

The background of the page is a teal-tinted photograph of two scientists in a laboratory. A woman on the left is wearing safety glasses and a lab coat, focused on a task. A man on the right is also wearing safety glasses and a lab coat, looking towards the camera. In the foreground, there is a rack of test tubes and a pipette tip being held by a hand. The overall tone is professional and academic.

3

Achieving Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Excellence in teaching and learning must underpin every aspect of life in the UCD community if the university is to realise its ambitious vision to offer the very best in undergraduate, graduate and lifelong learning and compete successfully for the most talented students.

Curriculum reform in the period of the UCD Strategic Plan has been dramatic and the university is now offering an innovative and exciting, fully modularised suite of degree programmes. The development of *UCD Horizons* has allowed the university to make the most of its tradition of educational excellence with new and flexible approaches through modular curriculum design.

In parallel, there has also been a major expansion of taught and research graduate activity including structured doctoral programmes. Quality teaching at UCD benefits from internationally recognised research excellence, and the finest students are taught by the best teachers and researchers. By investing in its undergraduate, graduate and research programmes, UCD is building on its past and present to further attract outstanding students and staff who will work together in a shared culture of sustained excellence and innovation in teaching and learning.

Sixth year student
Amy Browne from
Ballygarvan speaks
to John Buckley
of the Agricultural
Science and
Veterinary Medicine
Programme Office at
the December 2006
Open Day



Student Numbers

Modularisation, Semesterisation
and UCD Horizons

Student Recruitment
and New Programmes

International Student Activity

Innovation in Teaching
and Learning

Quality

Student Numbers

The number of students choosing to study at UCD continues to rise. The total number of students at undergraduate and graduate level rose by just under 2% from 22,528 in 2005/06 to 22,929 in 2006/07. Table 1 shows the breakdown of student numbers by programme.

Students are attracted to UCD from all over the world, with almost a fifth of the graduate student body coming from outside the island of Ireland. The university's international profile continues to rise and 110 countries are now represented. Table 2 shows the origin of undergraduate and graduate students.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of international students by undergraduate (52%) and graduate (48%).

Table 4 shows the breakdown of students awarded qualifications in 2006/07.

Table 1 — Student Numbers by Programme

Undergraduate Students	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Honours Degree	12,602	1,177	13,779
Certificate/Diploma	43	2,181	2,224
Exchange Students	246	285	531
Occasional	312	176	488
Total Undergraduate	13,203	3,819	17,022
Graduate Students	Full-time	Part-time	Total
PhD	1,393	154	1,547
Masters Research	307	54	361
Masters Taught	1,578	646	2,224
Certificate/Diploma	704	1,070	1,774
Total Graduate	3,982	1,925	5,907
University Total	17,185	5,744	22,929

Table 2 — Student Origin

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Dublin City and County	7,421	2,455	9,876
Rest of Ireland	7,245	2,271	9,516
Northern Ireland	206	47	253
Great Britain	239	139	378
EU	691	439	1,130
North America	574	110	684
Asia	489	263	752
Africa	96	145	241
Rest of World	61	38	99
Total	17,022	5,907	22,929

