



Enabling Foundations

This brief concluding section sets out at a high level the steps that will be taken to ensure the provision of the necessary support systems over the next five years to the achievement of our core objectives in education, research and innovation. Each of the support areas identified below will be developing its own detailed strategy and implementation plan.

7.1. Finance

University finances are heavily dependent on state funding, which has been under severe pressure in recent times. Over the period of this plan, UCD will restructure its financial profile to eliminate both the recurring and accumulated deficit. UCD will lessen reliance on state funding sources by expanding revenue from academic (graduate and international) and commercial arenas and will provide better alignment of our cost base with available revenues through prioritised recruitment and aggressive management of non-pay costs.

Key finance actions will include:

- Development of revenue-enhancing strategies to augment and diversify our income streams, including optimisation of the use of University assets and an appropriate level of commercialisation
- The development of UCD’s international and postgraduate offerings and profile with a view to substantially increasing their revenue streams
- Pursuit of effective cost-reduction strategies including:
 - Payroll cost management
 - Roll-out of best practice procurement
 - The continuation and enhancement of value for money audits
 - Elimination of excessive or inefficient resource usage
- Elimination of University deficit over the period of the plan
- Implementation of a service-level agreement for all finance-support services whether provided from the central finance function or from the college-based finance offices
- Significant heightening of financial and control awareness through greater communication of the University financial condition and the drivers of revenue and cost and the provision of relevant training to key staff
- Development of improved management information delivered on a regular basis, including the development of metrics around core university activities.

The achievement of these objectives will be measured using the following key metrics and performance indicators:

- Surplus/deficit as absolute amount (target: to eliminate deficit and to achieve small annual surplus over the lifetime of the plan)
- Under the UCD Five-Year Financial Plan, each unit has been assigned a financial target for each year (each unit is to achieve financial target)
- Income generated from non-Exchequer sources (amount and percentage of total income) broken down by 3rd- and 4th-level courses, international student fees and commercial income
- Investment in campus infrastructure (target: complete Law School, Student Facilities and Charles Institute, achieve 50-per-cent completion of UCD Science Centre and commence comprehensive redevelopment of Newman Building).

7.2. Human resources

During the preparatory phase of this plan, the landscape with regard to human resources (HR) within Ireland has changed considerably, particularly within the public-sector context. Pressures on the public finances have led to an intense scrutiny of the size and cost of the public sector. Government policy has dictated the introduction of a range of restrictive measures that impact very directly on HR policies. These include a general moratorium on recruitment and a targeted reduction in numbers within the public sector, the introduction of a range of remuneration reductions and the curtailment of promotional and other formal development opportunities.

These measures constitute a difficult environment within which to frame HR policies in a people- and knowledge-intensive sector. As a result, it will become increasingly necessary to formulate and execute policies that strive to motivate people and to enable them to deliver their full contribution. Substantial focus will need to be placed on enabling individuals to support, coach and mentor each other. Greater attention will need to be devoted to the sources of funding of employment, in recognition of the flexibilities which may be available in making appointments which are funded through non-Exchequer sources of revenue. In particular, it will be necessary to be able to demonstrate to public policy makers the causal link between investment in people and knowledge and the consequential contributions to economic and social development.

Key HR actions will include:

- Establishment of clear HR-planning policies, including streamlined recruitment processes, that will enable UCD to focus on areas of maximum potential for recruitment
- Recognising innovation commercialisation and income generation in UCD development pathways and reward systems
- Building on the initial investment the University has made in staff performance and development through the Performance Management Development System (PMDS) process and leadership programmes
- Actions to strengthen sense of collegiality and to build staff morale
- Initiatives to enhance flexible working arrangements, including the development of redeployment programmes across the university
- Development of staff mentoring programmes
- Development of service-level agreements for all HR support services.

The achievement of these objectives will be measured using the following key metrics and performance indicators:

- Number and cost of staff employed (actual and FTE)
- Ratio of academic staff FTE to administrative and support staff FTE (nationally and internationally benchmarked)
- Participation of staff in development and mentoring processes
- Balance between staff being funded from Exchequer versus non-Exchequer sources.

7.3. Library, information and knowledge management

Information and knowledge are fundamental to all UCD's activities, whether this be the scholarly knowledge resources that support learning and research or organisational information vital for daily operations and longer-term planning. Many aspects of research and education now rely heavily on data analysis, modelling and the successful application of computational, visualisation and electronic collaboration techniques. The overarching strategy for information and knowledge management at UCD has four major objectives:

1. To make available to the UCD community data, information and knowledge needed to promote learning and to catalyse the creation of new knowledge
2. To enable members of the UCD community and the external partners to use, interact with and collaborate around information on robust information systems, platforms and networks

3. To enhance capacity for communicating the outcomes and social impact of the University's teaching, research and innovation activities
4. To enable the effective management of administrative information and the capacity to translate that information into actionable organisational intelligence.

