

# St. Patrick's, College Drumcondra (SPD)

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## Strategic Dialogue Cycle 2 Reflections on Performance

### Overview

- SPD is currently engaged in an incorporation process into the 'new DCU'. Since SPD is a college of Dublin City University, objectives form part of DCU's contribution to the 3U cluster and the Dublin Leinster pillar II Cluster.
- Overall the college are meeting their stated targets in access and participation but it would be of benefit to see the impact on DCU targets, post-incorporation. DCU currently has a strong record in this area.
- While excellent progress appears to have been made against objectives in teaching and learning domain, further clarification is required in respect of some objectives.
- While research income has exceeded targets and much work has been done to support research applications, overall enrolments of research students decreased in 2014/15. The Institute will benefit from the incorporation with DCU in this regard.
- Overall, SPD is conducting engagement activities relevant in the context of initial teacher education provision. Extensive progress has been reported in most cases but there are some objectives not fully completed.
- In its compact, SPD stated "the College will consolidate and further develop HEI agreements with target strategic partners beyond the Bologna countries to maximise student and staff mobility." SPD did not apply for the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility funding which supports these endeavours. Teacher placement initiatives that are shown with Luxembourg and certain African countries are not new. Incoming and outgoing B.Ed. mobility numbers in line with targets. Pursuing a joint Masters with Australia yet did not apply for Erasmus+ support with this region. Targets for fee-paying students in Education and Humanities below level envisaged but numbers are small 6 instead in 10.

## Self-evaluation report - domain level review

### 1. Regional clusters:

SPD is currently engaged in an incorporation process into the 'new DCU'. Since SPD is a college of Dublin City University, objectives form part of DCU's contribution to the 3U cluster and the Dublin Leinster pillar II Cluster.

### 2. Participation, equal access and lifelong learning:

SPD set out seven objectives in relation to the target groups. SPD wish to increase the participation rate and support among and for SED, Mature Students, Students with Disabilities, and those from ethnic minorities.

However, the targets themselves are set quite low, for example SED baseline was 6%, to rise to 7% in 2014 (they achieved of 7.1%). While mature student target was set at 6% this dropped to 5.1%, but in line with the national trend. No students from ethnic minorities seem to have been attracted (the Irish language requirement is of course a factor) but SPD do not state any plans to address this. Students with a mobility, visual or hearing impairment have risen from 0.5% to 0.7%. DARE students rose from 1.5% to 2%.

SPD would therefore seem to have set low targets for students from the access, albeit the targets are achieved by reference to HEAR/DARE/mature/FE entry.

Overall the college are meeting their stated targets in access and participation but it would be of benefit to see the impact on DCU targets, post-incorporation. DCU currently has a strong record in this area.

### 3. Excellent teaching and learning and quality of student experience:

*Institution objective 1: Nurture a quality culture in teaching and learning and all College activities. Assure conformity with European standards and Guidelines for QA and the requirements of QQI.*

Target was met. The Irish survey of student engagement (ISSE) was completed in February 2014 and 2015 respectively and evidence of feedback mechanisms to stakeholders were provided in the self-evaluation form. T&L and QA initiatives across the university, were also achieved.

*Institution objective 2: to bring quality improvement and quality promotion strategies, structures and practices into further alignment with those of the university and national policy.*

Target objective was met. 50% of the student population participated and SPD note that initiatives will be undertaken to improve this. SPD to clarify if the 50% is in respect of registered students or programmes.

*Institution Objective 3: Promote staff professional development in the areas of innovative teaching and research.*

Target is met, lunchtime seminars for staff professional development were provided and an initial survey in 2014 (20 staff response rate) showed benefits in terms of enhancement of teaching and learning and the quality of the student experience. SPD should reflect on whether a judgement on the quality of the student experience can be made following training for staff.

In December 2014, another staff survey of education staff had a higher response rate of 90 staff (66% response rate) providing insight on pedagogies for effective teaching and learning in education that will inform a T&L strategy for the new faculty of education. SPD are invited to discuss this at the upcoming meeting.

*Institution objective 4: Develop a staff professional development programme with a focus on the delivery of online, blended and flexible learning programmes.*

Target is met, the number of programmes with blended components is growing steadily, the self-evaluation report states targets set here are underway, however figures and precise progress descriptions are not detailed. 435 students are enrolled on blended courses (14.85% of students).

#### **4. High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation:**

*Institution objective: The enhancement of staff research skills and capacity*

While progress was made on targets, it does not appear that PhD supervision workshops were held for all academic staff. 81% of staff have doctoral qualifications though, so the 2016 target has been achieved.

*Institution objective: The expansion of research infrastructure for staff and students*

Targeted postgraduate workshops have taken place but the agreement with DRI is not yet in place. Students are benefitting from the incorporation with DCU e.g. an interim structured PhD programme in Education has been developed and postgraduate students can attend workshops organised by DCU.

*Institution objective: Greater recognition of academic research endeavour*

Annual research reports have been compiled as planned. Further detail could have been provided on the mapping exercise on supports and recognition of research within the Incorporation Research work stream.

#### **5. Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange:**

*Institution objective: Respond to the needs of the education sector and to the employment needs of all graduates*

The 2014 targets related to reviewing the student exit survey and graduate employment survey and also to providing accredited programmes in the Irish language. They have provided extensive commentary on how these targets were met in 2014.

*Institution objective: Development of a strong framework to support civic engagement by staff and students.*

They do not appear to have met the target around "promotion of DCU President's award for Engagement" but there is no explanation of this in the progress report for year-end 2014. The workload model is not yet fully complete and a transitional workload model is in draft stage. They have flagged this objective as partially completed.

*Institution objective: Programme of knowledge transfer and exchange partnerships through increased provision of suite of professional development modules for alumni and external partners*

The target relating to setting up a framework and provision of CPD module appears to be met in full. They have provided extensive commentary on how these targets were met in 2014 but it would appear to meet the needs of the existing student cohort rather than the alumni as would have been envisaged under this objective. SPD should clarify.

*Institution objective: To develop the campus as a centre of education and culture in the community*

While the database has not yet been fully compiled, there are extensive examples of local engagement – national integration conference sponsored and held by SPD, staff sitting on local community groups etc.

## **6. Enhanced internationalisation:**

It its compact SPD stated "the College will consolidate and further develop HEI agreements with target strategic partners beyond the Bologna countries to maximise student and staff mobility." However, SPD did not apply for the Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility funding which supports these endeavours. Teacher placement initiatives that are shown with Luxembourg and certain African countries are not new. Incoming and outgoing B.Ed. mobility numbers are in line with targets though. One example is where the institute is pursuing a joint Masters with a college in Australia yet did not apply for Erasmus+ support with this region. More generally, targets for fee-paying students in Education and Humanities below level envisaged but numbers are small 6 instead in 10.

## **7. Institutional consolidation:**

In line with the compact, SPD has successfully aligned its programme offerings with those of DCU.

## **8. Compact revisions**

High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation:

*The enhancement of staff research skills and capacity*

81% of staff currently have doctoral qualifications, so the 2016 target has been achieved. Taking into consideration the impact of new staff recruited in 2015, SPD should consider whether revision is necessary.

#### Enhanced internationalisation

*Increase outgoing BEd/BA Students numbers, and equivalent in incoming student numbers on Exchange Programmes*

The 2015 target (70 outgoing students) appears to have been met in 2014. SPD should consider whether revision is necessary.