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Dear colleagues and friends of UCD,

One hundred and sixty years ago UCD was founded as an independent university, and the great nineteenth century educationalist, John Henry Newman, was appointed as the first rector to establish and shape its future. From these humble beginnings, Newman envisioned the growth of “a flourishing University, which for a while had to struggle with fortune, but which, when its first founders and servants were dead and gone, had successes far exceeding their anxieties”.

UCD has indeed flourished over these 160 years, making a unique and substantial contribution to the creation of modern Ireland, counting amongst its graduates three Presidents, four Taoisigh, five ministers in the current cabinet and six of Ireland’s European Commissioners. UCD’s contributions to business, science, the arts, culture and sport over this period are equally impressive, and the great author, James Joyce, remains our most well-known alumnus. At the same time, UCD has grown to become Ireland’s largest and most globally engaged university, attracting more first preferences from Irish students than any other university in the country, becoming the destination of choice for international students coming to Ireland and educating some 5,000 students at locations outside Ireland.

While our achievements are impressive, we cannot rest on our laurels. During the last 160 years the world has changed (and continues to change) at an extraordinary rate. Since the 1980s the Internet has revolutionised global communication and the way business is conducted. The Global Economic Crisis of 2008 demonstrated the extent to which countries and economies around the world are now interconnected. Multinational companies and organisations are increasingly multicultural and internationally mobile in the headquarters of their operations.

Over the same period of time, the global university environment has changed. Students have become increasingly internationally mobile, with many undertaking part or all of their university education in another country. Appreciation of the benefits of educating university students in a research intensive environment, together with the benefits to society of the knowledge and innovation generated by universities, has seen an increasing emphasis on the need for academics to be undertaking both teaching and research at the highest level.

The competitiveness of Ireland is dependent on the competitiveness of its universities, as it is the universities which educate our future leaders in all spheres of life and generate the intellectual property and innovation which provide the country with its competitive edge. However, the flourishing of Ireland requires more than just material contributions. The study and discussion of people, society, culture, languages and the creative arts are also characteristics of a flourishing society. As Ireland’s largest university, with its great strength and diversity of disciplines, UCD has a duty to make significant contributions in each of these domains. This strategy sets out our ambition for contributing to the flourishing of Ireland and the world.

This strategy is the result of a strategic planning process undertaken by our University community over the last eight months. The strategy states clearly our mission, values, and our vision for what UCD should be by 2020. Ten key objectives are then set out. These objectives will shape our planning and decision making at all levels of the University, in order to ensure we achieve the vision. In our planning processes we will use reflexive decision making which engages the entire University community, so that our actions are responsive to conditions, needs and opportunities at every level. The strategy also introduces six exciting major strategic initiatives which will be undertaken at University level in pursuit of the objectives. We will review progress against the objectives annually, and update plans as necessary to ensure our success.

Professor Andrew J Deeks
President, University College Dublin
Our Mission

Our mission is to contribute to the flourishing of Dublin, Ireland, Europe and the world through the excellence and impact of our research and scholarship, the quality of our graduates and our global engagement; providing a supportive community in which every member of the University is enabled to achieve their full potential.

Our Values

Our values are excellence, integrity, collegiality, engagement and diversity.
Our Vision For 2020

Our vision for 2020 is that:

UCD will be a preeminent, diverse and inclusive scholarly community of students, faculty and staff who, while contributing to the development of Ireland, have global standing, understanding and impact. UCD will continue to be an excellent research-intensive university, where a comprehensive suite of strong disciplines forms the foundation for high quality interdisciplinary research, scholarship and innovation. Through this combination of world-leading disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, we will vigorously tackle significant global issues and challenges.

Our graduates will be imbued with a knowledge of the past, and will be capable of critically interrogating the present and of imagining the future. Through a holistic student-focused and research-led educational experience which has both breadth and depth, they will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, experience and attitudes they need to flourish in present and future Irish and global societies.