Table 3 — International Students

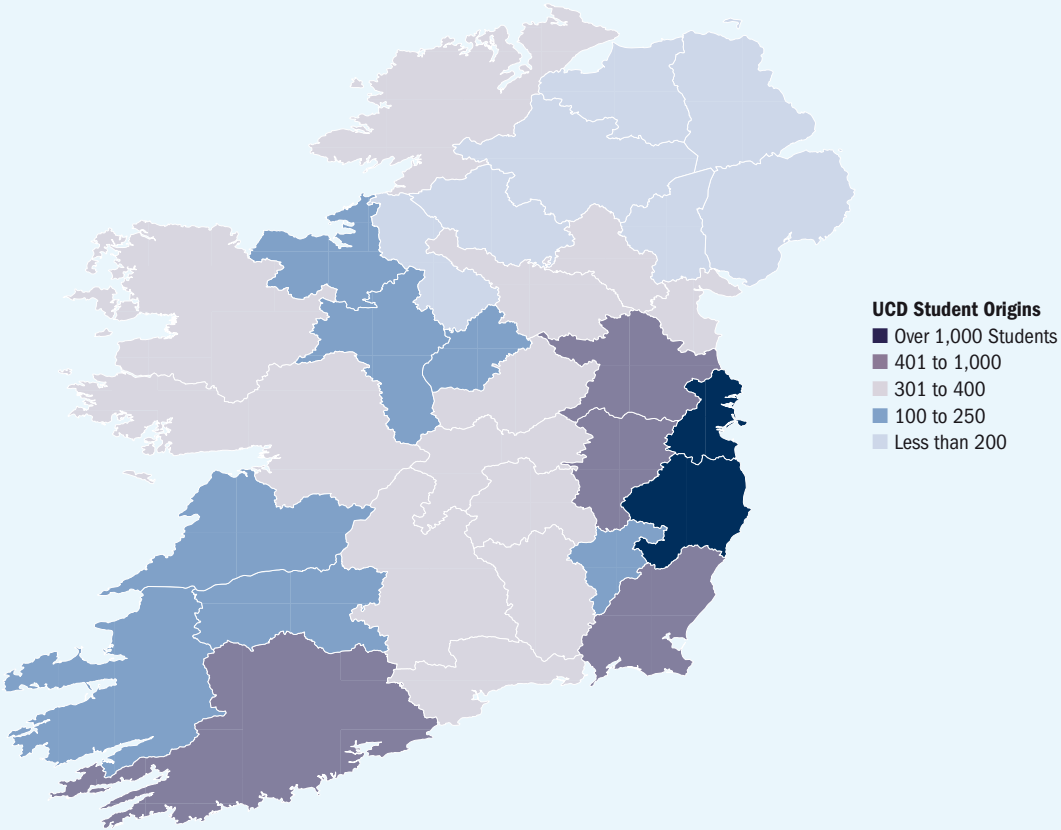
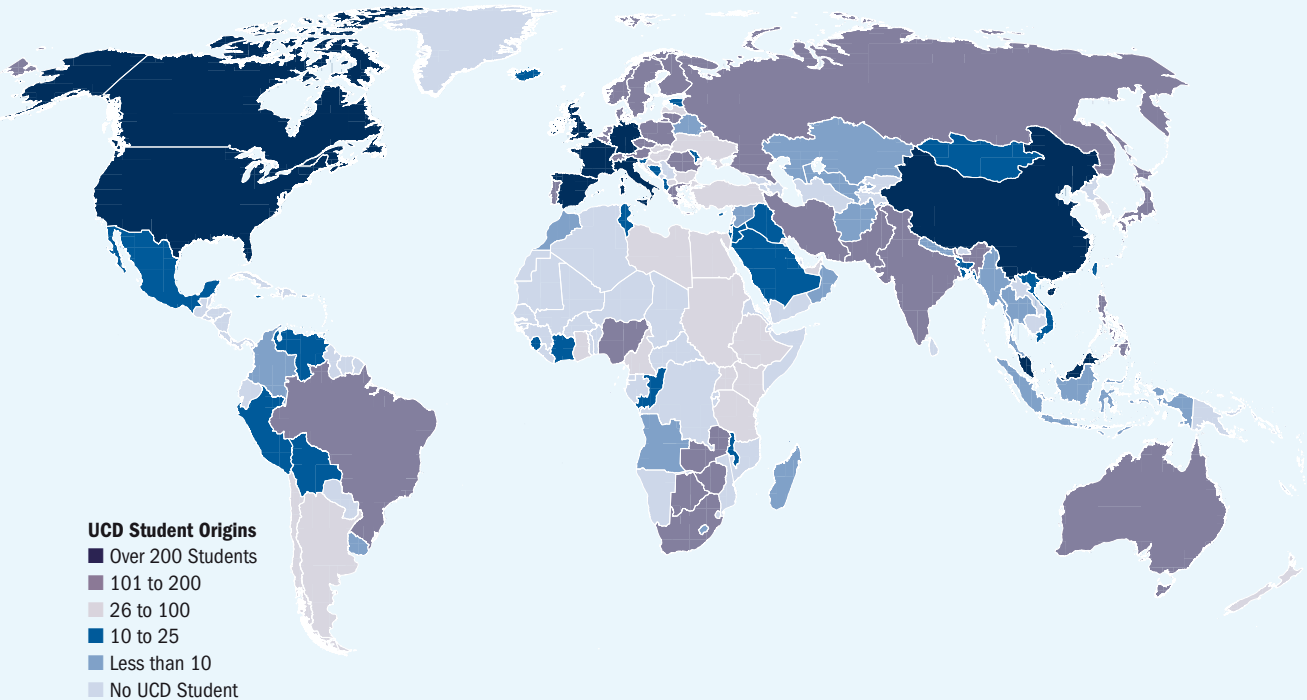
	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
International	1,217	1,134	2,351
JYA/Occasional/ Exchange	933		933
Total	2,150	1,134	3,284

Note: International is defined as students with domicile outside the Republic of Ireland and excludes those students on Exchange, JYA or other occasional programmes. These are presented separately.

Table 4 — Students Awarded Qualifications

Undergraduate	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Honours Degree	3,265	289	3,554
Certificate/Diploma	15	1,503	1,518
Total Undergraduate	3,280	1,792	5,072
Graduate	Full-time	Part-time	Total
PhD	101	96	197
Masters Research	114	28	142
Masters Taught	1,300	340	1,640
Certificate/Diploma	637	722	1,359
Total Graduate	2,152	1,186	3,338
University Total	5,432	2,978	8,410

Student Origins



Modularisation, Semesterisation and *UCD Horizons*

The ambitious objectives of the Strategic Plan are to:

- Implement a modularised and semesterised curriculum and drive curricular reform at module and programme level;
- Focus on defining the core curriculum and learning outcomes;
- Enrich the student learning experience through the provision of *UCD Horizons* electives.

