



# **UCD Pilot Research Assessment Project**

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**QQI quality enhancement conference in Dublin Castle**

**15 December 2016**



# Context for pilot

- **University's Strategy 2015-2020**
  - Increase the quality, quantity and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation
  - Provide an educational experience that defines international best practice
  - Consolidate and strengthen our disciplines

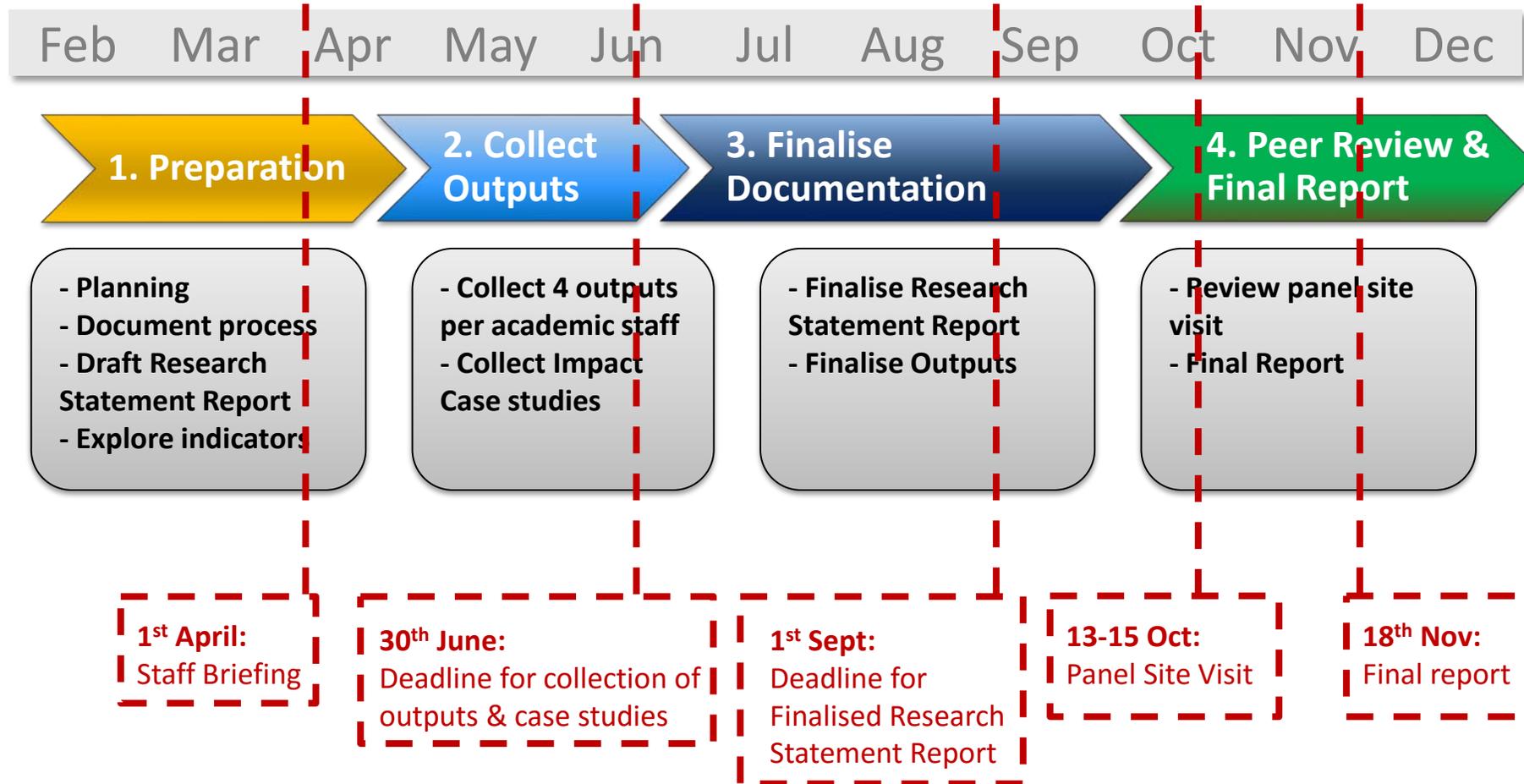


# Research Quality Assessment Pilot

- Assessment of the quality and level of research activity in the School of Archaeology benchmarked internationally
- School objective:
  - *“To be in the top 25 schools/departments of Archaeology in Europe and the top 50 schools/departments of Archaeology globally by 2020”*



