socially relevant research and education through partnerships with linked healthcare providers, healthcare industry and engagement with the wider community. The SONM existing network of connections is expanding through the establishment of the Dublin Midlands Hospital Group, the Trinity Centre for Practice and Healthcare Innovation (TCPHI), international collaborations and collaborations with industry. The SONM is in a strong place following a period of rapid growth but is situated in a small but highly competitive environment. There is a strong sense that this is a time for reframing and positioning for the future. A highly dynamic and competitive local market requires a responsive and agile business model to ensure positioning and funding.



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

QUALITY REVIEW REPORT SCHOOL OF NURSING & MIDWIFERY 2018

Initial response to review findings

School Executive

Anne-Marie Brady
Quality Committee November 2018

Contents

Introduction	2
Space requirements	2
Research activity & growth.....	2
Balance undergraduate & postgraduate teaching.....	3
Internationalisation & partnerships.....	4
Online & E-Learning	4
Attracting PhD students.....	5
Business model & processes	5
Final Comments	6

Introduction

The School of Nursing & Midwifery (SNM) welcomes the reviewers' report and their acknowledgement that the School, *'is the leading institution within Ireland for nursing and midwifery education and research'*. We also welcome their statement that we develop, *'leading-edge nurses and midwives who are the future leaders in their professions'*, which demonstrates our commitment both to our students' education and the healthcare sector. The process of review itself has been very helpful and over the last number of months has produced discussion and reflection, both within the executive and the school at large on the strengths, areas for development, and future direction of the School of Nursing & Midwifery at Trinity College Dublin. The report has prompted us to evaluate the SNM journey to 25th World QS ranking and will inform strategic planning for the coming years so we may seek to maintain and improve on that success. Work is already underway to develop an implementation plan. The review findings informed the School Executive Away Day in October 2018 and is to be progressed in the wider school planning activities scheduled over the coming months. The international experience and understanding of the healthcare environment for nursing and midwifery education and research was conveyed in the reviewer feedback. This insight was particularly helpful in light of the rapid growth of the school over the last number of years as the reviewers have grappled with similar issues in their respective institutions. The terms of reference of the review sought focus on the infrastructure, research growth and postgraduate activity within the school and this report sets out the SNM initial response to their findings and recommendations.

Space requirements

We fully endorse the comments of the reviewers in relation to space, *"Space and facilities for teaching and research are of critical concern"*. This has been a growing concern in the school and reached a somewhat critical point this year. There are a number of influencing factors, not least the unanticipated growth in the school since D'Olier Street building was acquired 2004. The space demands have been compounded by TEP activity, the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) mandated redevelopment of the undergraduate curriculum with the merger of the nursing and midwifery degrees for shared modules and the fourfold increase in PG numbers in recent years. The increase in the number of PIs and related research activity has increased the need for staff accommodation.

Much effort has been put into securing adequate large lecture teaching space on campus and, while this has been successful in 2018-19, we have reached the capacity of what can be accommodated in the larger lecture theatres. The lack of space, particularly in one centralised location, has been identified as a "substantial reputational risk" by the reviewers and is something the School sees as critical to its future development. The School's ability to house all staff within one location is highlighted as a key recommendation in order to achieve the optimal "integration and synthesis of the teaching, research and practice mission".

Research activity & growth

The reviewer comments reflects the challenging funding landscape for nursing and midwifery research and their report places emphasis on the need for investment in the research ecosystem and in the development of academic faculty to fulfil the mission of the SNM. This reflects the recent strategic investment in staffing within the SNM. There is evidence of growth with the vast majority of staff research active and increased success in achieving both research funding and promotional grades within the school.

Our current data, (which it is acknowledged is 6 months on from the reviewers assessment), shows that the value of total funding applications so far in the 2017/18 period is €14,771,556, representing an increase of 316% in funding sought in 2016/17. Figures from 2017/18, since the appointment of a Research Programme Officer (RPO), show an increase of 163% in grant applications. Since 2017 the School has been awarded €3,267,624 and currently awaits the outcome of grants to the value of €3,382,703. 28% of our funding is from international sources. It is evident that school will need increased resources to sustain such activity. The School welcomes the reviewers' positive comments in relation to the School's existing strategy to jointly appoint four Clinical Professors with our clinical partners. We acknowledge the challenges highlighted by the reviewers and the recommendations they have made to both appoint and sustain these posts. We have appointed a Clinical Professor in Chronic Illness and have had approval for additional Professors of Mental Health and Cancer Nursing.