Highly engaged locally, nationally and internationally, UCD will be known around the world as Ireland’s Global University. As such, we will be truly global in our comprehensive range of disciplines, in the reach and impact of our research and innovation, in our holistic educational experience, in the diversity of our University community, in our engagement with all sectors of society and with all regions of the world, and in the quality and extent of our campus and facilities. We will be distinctive in our agility, innovativeness, commitment to justice, inclusiveness and friendliness. We will bring the best of the world to Ireland, and the best of Ireland, including its distinct cultures, to the world.
To achieve this vision we will pursue
ten key objectives

1. Increase the quality, quantity and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation.
2. Provide an educational experience that defines international best practice.
3. Consolidate and strengthen our disciplines.
4. Conduct strong interdisciplinary research and education in important areas of national and global need.
5. Attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff.
6. Build our engagement locally, nationally and internationally.
7. Develop and strengthen our University community.
8. Further develop world-class facilities to support the vision.
9. Adopt governance, management and budgetary structures which enable the vision.
In pursuing these key objectives we will undertake **six major strategic initiatives**

1. Tackling global challenges
2. Defining educational excellence
3. Reimagining our campus
4. Engaging globally
5. Building partnerships
6. Increasing agility and effectiveness

We expect that success in achieving our vision will see us solidly in the **world top 100 universities by 2020**.
Objectives

Our ten key objectives will shape planning at all levels of the University and will allow us to measure progress towards the achievement of our vision. Each College, School, Centre, Institute and Support Unit will develop its own action plan to contribute to the achievement of these objectives.
Objective 1
Increase the quality, and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation

The hallmark of our vision is one of innovation. This ability to harness, to innovate across disciplines will enable our ability to meet national and global needs through our research and innovation activities and, through the education we deliver to our students.

Research and scholarship are at the heart of the mission and foundation of University College Dublin. This research leads to economic, social and cultural benefits, while the quality of our education is underpinned by our commitment to research excellence. Success will be measured through the rise in esteem of our research and scholarship, both nationally and globally.

Objective 2
Provide an educational experience that defines international best practice

Our students are the core of our University and the defining characteristics of our educational provision are that it enables students to flourish in an increasingly global society.

Our approach to education will further develop our portfolio of undergraduate and graduate programmes and we will consider alternative ways to deliver contemporary best practice and to become an exemplar of university education across the world. Our approach to education will further enhance the breadth and depth of learning with opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and attributes needed for our graduates to flourish in an increasingly global society.

Through our research, education and innovation, we will develop our students’ capacity for critical and creative thinking, personal and professional development, and leadership, as well as their conceptual, cultural, ethical and character development. We will also consider the design and delivery of co-curricular activities to develop international best practice.

Objective 3
Consolidate and strengthen our disciplines

We will consolidate our disciplines through the development of our research education and engagement metrics for our UCD research portfolio and our educational programmes and co-curricular activities. In addition, we will use agreed indicators to strengthen our strategic focus on research.

Research and scholarship are core to the identity and profile of University College Dublin. This research leads to economic, social and cultural benefits and the quality of our education is underpinned by our commitment to research excellence. Success will be measured through the rise in esteem of our research and scholarship, both nationally and globally.

Objective 4
Conduct strong interdisciplinary research and education in important areas of national and global need

The hallmark of our research is one of innovation. This ability to harness across disciplines will enable our ability to meet national and global needs through our research and innovation activities and, through the education we deliver to our students.

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University College Dublin
Objective 1
Increase the quality, scale and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation

Research and scholarship are at the heart of our mission: to advance knowledge and understanding of society and culture; and foundation of University College Dublin. The University leadership prioritises our research function and will actively support the development of our research capacity in ways that will enable our researchers to pursue their work to the highest possible standard.

Our vision for UCD in 2020 is built on a foundation of excellence and innovative research, delivered through a range of global scale programmes. We will leverage our network of academic programmes and international research partnerships to ensure across the University, and that of our students.

Research success will be measured through rising research education and engagement metrics for each research theme, through the quality of our research and innovation activities. Impact on societal and national and global need

The breadth of our expertise is one of the hallmarks of UCD. The ability to traverse across disciplines and embrace our ability to meet national and global needs through our research and innovation activities is an essential capability that defines us as a University.

