UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

QUALITY MANUAL

BUILDINGS AND ESTATES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief Outline of the Department

The Buildings and Estates Department at the University of Limerick develops and maintains the physical environment and infrastructure that enables the university to carry out its mission of achieving excellence in teaching and research.

The vision of the University of Limerick, as articulated in its Strategic Plan, requires the provision of *"outstanding physical facilities for the pursuit of academic, cultural and recreational activities"*.

The mission of the Buildings and Estates Department is *"to provide the framework for the infrastructure that realises this University vision in keeping with the Campus Physical Development Plan"*.

Specifically, the department is responsible for maintaining the physical aspect of the university's buildings and lands and for managing and maintaining physical developments within the campus. Responsibilities include:

- Maintenance of existing buildings and grounds
- Management of capital developments
- Land acquisition, including legal issues
- Alterations and minor works
- Space planning and management
- Energy and water management
- Waste management
- Furniture: procurement and maintenance
- Liaison with Higher Education Authority and Department of Education & Skills re. buildings and physical development matters.

- Security
- Cleaning
- Insurance
- Traffic and parking management
- Goods receiving and distribution
- Signage
- Key management
- Portering service

In addition, the department plays a pivotal role in the university's Executive Crisis Management Plan and all aspects of safety on campus.

1.2 Our Commitment to Quality

This Quality Manual demonstrates the Department's commitment to maintaining a high level of quality and strong customer focus, while striving to continually improve the level and quality of service we provide to our customers. Quality is an integral part of our operation. Changes to any processes outlined in this manual are controlled using the Department's ***Documentation Control Process***.

The role of the quality team, in conjunction with the Department's management team, is to lead the organisation through the implementation of its Quality Management System.

1.3   Quality Policy

The *Quality Policy* of B&E was created with reference to our customers, staff and the core principles of Quality within UL. It aims to provide a succinct message of our function, ethos, accountability and intent to continually serve and improve. Accordingly, amendments to the *Quality Policy* and all documentation within the QMS, will be made via the Division's *Document Control Process*.

The *Quality Policy* is controlled as its own document and is displayed in prominent locations in the Department and on the Department website.

The *Quality Policy* is reviewed annually as part of the formal QMS review process.

2.   CUSTOMER FOCUS

The ultimate aim of the Buildings and Estates Department is summarised in the department's ethos, i.e.: "to sustain and seek to continually improve the quality of all services that we provide to the campus community". Buildings and Estates recognises that, as a service provider to a large customer base, it is very important to establish who its customers are and what they think of the services being provided.

The principal customers of the department are the students and staff of the university. In fact, our primary customers are the students, even though the majority of our dealings are with staff. Our customers also include campus-based commercial units and visitors to the campus. In summary, our customer groups comprise:

- Staff
- Support departments
- Students
- Researchers
- Academic departments
- Commercial units
- Visitors to the campus

Customer Charter

Our *Customer Charter* is a controlled document and is available in prominent locations throughout B&E Offices and is available on the Department website.

B&E ensures that customer requirements and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements are determined and met. Details of how this is achieved are outlined in our *Continual Improvement and Customer Satisfaction Process*. This process demonstrates a clear two way communication mechanism. Risks and opportunities that can affect service and delivery and the ability of B&E to enhance customer satisfaction are determined and addressed using our *Continual Improvement and Customer Satisfaction Process.*

B&E carries out annual customer surveys and on an ongoing basis takes feedback on services provided. Through the use of the *Management Communications Process* key performance indicators in this area are monitored on a weekly, monthly and annual basis. Appropriate actions are initiated, completed and verified. Records associated with each of the processes mentioned above are maintained as evidence of overall customer satisfaction achievement.

3.   LEADERSHIP

Reporting to the Director, Management Planning and Reporting, B&E's position within the university's administrative structure can be seen within the University organisation structure. A detailed organisational chart is available in the Main Office at B&E and on the Department website.

B&E is committed to developing strong leadership within the organisation. In an effort to achieve this a key activity of the Department is to develop a strategic plan approximately every five years which sets out a clear roadmap for the future. The plan outlines clearly the Department's mission, vision and values with associated goals which collectively aim to deliver an excellent campus experience for our customers in the upcoming timeframe. The strategic plan is developed in line with University requirements.

Within the plan, a tangible objective to support a culture of continuous improvement is a consistent theme.

On a day to day basis, the B&E Team operating the QMS ensure adherence to best practice while attaining the objectives set and agreed with the University.