From a research perspective there is a significant and growing level of international collaboration in research in the School and colleagues are regularly informed of ongoing opportunities for international networking opportunities for research collaborations from the School's Research Office. An example of ongoing work in this area is the establishment of a sub-committee on research themes, established from the Research Committee. One of the early tasks of this committee is mapping out the research themes of high ranking Schools internationally, which in itself can support synergy building. This will all be in conjunction with, complementary to, the work of the Director of International Initiatives

The issue of impact has been identified as a key area for examination through the School Research Committee. A sub-committee will initially examine how impact is perceived from a number of dimensions - within nursing and midwifery, across College, nationally and internationally. Examples of the work ongoing and planned includes: liaising with Niamh Brennan, and colleagues in the library, on their review of impact in the College; examination of the understanding of impact from a funder perspective; and exploring the meaning of impact in relation to the contribution of the research in the School to society, culture and the economy, beyond the more easily measurable contribution to academia. This will then move to examining impact measurement tools in existence and how we can report on our impact. It is possible that within nursing and midwifery we may identify unique areas of impact that may, or may not, resonate with colleagues in our faculty and if this is the case we will explore how best this can be articulated with our professional colleagues and the wider College community.

Balance undergraduate & postgraduate teaching

Following a period of rapid growth the reviewers have recommended the need to consider the balance between undergraduate and postgraduate teaching missions as well as close competitor analysis domestically. The School acknowledges this and has consistently built on the growth and stability of the undergraduate market in Ireland, using this stability to take the necessary risks to grow a well-established, well recognised postgraduate suite of programmes. However the School recognises that retaining a large variety of programmes is both labour intensive and cost prohibitive, (or not hugely profit making), and the School acknowledges the need to pause, take stock and carefully assess the national and international market, and given consideration to condensing the suite of postgraduate programmes currently on offer. To this end the School have engaged an external marketing company to assist the School with predicting future postgraduate needs. Within this context a greater deal of flexibility, (within and across programmes), will likely be needed to (a) offer students greater choice (b) be responsive to changing student/healthcare environment need

and (c) match high ranking universities internationally who consistently offer bespoke modularised post graduate programmes.

The review stresses the importance of aligning partnerships and linkages locally, nationally and globally should be aligned with strategic priorities. The internationalization policy within the School needs to be mindful and realistic regarding the international market for postgraduate nursing and midwifery programmes and international trends. High ranking schools of nursing internationally currently have few international students, (often less than 5%). In some countries percentages range from 5-15%. Overall the international market is quite small, specific and niche and requires careful marketing and negotiation to bring to a realistic conclusion. There is also a great appetite among some international regions for postgraduate programmes that include a clinical nursing/midwifery component which is not always feasible (a) due to local factors such as availability of clinical placements or protected ring-fencing of student places for Irish based nurses/midwives (b) English language requirements for the nursing/midwifery professions, (by NMBI), are high (ILETS 7.5) and (c) some international candidates nursing/midwifery background and skills do not place them in a good position to work as post graduate specialist nurses in training in Ireland, (they may have never worked with female patients for example, and would be required to do so).

Internationalisation & partnerships

The recommendation from the reviewers to align partnerships and linkages locally, nationally and globally with strategic priorities, goals and outcomes has produced much discussion and will certainly inform the future strategic direction of the school. In recent years much of the international activity has been focused on increasing postgraduate student intake. The report does indicate a need for the school to give greater attention to the visibility of the international partnerships that arise from the research and teaching mission of the SNM. Work achieved in recent months and led by Director of International Initiatives has provided the opportunity to create a consolidated approach internationalisation; to create opportunities to maximise visibility for *in reach to & outreach* from college through partnership with exploitation of opportunities through Study Abroad, Erasmus, Non-EU students, and international research collaborations.

Online & E-Learning:

The School has a long tradition in a blended learning approach, with partially online courses going back to the early '00's in the BNS and Access to Nursing/Midwifery courses. However, the need to develop a more strategic approach to online/e-learning is acknowledged. The School has an online strategy but there is a lack of clarity in relation to the costs and income from online courses in College, making investment in the supports needed for online development difficult. The reviewers comments that e-learning modules, "*should be aligned to internationalization strategy*", raises a challenge for the School. At present, College regulations mean that international online student are not counted in our GRS student numbers. The joining of the GRS with online international student numbers would be more meaningful and give more impetus in developing online courses which would bring in more international students.