We will build on our success, regularly reviewing our research themes and institutional strategies to ensure appropriate positioning and good practice to facilitate international engagement and impact.

Objective 2
Provide an educational experience that defines international best practice

Our students are the core of our University, and we must value and support them. UCD will provide the conditions to enable our students to flourish in an increasingly global and challenging world.

Through our research, creative environment, we will leverage our position as a global university and be further enhanced by student and alumni engagement and our ability to capture and convey the impact of our research, scholarship and innovation both nationally and internationally.

In doing so, we will increase the quality, quantity and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation to levels equal to or exceeding those of leading universities. In measuring our progress against these markers, we will pay appropriate attention to disciplinary strengths and weaknesses.

Objective 3
Consolidate and strengthen our disciplines

We will consolidate our disciplines through a number of strategies relating to our research and education activities, and through the structures we design to deliver our strategy.

We will work to strengthen those disciplines that are internationally recognised our research strengths and to consolidate our disciplines through our research and innovation activities. We will ensure that structures, policies and processes appropriately reflect and adapt to support international research and education in a rapid-changing world.

Over the years the number of these disciplines has built strength across a range of disciplines. Since the foundation of the University, UCD Horizons structure has allowed undergraduate students to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed for our changing world. The breadth of our disciplines will underpin our success. The ability to harness that expertise across disciplines will be ranked within the world top 100 by 2020. We expect that our disciplines will perform to standards that will allow us to measure our success.

Objective 4
Conduct strong interdisciplinary research and education in important areas of national and global need

We will build on our current success, further developing our interdisciplinary approaches to research, teaching and learning. We will transform and develop our curricula to ensure appropriate positioning and good practice to facilitate international engagement.

We will ensure that our structures, policies and processes appropriately reflect and adapt to support international research and education in a rapid-changing world.

Our focus for UCD in 2020 is built on a foundation of excellence and innovative research, delivered through a range of global scale programmes. We will leverage our network of academic programmes and international research partnerships to ensure across the University, and that of our students.

Research success will be measured through rising research education and engagement metrics for each research theme, particularly those themes relating to impact and societal need.

We believe that it is important to capture and communicate the impact of our research, scholarship and innovation, and we will seek opportunities to do this through our reporting and public relations activities. Recognising the particular impact a research theme may have in a given area, we will develop strategies for capturing and communicating this impact.

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Objective 1
Increase the quality, the scale and impact of our research, scholarship and innovation

Research and scholarship are at the heart of the mission of the University and constitute the foundation of University College Dublin. The University is driven by excellent scholarship and research. In the rapidly changing environment in which we live, we must ensure that our research and scholarship is competitive, relevant and of the highest quality. As we move forward, we will ensure that the education of our students brings them into contact with the breadth of our disciplinary strengths. Our focus on interdisciplinary research ensures that our students have opportunities to engage in research work that is not captured by such metrics, and is essential for progressing each strand of our strategy.

Over the lifetime of this strategy we will adopt actions to increase the quality, quantity and impact of our research, enabling and promoting bids to attract funding for competitive research. We will increase the quality of our educational programmes and our research performance. Success will be measured through rising reputational scores and strengthened international engagement with our students and alumni.

Objective 2
Provide an educational experience that defines international best practice

Our students are the core of our University. We are committed to increasing the quality of the University experience that defines international best practice. We will achieve this by raising national and global rankings, increasing our national advantage in teaching, improving retention and increasing the breadth and depth of our international student body. We will provide learning opportunities for a wider community, including those who are students and the 'University of First-Choice' for Irish students and the 'University of Destination' for international students. In measuring our progress against national and global need, we will value and promote fundamental research and scholarship that is not captured by such metrics, paying appropriate attention to disciplinary norms. We will also recognise high quality work that is not captured by such metrics, thereby extending interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary activities. Further development of this area, further developing our portfolio of interdisciplinary research themes and building on the breadth of our expertise is one of the hallmarks of UCD. The ability to harness that ability to meet national and global needs, through research and innovation activities and through the education we deliver is our objective.

