



## STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

A College of Queen's University Belfast

### **Academic Plan 2009-2010**

#### **1 STUDENTS AND CURRICULUM**

##### **1.1 Student Recruitment**

###### **1.1.1 Undergraduate Recruitment (Volume and Quality)**

Undergraduate recruitment to Stranmillis University College is largely full-time students. Full-time undergraduate recruitment numbers are designated by DE and DEL. Tables 1A and 1B (see appendix 1) provide the most up to date estimates available. Part-time numbers are for the BA (Early Childhood Studies) and BSc (Health & Leisure) programmes only.

###### **1.1.2 Postgraduate Taught Recruitment (Home/EU and Overseas)**

The College's postgraduate courses include the MA (Early Childhood Studies), MEd (Leadership & Management in Education), MEd (Inclusive & Special Needs Education), MTeach and a full-time PGCE in Early Years. The PGCE figures in Tables 2 and 3 (see appendix 1) confirm no change from 2008 entry. Recruitment to the MA (Early Childhood Studies) has remained steady in recent years while the pattern for both the MEd and MTeach has posed greater challenges.

From 2009-2010 the College will promote its MEd provision in collaboration with the Queen's School of Education.

###### **1.1.3 Part-Time Student Recruitment**

The BA (Early Childhood Studies) is delivered as part of a collaborative arrangement with the South West Regional College (Omagh Campus). The programme recruits for both the Stranmillis campus and the Omagh campus.

The BSc (Health & Leisure) has attracted a small number of part-time enrolments in recent years. It has been identified that the present marketing strategy is failing to target potential applicants. In the next planning cycle a strategy for increasing these enrolments will be explored.

#### **1.1.4 GB, ROI, and International Recruitment**

Any limited recruitment to Initial Teacher Education from either GB or ROI is within the quota system applying in the sections above.

The College is involved in a number of important strategic partnerships:

- A cross-border partnership with Monaghan Vocational Institute to deliver the BA (Early Childhood Studies) on a part-time basis.
- A consortium arrangement with the Further & Higher Education sector to deliver a Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies. This is the largest Consortium of its kind in Northern Ireland.
- A strategic partnership with Tenby Educare, Malaysia. This partnership has resulted in the recruitment of a group of Malaysian teachers to a 12 week professional development course developed in response to identified needs. Further development work is planned for 2009-2010.

### **1.2 Student Attainment**

#### **1.2.1 Student Retention (drop-out rates)**

Retention rates have been consistently high. According to the HESA return for 2006-07 the drop-out rate after the first year at Stranmillis was 2.2% the lowest rate of any HEI in Northern Ireland. The College is one of the top ten UK institutions for retention rates. A priority is to maintain this through active monitoring and follow up work by Advisers of Studies, supported by programme teams.

#### **1.2.2 Degree Classifications**

Of 286 graduating in July, 2008, 225 (78.7%) were classified 1<sup>st</sup> or III.

#### **1.2.3 Employment/Graduate Employment**

From the HESA data, replies from 325 of 341 students who graduated in July 2007, indicated that 62.77% were in full-time employment, while 8.92% were classified as unemployed.

### **1.3 Curriculum Development**

The following significant developments will be implemented in 2009-2010:

- Both undergraduate initial teacher education programmes are being revised for September 2009 to address the priorities raised by the current policy contexts. The revised degree will also take account of the current debate on teaching becoming a Masters level profession by introducing a common fourth year with the option to take modules at Masters Level.

- Developing an innovative strategy in response to the STEM agenda in order to create a Centre of Excellence in the Teaching of STEM subjects.
- The option of developing a Masters degree in the area of Health & Leisure will be explored.
- The School Based Work Partnership pilot involving 3<sup>rd</sup> Year BEd students doing a placement in Medway Kent in 2008-09 will be offered in 2009-2010. The option to develop a similar partnership with Coventry will be explored.
- The School Based Work cross-border Partnership supported by Cross-Border Studies will continue to be developed subject to funding.
- The College will continue to promote its international partnerships, particularly those linked to the International Outreach Programme (see Table 5) and the sub-Saharan African countries capacity building projects in which the College is currently involved. Greater attention must be given to the marketing of these opportunities among our students and to ensuring that the experiences are integral to their degree programme.
- The modules in School Leadership and Special Educational Needs will be merged into the Queen's MEd specialist options. It is hoped that this development will also lead to an increasing number of Stranmillis staff becoming involved in supervision of postgraduate dissertation work.
- The MTeach will be advertised as normal for 2009-10. However, an internal review into the long term viability of the MTeach is underway. This will involve exploring a strategy to develop the MTeach into a more innovative programme which is delivered using online support and targeted at the international market. This will be done in collaboration with the College's CETL. The development would also have to be supported by a robust international marketing strategy.
- The College will continue to develop its Malaysian partnership. In the next planning cycle it intends to pilot and evaluate a programme of professional development for the international market and contribute to research in this field of Teacher Education. This will be done in collaboration with the College's CETL.
- The College's MA in Early Childhood Studies will be expanded to incorporate the Queen's MSc in Social Inclusion in the Early Years. The MA will be offered both as a full-time and part-time programme.
- Developing the BSc (Health & Leisure) as a mechanism for expanding part-time enrolments will be reviewed.
- The provision of short CPD courses will be expanded as part of the College's contribution to provide ongoing professional development for the teaching profession and its income generation strategy. This will include the collaborative work with the University