# Process (based on the REF)





## Panel Externs

- Professor Chris Gerrard – University of Durham
- Professor Robert Van de Noort – University of Reading
- Professor Alun Jones - UCD Chair
- *Note: a female panel member had to withdraw at short notice*



## Overall Quality Profile – Levels

- Four - Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance & rigour
- Three - Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which falls short of the highest standards of excellence
- Two - Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour
- One - Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour
- Unclassified - Quality that falls below standard of nationally recognized work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment



## Forming the overall quality profile

In forming the overall profile, the panel will assess three sub-elements:

- Environment (15%)
- Outputs (65%)
- Impact (20%)



# Research Statement Report

- **Environment**
  - Staff FTE & Headcount
  - Research Income €
  - Contextual narrative on strategy, organisation, infrastructure, funding, collaboration
- **Outputs**
  - 4 publications per staff (post docs/academic staff issue)
  - Benchmarking outputs against peer institutions (incl. citation analysis)
  - Research PhD numbers
- **Impacts**
  - Narrative on context for impact
  - Impact case studies



# UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN



## RESEARCH STATEMENT FOR THE SCHOOL OF ARCHAEOLOGY

September 2015

### 2.3 Funding/income

In the period under review the School brought in €3,920,328 in funding (Fig. 4). Hence the School has maintained a strong track record of research funding in an exceptionally difficult economic climate. Research awards averaged €784K in value per annum over the five year period 2009/10-2013/4 with an average of 18 new grants achieved each year. This equated to an average annual research income of €78K per academic staff member. Over the recorded period 7 grants in excess of €100k were secured by staff in the UCD School of Archaeology.

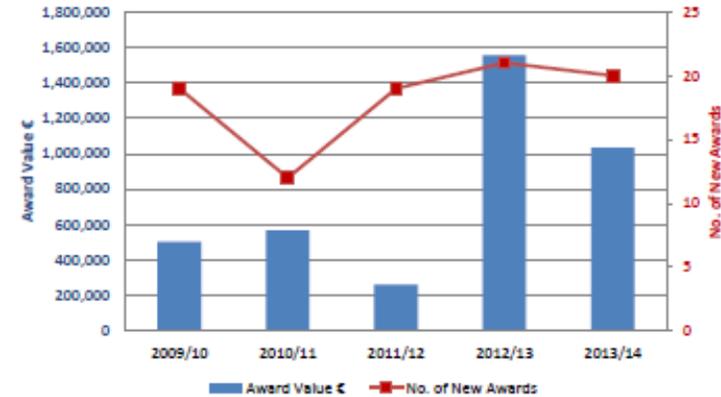


Figure 4: Research awards from 2010-2014 (UCD RMS Grants system)

There are a range of funding sources (Fig. 5). By far the most significant of the Irish (and overall) sources is the Irish Research Council (IRC) and its predecessor the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS). The IRC provided almost 50% of the external funding over the review period and covers doctoral and post-doctoral fellowships, which constitutes the bulk of the funding received by the School, as well as funding for research projects. Success in securing funding from the IRC for doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships can be seen as the product of a strategic, proactive and supportive approach to applicants. The School's approach in this regard has been held up as an exemplar of best practice within UCD and is being used as a basis for the development of the policy of the College of Social Sciences and Law in supporting IRC doctoral funding applications.



# Collection of Outputs

- 4 self selected per person (2010 -2014) using template
- Outputs can be:
  - Publications: [including books, book chapters, special issues; journals, monographs, conference papers, policy evaluation reports, critical review articles etc.]
  - Products: [this may include - physical artefacts, digital artefacts, research datasets, software etc.]
  - Patents
- Make outputs available online (where possible)
  - Institutional Repository
  - Online Journal etc.



# Output Collection Template

**Research Quality Review: Output Template**

Members of staff must supply four selected research outputs. The four outputs should be work published during the period of review, 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2014.

NOTE: You can submit multiple responses and edit those responses. If you enter more than four responses the most recently entered four responses will be used.