The UCD Library is the university's knowledge centre, its ubiquitous link to a global network of data, information and knowledge and a keeper of Irish cultural heritage; it is, moreover, a vital environment that catalyses student learning and intellectual engagement. Additionally, the ICT infrastructure of the University provides a platform for innovation and learning, enabling the widespread disseminating of electronic information, storing and managing large data-sets and collaborating on large-scale computational resources. This plan also recognises the need to continue investment in high-quality, user-oriented and sustainable learning support services and systems that enable innovation with digital media and instructional technologies. These information services will be made available on a robust infrastructure and transparent foundation of integrated applications services that facilitate student success.

Key information, knowledge management and infra-structural actions will include:

- Adopting a holistic and integrative approach to management of the University's information services and communications technologies, emphasising both capacity to advance University objectives and quality of the user experience
- Implementing a long-range plan for improved interoperability and access to administrative data systems, facilitating the user experience while building an advanced capacity for gathering organisational intelligence
- Developing UCD's infrastructure and e-learning services to fully exploit available and emerging technologies in areas such as large storage capacity, data management and advanced networks
- Advancing UCD library services and the University's access to data, information and knowledge by leveraging capacity for collaboration among Irish universities and national cultural heritage institutions, specifically:
 - Strengthening the IReL platform (a digital library of jointly licensed online journals and databases)
 - Building capacity for coordinated collection development amongst Irish university libraries
 - Contributing to systems that enable a unified view of the holdings of Irish university libraries
 - Exploring potential for joint facilities for materials storage, conservation and digitisation

- Further developing nascent information services of national scope and impact, namely, the IVRLA and ISSDA, assuring their sustainability by appropriate governance, appropriate placement in the UCD organisational context and adoption of sustainable approaches to data acquisition, representation, preservation and dissemination
- Improving availability of services, both locally at UCD and externally, that enable acquisition, capture and access to data and information essential to education, research and innovation across diverse fields of study. This effort will focus particularly on geospatial data and geographic information systems, as well as systems that facilitate the acquisition, administration and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data in the social sciences
- Developing capacity to exploit digital media, e-learning systems and communications technologies to enhance the UCD student learning experience and to extend lifelong learning opportunities to a geographically distributed Irish workforce
- Improving coordination of technology-assisted learning support services
- Expanding capacity for inter-organisational collaboration by supporting middleware services that enable interoperability across institutional boundaries, including a robust identity-management infrastructure and support of authentication and authorisation protocols
- Supporting cutting-edge research in the sciences, social sciences and humanities through a strategic approach to e-infrastructure development and leveraging UCD's unique research ICT support services
- Further leveraging of externally provided computational capacity to achieve financial efficiencies while improving services to end users.

7.4. Communications

In the period of the UCD Strategic Plan, 2005/2008, major advances have been made to remedy significant communications deficits at UCD. The implementation of the last plan saw the University make huge strides forward in communications terms. A standard visual identity was agreed and implemented across the University. This involved the revival of the original 1911 official crest for all official documentation and the design of a new, technologically sophisticated visual identity for mass communications, designed to make maximum impact across all media. Highly skilled professionals were appointed to key leadership roles in media relations and internal communications with immediate, measurable positive impact.

The communications function of any university is ultimately one which serves the core elements of the academic mission of the institution. This focus has been the basis of the success achieved to date at UCD in this arena. The focus, therefore, of communications planning and activity over the period of the UCD Strategic Plan to 2014 will be to align even more closely our sundry activities and products with our education, research and innovation missions - the articulation of which will become crisper and more effective in the same process.

Working in this way, key specific actions will include:

- Promoting the UCD brand as a single identifier of quality and affinity
- Creating an association between UCD and innovation in the public mind
- Developing and delivering the plan for communicating the benefits of *UCD Horizons* to prospective undergraduate students
- Developing and delivering a co-ordinated strategy for marketing to potential graduate students
- Highlighting individual academics through a range of communications channels focusing on their research achievements and academic expertise
- Building a sense of community through major outreach events and initiatives
- Developing a user-driven intranet with the primary objective of providing staff with one location for all internal information
- Developing a suite of student-focused communications to ensure students receive consistent messages about the university mission, vision and values.

7.5. Development and alumni relations

UCD renewed its focus on development and alumni relations to proactively engage with alumni to build and foster relationships in order to develop a culture of philanthropy to support the University's strategic goals.

The Campaign for UCD, *Forming Global Minds, 2008/2014*, is a capital one. Its three major priorities are:

1. The completion of the campaign for the new UCD Sutherland School of Law
2. The launching of the campaign for the new Science Centre
3. Developing and implementing the campaign for new facilities for the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business.

In addition to the campaign initiatives, the Development Office, through the UCD Foundation, continues to fund-raise for University-wide priorities, such as scholarships and Newman Fellowships.