of Ulster, Queen's University, St Mary's University College and the Open University to develop the Educational Testing Certificate.

- The College will develop a strategy to expand the range of courses offered as additional courses to undergraduate students under 'Degree Plus'. As well as continuing to offer the Queen's certificates in Entrepreneurship Studies and Career Management & Employability Skills, the College will aim to development a suite of certificates which are recognized under 'Degree Plus' in the following areas: Music, Art, Drama and PE & Health.
- The 'Lifelong Learning' portfolio will be extended, in collaboration with QUB. There will be a specific focus on the Arts (Visual and Performing) in order that the expansion strategy complements current provision being offered by Queen's University.

#### **1.4 Recommended Actions**

In setting its budget for 2009-2010 the College will prioritize the following development projects:

- Support the development of a portfolio of courses under Degree Plus, as outlined above.
- Support, through the collaboration between academic teams and CETL, the development of an innovative approach to the delivery of professional development, including the option of expanding into international markets.
- Support the development of a Centre of Excellence for the Teaching of STEM subjects.
- Support the development of a range of CPD programmes which contribute to income generation.

## **2. Research**

### **2.1 Research**

#### **2.1.1 Significant Changes to Research Strategy**

The RAE outcome endorsed the development of the existing research activities and saw the strong emergence of teacher education as a significant new area of development. The University College proposes to consolidate its approach to research by developing its current research activities to form the backbone of the new cluster - **Curriculum Development & Teaching** proposed for the new merged School. This cluster will serve as a developmental focus for research among staff from Stranmillis University College.

Early Childhood Education continues to indicate that this is the direction that the University College should take in developing further agendas for research. In the aftermath of the RAE the University College will continue to develop its research clusters in Early Childhood Education

and Diversity in Education as well as developing the new research cluster: **Curriculum Development & Teaching** as identified in the draft Academic Plan for the proposed School.

1. Early Childhood Education
2. Diversity in Education
3. Curriculum Development and Teaching, including Teacher Education.

The strategic realignment of the University College into a number of clusters will facilitate the development of further research both within these clusters and across the College. These will include literacy, numeracy, and the world around us, post-primary education, STEM and physical education. The University College is of the view that physical education would be a significant priority to develop in the mid-term. The University College feels that the merger will add considerably to the research agenda of the University but there are issues about alignment and mutual support. The University College is confident in terms of the quality of its papers at the 2008 RAE that it can take this agenda forward.

### **2.1.2 Research Grant Applications (volume, value)**

Table 6 shows the success the University College had in attracting external research grants over the period 2002/2003 to the 2007/2008 period.

### **2.1.3 Research Income (value, sources)**

Table 7 shows the number of applications and awards attracted in the period 2006/07 to 2008/09. Table 8 shows the total external research expenditure.

### **2.1.4 PGR Student Recruitment and Funding**

This section is not applicable to Stranmillis University College.

### **2.1.5 Devolved Research Support Funds Expenditure**

The College will use some of the funding allocated as a result of its success in the 2008 RAE to provide support for a number of start-up research projects linked specifically to the new research cluster.

### **2.1.6 Devolved International Fund Expenditure**

The University College is engaged in three Sub-Saharan African projects funded by Irish Aid. It is involved in:

- A project in Uganda with the development of capacity building in primary and secondary schools.
- A project in Mozambique with the development of research into public health and education.

- The University College is leading a project on assessment in teacher education in Mozambique, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and Northern Ireland.