The development of online programmes requires significant financial investment and whether or not there is a clear market for this within postgraduate nursing, midwifery and health care is not clear. Although an element of on online teaching and learning is likely to facilitate a degree of flexibility for busy students, our key market is the health service who require practice based skills focused programmes that are likely to remain, for the most part, comprised of face-to-face teaching and clinical practice engagement. The School needs to realistically review its position as an online

learning provider both in terms of the cost/benefit of any such investment, its current expertise in such endeavours and existent market demand.

Attracting PhD students

The review stresses the importance to workforce planning of attracting PHD students in Nursing & Midwifery. The School welcomes this comment, as there is a recognised deficit in the growth of nursing and midwifery professionals at PhD level. More than 60% of the School's current PhD cohort have background degrees and professions outside of nursing and midwifery. Very few, (less than 1%), of our own graduates currently register for PhDs in the School. The main barriers appear to be (a) the current clinical career pathway is primarily practice based, supported by MSc in specialist or advanced practice to further individual's careers and (b) there is a healthy market for nurses (both nationally and internationally) and this natural career progression is remunerated in such that negates against students applying for low stipends. In order to achieve the core mission of nursing and midwifery higher education in Ireland both in terms of enhancing the professions but also preparing future professionals, there is an urgent need to explore a response funding and/or career progression model that attracts nurses/midwives and current students to register for PhDs. The impact of the current scholarship arrangements (1252 & Provost Award) on the numbers of Nurse & Midwife PhD students within the school requires ongoing evaluation. It will be critical for the school to create innovative PhD funding opportunities, strategic funding partnerships with health service partners and national funding bodies.

Business model & processes

The complexity of many of the School's postgraduate professional courses has presented significant challenges both to the School and Academic Registry in their setup and ongoing management, particularly around the student registration process, and this is reflected in the comments received by the reviewers in their meetings with stakeholders. We acknowledge that significant improvements in communication between the School and Academic Registry, and vice versa, need to take place. Since the review, the School has met with the Director and senior team within the Academic Registry, has made much better use of the escalation process and has set up a joint operations group to manage the interface between the two areas.

A significant point made by the reviewers is that *"there is an urgent need to understand the business model and align business processes between academic registration and the SONM"*. The School believes that many areas of confusion/misunderstandings with Academic Registry, and Graduate Studies, relate to the external funding environment for postgraduate nursing and midwifery courses. This external business model involves extremely short tender deadlines and a high level of flexibility in terms of entry, payment structures and exit routes for students on courses funded by the HSE. This timeline is not compatible with the current College deadlines for course approval and entry/exit points, including modularisation, for Trinity approved postgraduate courses. The current college postgraduate course approval deadlines and limited entry/exits routes are a barrier to the demands of the external market and is impacting negatively on the ability of the School to achieve its student number commitments. The reviewers have highlighted this in their final summary comments, *"A highly dynamic and competitive local market requires a responsive and agile business model to ensure positioning and funding"*. This is speaking to the feedback from the health service stakeholders who contrast the structures here in Trinity with those available to them in UCC, UCD, RCSI, DCU and UCD for the taught postgraduate courses they fund students to undertake. The School is pleased to be actively engaging with Academic Registry and Graduate Studies office to enhance

shared understanding and refinement of the processes that underpin the student experience so we may bridge the gap between the external business environment and the current College structures.

Final Comments

We appreciate the thoughtful review we have received. We are encouraged by the many suggestions that the School is on the right path and their recognition that we are at “a time for reframing and positioning for the future”. We look forward to engaging with College to address many of the issues raised in the review, such as building on the research activity, flexible and responsive postgraduate business model, recruitment of Clinical Professors and most significantly the physical environment and the co-locating of all aspects of School activity.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne-Marie Brady". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

Professor Anne-Marie Brady

Head of School

RESPONSE FROM THE FACULTY DEAN

Introduction

The Dean would like thank the international experts who undertook the review of the School of Nursing and Midwifery for their time and effort. They have highlighted many issues for careful consideration but have endorsed the effort which the staff continue make to provide a world class teaching and research environment for students.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

There is a critical need for the central administration, particularly the Academic Registry, to have a contemporary and realistic appreciation of business models in funding for nursing and midwifery. There is a malalignment between administrative processes and the business model representing significant risk to Trinity in terms of market share, reputation and material risk.