Objective 3
Consolidate and strengthen our disciplines

Experience, but also underpins our success as a research-intensive university and our international standing. Over the years the number of these disciplines has built strength across a range of disciplines. Since the foundation of the University, UCD has led the way in Ireland in conducting discovery research as well as application-oriented research. Our vision for UCD in 2020 is built on a foundation of excellent and important research, delivering success in terms of global significance in which UCD and Ireland can compete. If we are to meet the challenge of university education, we will extend into the wider University and community life. Our inclusive approach to student learning and institutional excellence.

We will consolidate our disciplines through continued efforts in the areas of new discipline development, interdisciplinary research and education and will work to strengthen these disciplines. As we develop our new disciplines, we will do so in partnership with our existing disciplines, and we will also strengthen our existing disciplines through the development of our interdisciplinary programmes. We will build on our success, regularly monitoring our research themes and institutional priorities to ensure appropriate positioning and guidance to strategic UCD engagement. We will ensure that new structures and policies are responsive to student feedback, flexibility and adaptability to support allied interdisciplinary research and education in the rapidly changing environment. We will work to strengthen our global ranking in the world of research and establish UCD as a leader in the world of research, and in the formation of public policy.

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Objective 4
Conduct strong interdisciplinary research and education in important areas of national and global need

We will continue to expand and strengthen our interdisciplinary research and education, and build interdisciplinary research and education. As we work to strengthen our existing disciplines, the breadth of our expertise is one of the hallmarks of UCD. The ability to harness that ability to meet national and global needs, through research and innovation activities and through the education we deliver is our objective.

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Objective 2
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Our students are the core of our University. We are committed to increasing the quality of the University experience that defines international best practice. We will achieve this by raising national and global rankings, increasing our national advantage in teaching, improving retention and increasing the breadth and depth of our international student body. We will provide learning opportunities for a wider community, including those who are students and the 'University of First-Choice' for Irish students and the 'University of Destination' for international students. In measuring our progress against national and global need, we will value and promote fundamental research and scholarship that is not captured by such metrics, paying appropriate attention to disciplinary norms. We will also recognise high quality work that is not captured by such metrics, thereby extending interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary activities. Further development of this area, further developing our portfolio of interdisciplinary research themes and building on the breadth of our expertise is one of the hallmarks of UCD. The ability to harness that ability to meet national and global needs, through research and innovation activities and through the education we deliver is our objective.

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Research and scholarship are at the heart of the University’s mission and have been the hallmark of University College Dublin. The University has a clear strategy to become a top 100 global research institution by 2020. The vision is that we will achieve a position of world leadership in our strengths, while continuing to expand our global reach and reputation. The strategic themes outlined in the University’s research strategy will be aligned with our research priorities and will support the growth of thematic PhD programmes and international research collaboration building around our research themes. Our research will leverage the benefits of thematic approaches to community engagement and policy development.

Success will be measured through rising research income, PhD students and patents, and we will value and promote fundamental research. We believe that it is important to capture and convey the impact of our research, scholarship and innovation, and will work to increase our level of impact. We will ensure that our research supports the development of our strategic themes. We will continue to promote the development of our research and innovation activities in order to achieve our strategic goals.

Objective 2
Provide an educational experience that defines international best practice

Our students are the core of our University. We strive to ensure that our educational experience is unique and tailored to the needs of our students. We believe that it is important to promote and support the development of our educational activities in order to achieve our strategic goals.

Success will be measured through student satisfaction, student retention and student employment.

Objective 3
Consolidate and strengthen our disciplines

We will consolidate our disciplines through strategic investments in our research and education activities. We will also work to strengthen our disciplines through the development of our strategies. Our strategies will be aligned with our research and education initiatives, and will be used to support the growth of our disciplines.

Objective 4
Conduct strong interdisciplinary research and education in important areas of national and global need

We will build on our success, regularly reviewing our research themes and educational initiatives. We will ensure that our research themes and educational initiatives are aligned with national strengths and global needs. We will also work to strengthen these disciplines.