On behalf of the Director, the Quality Team is assigned responsibility for overseeing the QMS. The team is comprised of staff representing each area. On behalf of their colleagues, this team is responsible for:

- Supporting QMS development and deployment
- Planning/reviewing annual audits
- Preparing self-assessment reports
- Reviewing Improvement activities and Customer Feedback trends.

The team meets regularly with a primary remit to develop and improve the QMS in the Department. Details of how the team operates are outlined in the *Management Communications Process.*

3.1   Planning

Extensive planning takes place throughout the organisation. As outlined earlier, the Department determines a strategic plan. The strategic planning process involves engagement of the Department staff, other support Departments, Academic Department heads and the UL extended community in planning the future that involves each area of activity. Additionally, B&E refer to other Universities and organisations involved in similar business processes to ensure benchmarking against best in class is included in future plans. Each strategic goal has specific associated targets and deadlines which enables progress measurement. The document details a firm implementation plan to ensure its success of which will need to be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

Each strategic goal is developed into an operational plan by staff associated with each area of activity. The operational plan devolves the strategic goals into divisional targets and associated

KPI's for success. The Department produces an Annual Report which gives an overview of the Department's year of activity.

Infrastructure and resource planning is completed in an appropriate manner for each service provided by the division. In all cases, the management team ensure that the correct resource level and experience are in place to support any of these planning structures.

3.2   Management Review Process

Management review the Quality Management System at planned intervals to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. This review includes assessing opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the QMS, including the quality policy and quality objectives.

Specifically, the *Management Communications Process* outlines the mechanism used to manage the QMS on a day-to-day basis. It explains the meetings that take place, the staff that are involved, the agendas, trends, data analysis, actions and decisions taken to achieve this.

Further, the *Self-Assessment Process* details the system used to specifically review the QMS on a regular basis. In maintaining and changing the Quality Management System, the regulatory and statutory requirements, such as University's Act, Purchasing, Finance and HR policies, are communicated and accommodated within the system.

3.2.1   Annual Management Review Process

As outlined above the management review the performance of the Business / Quality system on a regular basis as part of the *Management Communications Process.* However, at least annually, a specific QMS review will be undertaken.

At the QMS review meeting the team adhere to the agenda outlined below. Input from any staff member is sought prior to the meeting and key plans and decisions are communicated after the meeting on the Department shared drive.

The agenda for the annual review includes the following:
- Key metrics review and actions
- Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) status
- Self-Assessment and external audit scheduling, results and actions
- Customer Satisfaction, feedback and corrective action trend summaries
- Review of previous minutes
- Resource, training and infrastructure or work environment requirements including the appointment of additional Internal Auditors
- Discussion on the overall effectiveness and recommendations for improvement of the existing system as a result of the discussion on each topic above
- Manual, policy and procedure review and upgrade requirements
- Communication process and plans

- Discussion of existing quality objectives and determination of any new quality objectives required

These meetings are minuted with decisions and action items recorded for each topic. Specifically, improvements in the QMS, customer required service changes and resource requirements are noted. Minutes are available on the Department shared drive.

The aim of these reviews is to ensure that B&E continually improves the effectiveness of the QMS through the use of the quality policy, objectives, audit results, analysis of data, corrective and preventive actions and the reviews themselves.

4.   ENGAGEMENT OF PEOPLE

The Buildings and Estates Department continually strives to involve staff in the business of the department's activities so that all members of staff have an understanding of the responsibilities and workings of the department as a whole. Generally, this is done by providing:

- Open-door policy between staff and all line managers
- Opportunities for training and development within the role
- A systematic multi-layer meetings and communications structure
- An annual performance review and development process
- A safe work environment for all employees
- A fair, transparent and effective recruitment process
- Each member of staff has a training record which records details of mandatory and optional training.

The Department is committed to the development of our people to achieve excellent service delivery. To achieve this the Department aims to be inclusive of all staff and to offer them support to develop within their role.

Teamwork is actively encouraged. Although several teams exist around functions, they are fluid and come together to support each other for project initiatives and as required to manage the processes of the Department.

HR Policies are very much aligned with those of the University. The department operates the university Performance & Development Review System (PDRS), the overall aim of which is to improve staff performance and enhance staff's professional/career development.

4.1   Responsibility and Authority

All staff have authority and responsibility to carry out any decisions and correspondence associated with their functions as per the job boundaries outlined in their individual job description and the detail in the QMS procedures.

When personnel are absent, then the responsible line manager takes over or appoints a suitable deputy.

Job Descriptions for positions are defined under headings such as:

- Position title
- Job purpose
- Key accountabilities
- Key working relationships
- Work environment
- Job boundaries
- Knowledge, functional skills, experience and qualifications
- Behavioural competencies

A copy of the required job description is available to each staff member. As mentioned earlier, a detailed organisational chart is available in the B&E Main Office and on the Department website.