Your username ([liam.cleere@ucd.ie](mailto:liam.cleere@ucd.ie)) will be recorded when you submit this form. Not [liam.cleere?](#) [Sign out](#)

\* Required

**Output title \***  
Enter the title of the publication or output

  
**Output Type \***  

**Volume Title (e.g. Periodical etc.)**

  
**Year \***  

**Where is the output located? Specify DOI, Hyperlink etc \***

  
**What makes this item significant? (200 words maximum)**

<b>Output title</b>	<a href="#">A Contextual Approach to the Emergence of Agriculture in Southwest ...</a>
<b>Output type</b>	D - Journal article
<b>Volume title</b>	Current Anthropology
<b>Year</b>	2013
<b>DOI</b>	<a href="#">10.1086/670679</a>
<b>Output title</b>	<a href="#">A Technological Fix for 'Dunbar's Dilemma'?</a>
<b>Output type</b>	C - Chapter in book
<b>Volume title</b>	Social Brain, Distributed Mind
<b>Year</b>	2010
<b>DOI</b>	
<b>Output title</b>	<a href="#">A World Upturned: Commentary and Analysis of the Dialogue of ...</a>
<b>Output type</b>	A - Authored book
<b>Volume title</b>	
<b>Year</b>	2008
<b>DOI</b>	
<b>Output title</b>	<a href="#">An archaeological signature of multi-level social systems: The ...</a>
<b>Output type</b>	D - Journal article
<b>Volume title</b>	Journal of Anthropological Archaeology
<b>Year</b>	2011
<b>DOI</b>	<a href="#">10.1016/j.jaa.2010.12.002</a>



# Case Study Template

- Title of case study
- Images
- Summary
- Research description
- Details of the impact
- References

Impact Case Study Template		
1	Name: Graeme Warren, on behalf of the whole School	
2	Title of case study: Glendalough	
3	Images: (Paste image files or insert links to images online)	



# Differences with REF 2014

- Definition of impact from [Beyond Publications](#) included 'academic impact' as well as 'societal & economic'
- All staff were included in the assessment
  - in the UK REF approx. 75% of staff would be returned
- In a REF submission it would be unusual to include criticisms about facilities



# The report

- Overall quality profile score and benchmarking
  - “percentage of outputs ranked as internationally excellent or better would outstrip Manchester, as well as the combined Geography and Archaeology submissions the University of Edinburgh and Queen’s University Belfast.”
- Descriptive statement of the overall quality of research activity in the School
- Conclusions and recommendations for improvement
  - 16 bullet points
- Comment on the pilot research assessment process



# Conclusions and recommendations for improvement

- Area A: Quality & Reputation
  - “... introduce a buddy system for researchers, with the aim of improving mentoring opportunities without an implied ‘senior-junior’ relationship.”
- Area B: Bulk of Department
- Area C: Grant Income
- Area D: Impact
  - “ ...give its research more of a **physical presence**. Recent and ongoing research can be showcased in the main corridor by e.g. noticeboards and colour print-outs of book covers. Good news about research, such as new grants, awards, and publications, should be **circulated and celebrated by email.**”
- Area E: Vision
- Area F: Research Planning



# School response

- Dedicated staff meeting (Jan 2016)
- Workshop with Postdocs/PhDs (Feb 2016)
- Liaison with external stakeholders (ongoing)
- Implementation of some recommendations
  - Social events/Vision & values
- Changing School leadership
  - New research plan



# Assessment – lessons learnt

- Questions about all staff being included in the assessment
- Tensions between Irish vs. internationalisation
- Output types
  - In the REF outputs in ‘handbooks’ and ‘position papers’ would be of secondary importance
  - Articles in international peer-reviewed journals or monographs published by the most respected university presses are considered the gold standard
- Impact
  - Panel felt that impact described fitted better under the category of ‘knowledge transfer’



# Value and reflection

- Part of strategic vision of school as laid out in strategic plan
  - School, College, UCD
- Didn't know we were playing the game until the end of the period!
  - Nature of publications
  - Impact
- Some investment of time to generate
- Asks hard questions, provides hard data
- Scalability issues around wider application
  - Other initiatives e.g. Output-Based Research Support Scheme (OBRSS)