The Dean agrees that there is a challenge in the current college postgraduate course approval deadlines and limited entry/exits routes that present a barrier to the demands of the external market and is impacting negatively on the ability of the School to achieve its student number commitments. The Dean agrees with the School's approach to actively engaging with academic registry and Graduate studies office to enhance shared understanding and refinement of the processes that underpin the student experience so we may bridge the gap between the external business environment and the current College structures.

Recommendation 2:

Following a period of rapid growth there is a need to consider the balance between undergraduate and postgraduate teaching missions as well as close competitor analysis domestically. Alignment of the need for an agile business model and Trinity College administrative processes needs to be achieved. Considering space and accommodation needs is critically important. There is a substantial reputational risk associated with the current limited and inadequate teaching, learning and staff accommodation.

The Dean acknowledges the concerns raised about limited and inadequate teaching, learning and staff accommodation and also wishes to recognize the efforts by the School and by College to meet needs to the best degree possible within existing resources. As noted by the head of School, space demands have increased because of TEP activity, the NMBI mandated redevelopment of the undergraduate curriculum with merger of the nursing and midwifery degrees for shared modules, a fourfold increase in PG numbers in recent years and an increase in the number of PIs and related research activity. The Dean agrees there is an urgent need to create a space able to house all staff within one location and to meet all instructional and research needs.

Recommendation 3:

Foster a strategic vision to promote interdisciplinary research and practice leveraging the diversity of Trinity College. There are likely further opportunities for integration and meaningful collaborations across the teaching and research missions.

The Faculty of Health Sciences has been targeting the further development of interdisciplinary research and practice particularly with our linked hospitals. Advancing such research has been an important consideration in recent chair hires. The School has been actively involved in such efforts and the Dean is committed to ensuring their achievement.

Recommendation 4:

Investment in the recruitment and development of faculty to address the teaching, research and service mission of the SONM is important. As in many nursing and midwifery schools, there is a dependence on a small number of high performing individuals with limited consideration of succession planning. Affirmatively, attracting PhD students in Nursing and Midwifery is of high importance for future workforce planning.

The Dean agrees that there is a pressing need to examine and respond to how the renewal of research active and funded staff will be achieved when a number of funded faculty will soon be retiring. Pursuit of new chairs and support of new funded and funding capable faculty is a priority for the School that the Dean's office will seek to support.

Recommendation 5:

Partnerships and linkages locally, nationally and globally should be aligned with strategic priorities and be focused on negotiated goals and outcomes. The internationalization focus should be further integrated within the research mission.

The building of global relationships both for the recruitment of students and to build research partnerships has been an important effort by the School over a number of years. The Dean agrees that the School has reached a level of success such that a more strategic and structured focus may now be applied to such efforts.

Recommendation 6:

Continuing to advance the marketing and communication plan is necessary to position the school in the market and leverage brand positioning building on strong QS rankings. Convening a strategic advisory board may assist in positioning the SONM.

The Dean agrees that a strategic advisory board should be established and will work with the Head of School to implement. The Significant QS ranking for the School is an opportunity to build, maintain, enhance and position the Trinity "brand".

Recommendation 7:

Longitudinal key performance indicators, including funding, publications and impact measures should be provided for future reviews to enable a more detailed review of progress.

The Dean agrees that the metrics requested should be collected in a more formal way and be available to future review teams. The Dean will work with the Head of School to achieve this.

Recommendation 8:

Although there have been considerable advances in the research enterprise within the SONM, there is the potential to invest more in the research ecosystem, particularly in the pre-award phase. Support with grant writing, budgets and other operational aspects of the grant administration system may leverage further benefits.

Investments in supports and other research ecosystem components including pre-award is currently a discussion within College with recommendation for next steps emerging. The Dean will work with the Head of School to further develop within School resources and to ensure that the School's needs are considered in what emerges from the College-wide discussion.

Conclusions:

The School of Nursing and Midwifery faces a challenging environment with budget and space concerns, growing external demands on clinical and other partners, and the need to integrate and build partnerships and linkages locally, nationally and globally. The current School leadership and the heads of its disciplines are therefore to be commended for their work in advancing the School despite such challenges.

In the School response to the review, processes already underway are highlighted and they identify and address many reviewer suggestions that the School, Faculty and College were already aware of and have been addressing. As noted here the Dean is also committed to supporting many of these steps including the already approved searches for key staff and to work with the School's leadership on additional initiatives that will encourage excellence in research and teaching and ensure that the School continues to be recognized as a world leader in Nursing and Midwifery education and research.