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Through our research initiatives, we will build on our success, regularly reviewing our research themes and educational initiatives. We will ensure that our research themes and educational initiatives are aligned with national strengths and global needs. We will also work to strengthen these disciplines.
Objective 5
Attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff

UCD values excellence and understands that excellent performance requires excellent people working in a supportive environment. Diversity, in all its forms, cultivates the exchange and development of ideas, an experience and understanding of cultural differences at all levels and a challenge to the status quo. The UCD community values these concepts and believes that diversity fosters excellence. Over the period of this strategy, UCD will continue to attract excellent and diverse students, faculty and staff from around Ireland and around the world, and will put in place appropriate support measures to develop and retain the members of our community.

UCD has the largest number and percentage of international students among the Irish universities and compares well with leading international universities for international faculty. We see continued growth in the numbers and quality of our international students and faculty as being a critical element in the development of the UCD community and in fostering excellence in our educational and research programmes.

In support of this goal, we will work to further raise the profile of UCD nationally and internationally. We will review our student recruitment programmes to ensure emphasis on excellence and widening participation and set annual targets for ensuring diversity in student recruitment. We will review our staff recruitment procedures to ensure that internationally benchmarked excellence is the standard we set for all of our recruitment activities.

UCD has been in the vanguard of supporting students from socio-economically disadvantaged communities and students with disabilities. UCD also has a long tradition of encouraging mature students and we value in particular the contribution they make to the dynamic of our classes. We will continue to grow this valuable part of our community.

To ensure we retain our excellent and diverse cohort of students through to graduation, working in partnership with our various stakeholders, we will ensure that we have in place a comprehensive suite of student support measures and that our student services are world-class.

To ensure we retain our excellent and diverse faculty and staff, we will put in place a comprehensive performance development programme, having undertaken a full review of our promotion procedures, training processes and leave provisions. We will work to ensure that all members of faculty and staff are enabled to achieve their full potential and are appropriately rewarded for their contribution to our mission, vision and community, and together, we will promote gender balance and equality of opportunity among students and employees of the University. Furthermore, we will engage with leading edge national and international diversity programmes to ensure that we achieve the benefits of diversity throughout the University and at all levels of leadership.

Success will be measured by the quality and diversity of student admissions which will be measured by including students’ prior educational achievement, progression success and other measures of student quality and success, together with measures of gender, race, nationality and socio-economic disadvantage. Corresponding measures will be put in place to evaluate the quality and diversity of faculty and staff recruitment, and the career development and retention of faculty and staff.
Objective 6
Build our engagement locally, nationally and internationally

A critical focus of this plan will be to develop UCD’s engagement both within Ireland and further afield, and through this, to improve our national and international impact. UCD has made a unique and unrivalled contribution to the development of modern Ireland since the foundation of the State. This has been based on successful engagement with Irish society on every level and across every sphere of activity. Similarly, in recent times, UCD’s engagement internationally has grown substantively. Now, in support of our vision for 2020, it is critical that UCD further builds these national and international engagements in a coordinated and strategic manner.

We will continue to build our portfolio of strategic, holistic and mutually beneficial partnerships with industry, public service and community organisations. We will work with local and national authorities to meet shared objectives, capturing the value of a great public university to city and country. We will engage our local community, sharing the benefits of the campus and the activities it houses.

Equally, we will develop our relationships with recognised colleges and partner universities nationally and internationally. We will engage globally through UCD Global Centres in key regions, working with government agencies, partners, alumni and the Irish diaspora in each region to deliver on our mission.

Success will be measured through our portfolio of strategic partners and through metrics of engagement activities locally, nationally and internationally.
Objective 7

Develop and strengthen our University community

Central to our mission and vision is the building-up of a supportive and inclusive community of students, faculty and staff, alumni and diaspora.

Community has always been a distinguishing feature of UCD. Testament to this is the frequency with which our students pay tribute to faculty and staff for their support and dedication. Our students form lifelong friendships in class and through extra-curricular activities, which form invaluable networks that support graduates throughout their careers. Our community of faculty and staff take a pride in and make a commitment to their students and to the contribution the University makes to society.

We will work together to make UCD an attractive, friendly and accessible environment, which encourages all members of our community and their families to spend more time on the campus.