Throughout the Quality Manual System documents there are references to job titles that do not appear in the B&E Organisational Chart e.g. Web Content Administrator (WCA), Drawing Register Administrator (DRA). These titles only form part of an individual staff members assigned tasks, therefore such roles can rotate to other department staff members from time to time.

4.2 Staff Communication

Staff are encouraged to share their views and ideas in all areas of activity in the Department (Ref *Management Communications Process*). The communications and meeting structure that exists encourages engagement of views for consideration. Staff views are taken into consideration when planning for significant projects where we set out to improve our facilities and services.

4.3 Training and Development

As detailed in the Training Process, all staff at B&E participate in an annual performance review, PDRS mentioned above, with their line manager. At the review, a training plan for the year is agreed and the line manager takes on the responsibility to coordinate the training required. Training and development may include:

- Technical courses
- Management development programmes
- Development of personal effectiveness skills

Throughout the year, with existing staff or when new staff come on board, further training may be identified and agreed with the line manager.

Formal training records are held centrally on the employees file.

4.4 Work Environment and Infrastructure

We are fortunate to work on a beautiful campus environment. The range of facilities available to staff in terms of sport, the arts and social and recreational facilities are exceptional. The Department monitors and maintains the appropriate infrastructure and work environment to achieve conformity to service requirements. Any issues that may arise are highlighted in one of the regular management communication meetings where appropriate action is taken.

All work areas are maintained in a clean and tidy manner to ensure that service is not adversely affected. As part of the introduction of any new processes, equipment or practices the planning for same will include a review of any implications on the work area. A workplace Health and Safety risk audit is completed annually and a risk register is maintained.

5.   PROCESS APPROACH

The mapping of all B&E Key Processes is an integral part of the Department's QMS system so that we are delivering facilities and services of high quality to our customers.

The principle aim is to develop and continually improve processes so as to increase customer satisfaction with the services they receive, to interact effectively with customers, to have systems in place to measure the actual performance and get feedback from customers.

5.1   Department Procedures

Complementing the department's Quality Manual and Quality Policy Statement, the following are the department's QMS and service procedures:

QMS procedures

- Quality policy statement

- Departmental objectives and measures

- Documentation management

- Departmental/management communication

- Employee satisfaction

- Training and continuing professional development

- Continual improvement and customer satisfaction

- Customer feedback and customer focus groups

- Self-assessment

- Process structure and interaction

Service procedures

- Budget management

- Management of capital projects

- Capital projects – work outside of assigned site

- Maintenance and minor works

- Safety management system

- Supplier contract management

- Space management

- Furniture provision

- (Building) access control

- Out-of-hours access

- Heating

- Heating Response

- Cleaning management

- Waste management

- Portering operations

- Goods receiving and distribution

- Insurance

- Security

- Key control

- Parking management

- Parking permits

- Vehicle clamping

- Grounds maintenance

- Energy and water

- Environmental

- Environmental management

- Smarter travel

- Bicycle parking

- Signage

- Representation on UL boards and committees

- Purchasing

- Other policies and procedures

5.2   A Systematic Approach to Management

Section 5.1 outlines the main processes integral to our QMS. These processes/activities support our key business processes.

The planning of each process goes through the following stages:
1. Planning for each process is conducted with a cross-functional team
2. Consultation and review in meetings on the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes
3. Benchmark research of the processes elsewhere
4. Feedback analysis from customers, staff, suppliers and stakeholders
5. Implementation of the process
6. Continual process evaluation

Records of the development of the processes are available through the revision history which is maintained as part of the ***Documentation Control Process***.

6. CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

B&E is committed to delivering the best campus experience to its customers. Our team work hard to improve how we deliver the best possible service on a continual basis. To achieve this continual improvement is crucial to the organisation.

6.1 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) system detailed in the ***Continual Improvement and Customer Satisfaction Procedure*** is used to record all quality actions. The QIP ensures that we select opportunities for improvement that meet customer requirements and enhance customer satisfaction.

In general, items such as those listed below are utilised to identify improvement opportunities.
1. Continual improvement is a standing agenda item for all management meetings
2. Customer Feedback, such as survey results, customer feedback log analysis etc
3. Partner discussions
4. Audit feedback – internal and external
5. Staff input and suggestions
6. Key performance indicators

Additionally, the Department's ***Self-Assessment Procedure*** ensures continual implementation, maintenance and improvement of the Department's QMS.

6.2 Quality Improvement Objectives

As outlined in 3.2.1 above, quality objectives are set annually, communicated to all staff and reviewed on a regular basis within the Department.

7. EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

B&E ensures that decision-making is based on the analysis of facts and information derived from customers, market research, financial and operational data and business risk analysis. Collection and analysis of customer data is of great importance to ensure we deliver facilities and services that meet their needs and expectations.

7.1 Analysis of Data

Data and information used to assist decision making at B&E derives from internal and external reports, logs generated in each area of activity, software systems, customer feedback mechanisms (surveys, customer feedback log and focus groups), the Department risk register and CCTV footage.

The data gathered by the above mechanisms are analysed and trends identified by the area owners on an ongoing basis and by the Quarterly Business Review (QBR) group at its meetings. The QBR group reviews the data and reflects on potential improvements.

Other data reviews take place in meetings including:

- Fortnightly Departmental Co-ordination Meeting
- Fortnightly Minor Works/Maintenance Co-ordination Meeting
- Fortnightly Projects Review Meeting
- Campus Development Plan reviews
- Building Committee meetings for new capital projects on campus
- Space Management committee meetings
- Ad hoc meetings

The *Continual Improvement and Customer Satisfaction Procedure* is used to process and record improvement activity resulting from the data analysis.

Department Risk Register

The *B&E Risk Register* outlines and sets out to address key risks identified by regular external and internal audit. The risk register is compiled in accordance with the University's risk management policy. The Department risk register is designed to capture risks that could prevent the Department from achieving its objectives. Risk is categorised into three areas namely: reputational, operational and financial. All departments participate in risk assessment activity and ongoing development is monitored in management team meetings.

Data Protection

The University has a *Data Protection Policy* which is developed in accordance with the Data Protection Acts (1988 & 2003). The Department complies with these requirements.

7.2   Strategic Review of Data by Management

As outlined in the ***Management Communications Procedure*** and in section 3.2.1, ***Annual Management Review*** above, the Department management team use the output of data analysis to support their decisions strategically and operationally on an ongoing basis. Objectives are devolved from strategic plans and along with operational key performance indicators are monitored.

Examples of Key Performance Indicators include:

- Minor Works activity
- Response times to minor works requests
- Complaints monitoring
- Budget adherence

8. RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

We view our relationship with stakeholders, suppliers and contractors as one that is strong, collaborative and important in meeting the needs and expectations of our customers. Our approach to building positive relationships with stakeholders, suppliers and contractors is centred around being:

- Customer-focused
- Demanding on service delivery
- Intent on problem-solving in partnership
- Willing to work in partnership to achieve outcomes
- Prompt on payment

8.1 Suppliers

The Department *Purchasing and Contract Management Procedure* outlines how suppliers are sourced for the Department's activity. Our supplier list is aligned with that of the University and includes suppliers relevant to our service needs.

Review meetings are held regularly with contractors to monitor and review delivery of services.

8.2 Partners

B&E has a strong relationship with the campus community as an important entity on campus through the development of services and working in partnership with other divisions and stakeholders on campus to the benefit of all parties. While the department interacts to some extent with every group in the university, its pivotal relationships are with the following groups:

- Finance Office
- Human Resources Division
- Procurement Office
- Students' Union
- Campus Life Services
- UL Sport
- Information Technology Division
- Green Campus Committee

8.3 Community Relations

Buildings and Estates continually interacts with other higher education institutions (HEIs) in Ireland and abroad. The department collaborates with other Irish HEIs on the issue of procurement for insurance and energy.

As with all other public bodies, the department engages with the Office of Government Procurement.

B&E deals with many local organisations in the course of its work. The local bodies that the department interacts with on a regular basis include:

- GardaÍ (Community Garda in particular)
- Limerick City & County Council
- Fire Officer and Local Fire Service
- Clare County Council
- ESB (Electricity Supply Board)
- Community Liaison Committee
- Bord Gais
- Local Residential Community

The department is member of AUCSO (Association of University Chief Security Officers), which is the primary association for security professionals working in universities, colleges and a member of AUDE (Association of University Directors of Estates).

8.4   Communication with Stakeholders

The Department's communication with all of our stakeholders is outlined in the relevant key business processes and other sections of this ***Quality Manual*** as appropriate.

9. APPROVALS AND REVISION HISTORY

Revision No.	Date	Approved by:	Details of Change
1.0	14-April-2016	RR	Initial Release
2.0	27-June-2019	RR	Updates to document
2.1	10-Dec-2019	RR	Section 5.1 updated to separate out QMS and service procedures. List of service procedures also updated. Section 6.0 further subdivided into 6.1 and 6.2. Also update to new UL Logo.