The University College is also involved in research capacity building in schools in northern Uganda a project which is coordinated by Makerere University, Kampala, the University of Sierra Leone, University of Rwanda and Stranmillis University College. Support for these projects has been developed through the international fund.

#### **2.1.7 Devolved Forum Funds Schedule**

This section is not applicable to Stranmillis University College.

#### **2.1.8 Proposed Sabbatical Leave Schedule**

The College will continue to support a Sabbatical Leave Schedule in line with its current policy and which is linked to the key strategies outlined in this Plan.

#### **2.1.9 Knowledge Transfer and Related Activity**

This section is not applicable to Stranmillis University College.

#### **2.1.10 Research Outputs**

Table 9: shows the research performance of the University College in comparison to the research climate and research ethos.

A key priority for the University College in 2009-2010 is to enhance the quality of its research outputs. In order to achieve this objective the University College is considering the appointment of a Professor of Education, in consultation with Queen's University Belfast, to oversee the development and publication of research in the University College with a particular focus on Curriculum Development & Teaching, including Teacher Education. This is done in the light of the previous RAE experience and the direction the University College wishes to take in the merger with Queen's University, Belfast.

#### **2.1.11 RAE Outcomes**

The University College was delighted with the outcome of the RAE 2008. The quality of the research output of the University College was commented on favourably by the Chair of the sub-group. The University College did not score as successfully on research climate or measures of esteem. This was exceedingly difficult given the nature of our relationship with Queen's University Belfast. While the RAE output, proof and profile for the University College was higher than those for esteem and environment the University College was not surprised by this and was extremely pleased in terms of the assessment of the quality of the research.

## **2.2 Recommended Actions**

The College supports the proposal outlined in the draft Academic Plan for the new School, to establish two new chairs to contribute to capacity building in the new merged school. However, within this planning cycle we propose that one be appointed immediately to take forward the development of the new research cluster. We also propose to provide further support and staff development to facilitate further the publication of articles in internationally recognised journals among staff on the Stranmillis side and to promote the development of a University strategy for the career development of contracted research staff. Efforts will also be focused on the need to increase research income through successful grant applications.

## **3 Resources**

### **3.1 Staff**

#### **3.1.1 Academic Staff Vacancies and Recruitment**

It is anticipated that there will be no vacant posts in the College in 2009-2010. However, a post at Professorship level for 3 years to develop the new research cluster – Curriculum Development & Teaching should be agreed with Queen's University. This post would be funded from the research funding the College will attract between 2009 - 2012.

#### **3.1.2 Other Staff Resource Issues (clerical, technical)**

It is anticipated that there will be no additional support posts required in the College in 2009-2010 – see Table 10.

#### **3.1.3 Staff Development**

The priorities are as follows:

- Support staff who are currently enrolled on PhD/EdD programmes;
- Support staff who wish to undertake Recent Relevant Experience;
- Support staff in developing their capacity to publish research in internationally recognized journals;
- Support staff in the development of their leadership skills.

#### **3.1.4 Probation**

Currently the College has no staff on probation.

### **3.1.5 Promotion**

The College will continue to operate under the agreed HERA Framework.

### **3.1.6 Discretionary Pay**

The College will continue to operate under the agreed HERA Framework.

## **3.2 Finance**

### **3.2.1 Generation of Non-Government Income**

The College will seek to increase the number of short courses offered as CPD opportunities for the teaching profession. The short courses in English as a Second Language and Primary School Languages demonstrate the Colleges capacity to offer CPD on a full cost recovery basis. It is an imperative that the College continues to expand its portfolio of CPD programmes in 2009-2010 not only as an additional revenue stream but in preparation for the new market conditions that are likely to prevail when the ESA is established in 2010.

### **3.2.2 Update on Academic Plan**

A draft budget for 2009-10 has been prepared. If necessary this will be adjusted when the College receives confirmation of its 2009-2010 funding arrangements.

### **3.2.3 Outline Proposals for the Use of Accumulated Reserves (revenue and equipment)**

Not applicable to Stranmillis.

### **3.2.4 Outline Any Major Equipment Requests**

Working within the parameters of the 2009-2010 budget the College will seek to upgrade a number of teaching spaces to include whiteboards and data projectors. Resources will also be allocated to purchase additional IT resources as part of the upgrade of the learning environment on the Library/Learning Support floor.

## **3.3 Recommended Actions**

- Appoint a Professor in Curriculum Development & Teaching for a 3 year period.