To further enhance our staff community we will improve the communication and decision making processes within the University. The development of reflexive and inclusive decision making processes will distinguish UCD as a university characterised by effective engagement with changing conditions, needs and ideas across the campus, generating a high degree of responsiveness and commitment. We will provide a wide range of opportunities for faculty and staff interaction across Colleges, Schools and Units, at both professional and social level, so as to enhance both well-being and the effectiveness of communication across the University.

We will continue to develop extra-curricular activities and increase the participation of students in the management and development of the student experience.

To build on our affinity with our alumni we will expand our social alumni networks. Conscious of the benefits of two-way exchange, we will foster greater engagement between our faculty and alumni through a programme of events aimed at sharing expertise in this wider community.

Success will be measured through satisfaction surveys and focus groups, through increased alumni and external involvement in University events and through increased participation in student mentoring initiatives.
Objective 8
Further develop world-class facilities to support our vision

As UCD continues to develop as a university of preeminent international standing, it is imperative that our facilities match this level of ambition. UCD has made significant progress in recent years in developing world-class facilities, and the campus now represents a significant strength and area of competitive advantage for the University. Recent developments emphasise this, including the newly opened UCD O’Brien Centre for Science and the UCD Sutherland School of Law. Our Student Centre and many of our sporting facilities can also justifiably be categorised as world-class.

However, there is a lack of uniformity to the condition of our buildings, equipment and other facilities. Throughout the period of this plan we will work towards putting in place, maintaining and improving our facilities, equipment and services right across the University, to support world-class research and a research-led and engaged student experience.

We are equally determined to put in place facilities which contribute significantly to the building of the University community, and which promote engagement with our wider community. To the greatest extent possible, we wish to house schools and support units in contiguous space, and to ensure that each has appropriate space to facilitate engagement and the exchange of ideas amongst faculty and staff.

We will put in place a campus development plan which will emphasise a rigorous process of prioritisation, establish clear timelines and set out a compelling case for our priorities. This plan will form an important basis for our funding campaigns which will focus on securing both government and philanthropic finance for our developments.

Success will be measured by the development of a new campus development plan, significant progress towards the realisation of that plan, the formulation of ongoing maintenance programmes for buildings and equipment, and the creation of a fund for substantial capital investments and maintenance.
Irish universities, like many universities in the western world, have traditionally been governed and managed by committees of peers, and sustained for the most part by exchequer funding.

However, the higher education environment is now significantly more competitive than in the past, sources of funding and activities have diversified and accountability to funders is now more formalised.

These factors necessitate that universities act in a more business-like manner. In many cases this has resulted in a more centralised or ‘managerial’ approach to the operation of universities. This approach sometimes fails to fully utilise the capabilities of leadership at unit level and the commitment and enterprise present within the organisation.

We will work to put in place appropriate governance, management and budgetary structures which strike a balance between devolved decision making and empowerment and appropriate central oversight and strategic direction. We will perform functions centrally when they are more effectively performed that way, and perform functions locally when that is the most effective approach. Recognising the critical importance of communications to support this objective, we will put in place appropriate communication structures that reflect and facilitate the dialogue required.

Equally, we will strive to put in place a fair and equitable mechanism to allocate budgetary resources to all of our units. It is of fundamental importance that units clearly understand their budgetary horizon in order to facilitate effective multi-annual planning.

Success will be measured through increased faculty and staff satisfaction with management, budgetary and administrative processes as determined through staff satisfaction surveys and an improvement in the ratio of direct and indirect costs in running the University.
Objective 10

Overcome financial, human resource management and other external constraints

The significant impact of the global economic crisis on Ireland has generated substantial ongoing challenges for the University in terms of financial and human resource management. Equally, the constraints on the national exchequer have led to a tendency for government to employ a restrictive approach to budgetary and human resource policy in the universities. This approach has significantly compromised the autonomy of our universities and threatens to undermine our ability to conduct world-class research and education and to act in an independent and entrepreneurial manner to develop alternative non-exchequer funding streams.