Alumni Relations is critical to the success of the University's fund-raising campaigns as its programme of communications and events prepares alumni to support and serve the University in a multitude of ways.

Key development actions will include:

- The successful launch of the Campaign for UCD - *Forming Global Minds*, to include the appointment of a stellar Campaign Board to lead and drive the campaign
- Delivery of a multifaceted fund-raising programme including major gifts, mass fund-raising (telethons/direct mail), corporate fund-raising, Trust and Foundation fundraising and legacy-giving
- Growth of an Alumni Relations programme and an active global alumni-association network to affiliate alumni more closely with the University.

7.6. Student administrative and support services

The student is at the centre of UCD life. We offer an excellent education and create a special student experience, both of which contribute to the formation of our graduates, and both of which will be enhanced under this strategic plan. A central objective of this plan is to make a UCD education accessible to a much wider variety of students by providing new and flexible modes of study and by adapting our portfolio and curricula to meet the individual and changing needs of a diverse student body. Realising the full benefits of the modular curriculum and combining this with emerging educational technologies and individualised student support has the potential to establish UCD as a unique place of higher learning.

Delivering on the educational objectives of this strategic plan will depend on the professionalism, creativity and commitment of the University's non-academic staff, working in partnership with their academic colleagues. UCD's administrative, technical and professional student support staff clearly demonstrated their capacity and willingness, under the Strategic Plan, 2005/2008, to deliver major change in the best interests of students - despite limited resources.

As part of this plan, UCD will:

- Achieve greater integration of student and academic services across the entire student life cycle, from the engagement of prospective students at 2nd-level through to graduation and ongoing relationships as university alumni
- Aim for seamless provision across centralised and distributed academic and student support functions
- Develop the administrative, support, information and technical services and systems required both to support curricular flexibility and new modes of study and learning and to enhance students' experiences in their administrative dealings with the University
- Review the means by which we provide both academic and pastoral advice and support to students and create an integrated student-support model that ensures timely, appropriate and individualised academic and pastoral advice and support
- Develop services and supports that specifically foster students' intellectual flexibility and breadth and the skills and capacities for a rewarding life, for employment and for entrepreneurship and active citizenship
- Ensure the ongoing development of excellent services to ensure the well-being, health and welfare of our students
- Enhance our engagement with prospective students and those who advise and support them.

7.7. Capital development

The University recently embarked on a €300 million capital development programme to significantly upgrade some of the older buildings on the campus and to further enhance student facilities. A key component of the programme is the further development of the Science Precinct. UCD is unique in these islands in having a science district on campus that covers the human, animal and plant sciences and complements the core science disciplines and informatics. The programme will be completed within the first two years of this Strategic Plan.

A second major focus in the plan is the implementation of the Gateway and other commercial developments on the periphery of the campus. The objective is to provide the University with a new campus layout, an appropriate entrance from the N11 and the provision of commercial space and social and leisure facilities for the campus and neighbouring communities. Notwithstanding the current economic downturn, the University is committed to implementing these projects as well as to providing the facilities required to support and build on the *UCD-TCO Innovation Alliance*.

The University intends to deliver its projects in accordance with its aspiration to develop Belfield as a sustainable and ecologically focused campus community.

Key capital development programmes will include:

- The redevelopment of the UCD Science Centre as a core research and teaching facility with substantial capacity for interdisciplinary activity
- The development of the Newman Building, James Joyce Library and adjacent spaces to provide vital and dynamic space for research, teaching and learning, to catalyse interaction across disciplinary boundaries and to provide a public gateway to UCD's Irish cultural heritage collections and programmes
- Completion of the Sutherland School of Law, a new building to support the teaching and research activity of UCD's School of Law
- Design and completion of the UCD Charles Institute of Dermatology, which is being planned as a facility for research and training in dermatology that will become a national and European centre of excellence
- Design and completion of Systems Biology Ireland as a national centre for computational biology
- Completion of the next phase of the UCD Student Learning, Leisure and Sports Complex
- The doubling of the existing capacity of UCD residences through a number of initiatives that will increase the existing campus villages and provide additional accommodation in conjunction with the private sector and within the Gateway complex
- Advancement of UCD Gateway, an innovative approach to bring business, commerce and social interaction directly onto the campus through providing a gateway to the University and the county
- Develop Belfield Innovation Park as a flagship for Irish innovation.

Furthermore, UCD is designing its building stock with the specific objective of fostering interdisciplinarity.

This is evidenced by:

- Design of buildings to stimulate interdisciplinarity
- The location of researchers around specific themes
- Strict space allocation based on needs of research activities
- The use of institutes to foster cross-cutting interdisciplinary research.



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STRATEGIC PLAN TO 2014

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This Strategic Plan was presented to and formally approved by the Governing Authority of University College Dublin at its meeting on 23 February 2010



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