## **4 New Developments/Initiatives**

### **4.1 Response to Wider Strategies**

#### **4.1.1 Marketing Strategy**

The College will continue to build its marketing strategy using the following approaches:

- College prospectus;
- Masters Level leaflets;
- Short Courses leaflets;
- College Website;
- STRANews;
- Articles/adverts in established journals/booklets such as those published by the British Council.

However, in the next planning cycle the College would wish to achieve greater coherence and standardization of quality in terms of its short programme leaflets. It will also begin to explore the option and potential of developing an international marketing strategy.

#### **4.1.2 Widening Participation**

The College has made considerable progress in attracting non-traditional students and has been commended for its innovative project 'Males into Teaching'. It will continue to develop its Widening Access strategy. The Widening Access Co-ordinator will lead this development with a continuing focus on encouraging males into teaching, attracting non-traditional learners to courses and promoting engagement with the STEM agenda.

#### **4.1.3 Skills Strategy**

The College will continue to contribute to the University's Skills strategy in a number of ways:

- Providing study skills support in programme modules in order to support independent learning;
- Providing support through the Communications Skills Centre;
- Developing and extending the use of Access to online resources;
- Developing and extending the use of PDP.

#### **4.1.4 Curriculum Review**

See section 1.3 above

#### **4.1.5 Degree Plus including the Employability and Skills Policy**

The College's strategy is to increase the numbers participating in Degree Plus activities, including:

- Certificate in Entrepreneurship Studies;
- Certificate in Career Management & Employability Skills.

It will support a strategy for developing a number of Degree Plus courses in key areas as outlined above.

#### **4.2 Sustainability of Cross-University Initiatives (eg CETL)**

The College will develop and implement a strategy in the next planning cycle which aims to secure the long-term sustainability of its CETL. The key projects linked to that strategy are outlined in this Plan.

#### **4.3 Estates Priorities**

The College will deliver a number of refurbishment projects in order to enhance the learning environment and contribute to the improvement of services to students and staff. The priority will be to develop the resources in the Central Building. This will include:

- A new Administration office;
- Coffee Shop;
- New toilets at Theatre;
- Refurbishment of library/learning support floor;
- Refurbishment of science block.

### **5 Prioritized Actions**

The key priorities in 2009-2010 will be:

- The successful implementation of the merger with the Queen's University School of Education;
- Establishing the new research cluster - **Curriculum Development & Teaching;**

- Securing the long term sustainability of the College's CETL through its support for teaching and learning and contribution to research;
- Expanding provision under CPD and short courses to increase income generation.

## Appendix 1

**Table 1A: Undergraduate recruitment (fte)**

| Student Recruitment (FTE) | 2006-07 Baseline | 2006-07 Actual | 2007-08 Actual | 2008-09 Actual | 2009-10 Target |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Undergraduate             |                  |                |                |                |                |
| Home and EU               | 268              | 281            | 256            | 241            |                |
| Overseas                  |                  |                |                |                |                |
| <b>Total</b>              | 268              | 281            | 256            | 241            |                |

These include part-time students.

**Table 1B: Undergraduate recruitment by headcount**

| Student Recruitment        | 2006-07 Baseline | 2006-07 Actual | 2007-08 Actual | 2008-09 Actual | 2009-10 Target |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Full-time</b>           |                  |                |                |                |                |
| BEd Primary                | 115              | 119            | 88             | 78             | 90             |
| BEd Post Primary           | 50               | 47             | 51             | 51             | 50             |
| BA Early Childhood Studies | 46               | 46             | 63             | 57             |                |
| BSc Health & Leisure       | 57               | 57             | 42             | 37             |                |
| <b>Part-time</b>           |                  |                |                |                |                |
| BA Early Childhood Studies | 24               | 24             | 30             | 46             |                |
| BSc Health & Leisure       | 5                | 5              | 0              | 0              |                |
| <b>Total</b>               | 297              | 298            | 274            | 269            |                |

**Table 2: PGT (fte)**

| PGT Student Recruitment (FTE)                 | 2006-07 Baseline | 2006-07 Actual | 2007-08 Actual | 2008-09 Actual | 2009-10 Target |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Home and EU<br>(PGCE Early Childhood Studies) | 30               | 30             | 20             | 15             | 15             |
| Overseas                                      |                  |                |                |                |                |
| Total   | 30               | 30             | 20             | 15             | 15             |

**Table 3: PGT headcount for PGT students**

| Education PGT headcount                                | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| PGCE   | 30      | 20      | 15      | 15      |
| PGCHET   | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| EdD  | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Education: (MEd) (Part-time)                           | 49      | 48      | 50      |         |
| Education: (MTeach) (Part-time)                        | 7       | 3       | 1       |         |
| Professional/Vocational (MA - Early Years) (Part-time) | 18      | 9       | 13      |         |
| Total  | 104     | 80      | 79      |         |