To overcome these financial challenges we will work with the Irish Universities Association (IUA) and with government through the Department of Education and Skills and the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to develop and agree a sustainable funding mechanism for the universities in Ireland which covers the full cost of providing a world-class research-led university education. Additionally, we will work to generate additional non-exchequer income by attracting increased numbers of non-EU and graduate students, by the further provision of professional development programmes and the performance of research and consultancy contracts. Success will be measured by a significant increase in the annual income per Irish and EU student, and increased income from non-EU students, from professional and executive education and from non-exchequer funded research and consultancy.

In the area of human resource management, we will work with the IUA and with government through the Department of Education and Skills and the HEA to address public pay policy and other public service employment constraints to provide opportunities for development, advancement and appropriate reward for our faculty and staff, and to allow us to employ the number of staff required to achieve our vision. Success will be measured through increased flexibility in the employment of staff, and a removal of the constraints on the number of core staff weemploy.

To ensure that the independence of the University, our ability to use funding effectively, and our ability to act in the best interests of the country are not jeopardised, we will work closely with government ministers, the Department of Education and Skills and the HEA to ensure that policies are informed by our knowledge and experience of the sector, and that those policies do not adversely impact on our ability to deliver our mission and vision.
Major Strategic Initiatives

In pursuing these objectives we will undertake six major strategic initiatives. These initiatives will be managed and overseen by the University Management Team and its subgroups, working in partnership with the Academic Council and the Governing Authority.

1. Tackling global challenges:
We will strengthen our disciplines and on these disciplines build multi-disciplinary research and education in areas which reflect UCD’s strengths and which make significant contribution to identified national and international priorities. We will ensure our Colleges and Schools are built around disciplines and we will work to ensure that these disciplines are world-class. We will further develop research themes aligning with UCD’s strengths and global needs, and align our Institutes and Centres to these research themes, paying particular attention to the themes highlighted in the EU Horizon 2020 programme. We will ensure the structure and policies of our Institutes and Centres incorporate sufficient flexibility and adaptability to cope with changing priorities.

2. Defining educational excellence:
We will build on the work we have already done to establish an approach to education that supports all our students to achieve academic excellence and to equip them with the social, intercultural and generic skills to succeed in a diverse society. To enhance the UCD Horizons modular structure, we will conduct a robust curriculum review of our undergraduate and graduate offerings, informed by our vision for 2020 and by best international practice in curriculum design, pedagogy and effective student learning. This will be underpinned by a broader educational environment leveraging intellectual, cultural, social and sporting opportunities which will allow students to develop important new national and global perspectives.

3. Reimagining our campus:
Recent development of the campus buildings and surroundings have demonstrated the potential for creating an environment that matches best international comparisions and supports the needs of our community. We will refine, enhance and execute a campus development plan which supports the vision, engages our staff and our students and opens our University to the wider community. The campus will be a vibrant and active place seven days a week.
4. Engaging globally:
UCD’s world extends beyond our campus, beyond our city and our borders. Our students and graduates benefit from a UCD education that enables them to thrive and contribute in an increasingly global community. Our faculty engage in international research collaborations, sharing and contributing to a global bank of knowledge that aims to impact on society. In order to expand our global engagement, we will create a network of UCD Global Centres, each of which will provide a hub of research and education connections for our students, faculty, alumni and partners.

5. Building partnerships:
The ethos of UCD has always been embracing and inclusive, and we have established a range of effective partnerships. We value the mutual benefit of engaging with wider society. Through this initiative, we will build further holistic, strategic partnerships with public and non-governmental agencies, educational institutions, industry, community and professional organisations, in a structured way so that we can maximise our relevance and impact on society, while at the same time augmenting our student experience and researcher engagement.

6. Increasing agility and effectiveness:
Building on the considerable efficiencies that have already been achieved, we will ensure that our teaching, research and administrative processes and procedures are efficient and fit-for-purpose. We will conduct a comprehensive review of these processes using modern methodologies, and based on this review, we will identify and implement any changes necessary to bring UCD’s processes to a standard of excellence as benchmarked by relevant international comparators.

We will develop an implementation and resourcing plan for each of these major initiatives, and report progress against each plan annually. Success will be measured by progress against the key objectives.