**Table 4: Total number of new students (headcount)**

| Area      | 2007-08 | 2008-09 |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| UG        | 274     | 269     |
| PGCE      | 20      | 15      |
| PGT       | 60      | 64      |
| PhD       | 0       | 0       |
| EdD       | 0       | 0       |
| EdD TESOL | 0       | 0       |

**Table 5: shows the scale of the College's International Outreach Programme**

| Incoming                                   | 2006<br>-07 | 2007<br>-08 | 2008<br>-09 | 2009<br>-10 | Outgoing                                   | 2006<br>-07 | 2007<br>-08 | 2008<br>-09 | 2009<br>-10 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Erasmus Incoming                           | 26          | 34          | 33          |             | Erasmus Outgoing                           | 20          | 23          | 24          |             |
| International Programme Incoming           | 11          | 12          | 17          |             | International Programme Outgoing           | 10          | 14          | 14          |             |
| Irish American Scholars Programme Incoming | 2           | 0           | 1           |             | Irish American Scholars Programme Outgoing | 0           | 0           | 0           |             |
| Comenius Programme                         | 5           | 0           | 0           |             |  |             |             |             |             |
| Total                                      | 44          | 46          | 51          |             | Total                                      | 30          | 37          | 38          |             |

**Tables 6: shows the success the University College has had in attracting external research grants over the period 2002/03 to the 2007/08 period**

|   | 2001/02 | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | 2004/05 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Regional Development Agency (RDA)             | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       |
| Other government bodies in the UK             | 71838   | 39603   | 88717   | 18606   | 96713   | 19459   | 0       |
| UK industry, commerce and public corporations | 20500   | 79716   | 394766  | 509253  | 26960   | 8778    | 0       |
| Government bodies in the EU                   | 0       | 0       | 0       | 106262  | 5907    | 0       | 68000   |

**Table7: Research Applications and Awards**

| Type                  | 2006-07  | 2007-08  | 2008-09  | 2009-2010 |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Applications          |          |          |          |           |
| Value of applications |          |          |          |           |
| Awards                | 6        | 5        | 5        |           |
| Value of awards       | £140,011 | £200,108 | £120,000 |           |

**Table 8: KPI 24: Total external research expenditure**

|                     | 2004-05<br>Baseline | 2005-06<br>Actual | 2006-07<br>Actual | 2007-08<br>Actual | 2008-09 | 2009-10 |
|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|
| <b>College Data</b> | 430,026             | 404,560           | £140,011          | £200,108          |         |         |

**Table 9: shows the research performance of the University College in comparison to the research climate and research ethos**

| <b>Percentage of research activity in the submission judged to meet the standard for:</b> |           |           |           |           |            |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
|   | <b>4*</b> | <b>3*</b> | <b>2*</b> | <b>1*</b> | <b>U/C</b> |
| <b>Overall quality profile</b>  | 5.0       | 20.0      | 15.0      | 40.0      | 20.0       |
| <b>Sub – profiles:</b>  |           |           |           |           |            |
| <u>Research output</u>  | 10.7      | 25.0      | 14.3      | 35.7      | 14.3       |
| <u>Research environment</u>   | 0.0       | 0.0       | 10.0      | 60.0      | 30.0       |
| Esteem indicators   | 0.0       | 0.0       | 40.0      | 40.0      | 20.0       |

**Table 10: Staffing**

| Staff Category         | Established Posts (FTE) | Staff in Post (FTE) | Head Count | Vacancies | Percentage Vacant |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Academic               | 53.8                    | 53.8                | 54         | 0         |                   |
| Academic Related       | 0                       | 0                   | 0          | 0         |                   |
| APT&C                  | 44.1                    | 44.9                | 49         | 0         |                   |
| Library                | 5.9                     | 5.9                 | 9          | 0         |                   |
| Research               | 3                       | 3                   | 3          | 0         |                   |
| Teaching Fellow/Assist | 0                       | 0                   | 0          | 0         |                   |
| Estates                | 25.7                    | 24.7                | 25         | 1         |                   |
| Hospitality            | 27.4                    | 26.4                | 45         | 0         |                   |
| Total                  | 159.9                   | 158.7               | 185        | 1         |                   |

**Draft Budget 2009-2010 is presented as a separate document**