UCD has made strides in embedding the mechanisms and processes to govern and enable the effective management of all graduate programmes — taught and research — while facilitating continued programme development. This extends from undergraduate programmes to thematic doctoral programmes, an area identified as key for development by both the UCD Strategic Plan as well as the Government's *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation 2006–2013*.

Progress to date

The majority of the university's undergraduate programmes are fully modularised and semesterised, with learning outcomes expressed at the programme and module level.

Schools are collaborating on new and interesting ways of combining different subject areas and are focusing on defining programmes through learning outcomes. New programmes have been established which bring together areas of study for a unique degree.

Students have the opportunity to register to elective modules outside of their area(s) of study, which enable them to develop a broader knowledge base in diverse subjects. Students also have the opportunity to register two options within their programme which enable them develop a deeper understanding of their subject area. Modules in Applied Languages and Psychology were very popular elective choices for students in September 2006. See Table 1.

Policy on the provision of electives was developed and approved in 2007. It sets out the general principles maintained by the university on the provision of electives, including how elective 'blocks' can be structured within a School or subject area.

Online registration for September 2007 entry began on a phased basis in mid August 2007, with the system offering very significant improvements

**Table 1 — First Year Top Elective Choices
September 2006**

Module	Number of first year students
Psychology	284
Applied Languages	221
Computer Science	188
Business Management	166
Law	135
Physics	130
Philosophy	129
Economics	123
Biology	111

on the previous year. This complex body of work was led by UCD Registry, a new unit which has evolved structurally in line with developments in modularisation and management reconfiguration within the overall Office of the Registrar and Deputy President.

UCD Registry is headed up by the Director of Registry, Kevin Griffin and comprises the following five units: Academic Policy and Programme Development, Student Recruitment, Operations, Assessment and Logistics and SySDeM (Systems, Support, Development and Enrolment Management).

Achievement in the undergraduate area has been the result of a collaborative process over time between Programme Offices, Programme Boards, Schools and teams within Registry. The University Undergraduate Programme Board, has been the main forum for discussion and recommendations on curriculum reform and wider programme development issues.

Modularisation and semesterisation has had a major impact on the pattern and modes of student assessment. Significant work has been undertaken to restructure the Exams Office into the Assessment and Logistics Unit (ALU) to support staff in the changing assessment context. Processes and procedures to accommodate the new curricular structures have been the main focus, with a re-structuring of logistics, exams scheduling and hall management system, and the creation of a set of innovative assessment reports to enable the development of a modular grade approval process. This was a collaborative effort between the Assessment and Logistics Unit, the Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Supervisor of Examinations, Programme Offices, Graduate School Offices and the Management Services Unit.

By August 2007, only five graduate taught programmes remained to be modularised, and all research masters programmes for delivery in 2007/08 have been modularised. Also, 30 new graduate taught programmes were approved for delivery in 2007/08, along with 15 new thematic doctoral programmes.

Concerted effort towards the modularisation of graduate research programmes began in September 2006, when the university introduced the new structured PhD programme for all new doctoral students entering. As part of the new structured PhD, doctoral students are now able to avail of taught modules from throughout the university and are no longer only supported in their research by a single supervisor but by a Doctoral

Studies Panel. All students are now encouraged to develop a Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP) in co-operation with their Doctoral Studies Panel.

Future objectives

- Progress at programme level curriculum review and development, particularly in aligning curriculum design with stated learning outcomes;
- Progress at School level in the development of their elective portfolio, particularly in the area of structured electives;
- Strengthening the mechanisms for graduate governance and support for the development of new graduate programmes, including and especially thematic doctoral programmes, and the development of a number of additional policy instruments to provide ongoing guidance and support for all students and staff involved with graduate education;
- International best-practice review and implementation of assessment approaches and methodologies in a modular system, including examining, grading and examination board policies and procedures.

While outlining the institutional achievements above, it is important to acknowledge the extraordinary leadership role played by Vice-Principals for Teaching and Learning and Directors of Graduate Schools in shaping and delivering the modularisation initiative at all levels.



Undergraduate Programme Deans

During the year, the key role of Programme Dean was introduced to advance the strategic development of programmes. Deans have been appointed for 12 Programme Boards, with approved terms of reference to ensure effective programme governance and management.

The Programme Deans will lead the strategic development of our undergraduate programmes within the modular framework and are responsible

for the academic governance of programmes through the Programme Boards, and the students' welfare and learning experience at programme level. Working with the relevant Programme Office(s) and with UCD Registry, Deans will ensure the co-ordinated provision of administrative supports to students, and the effective operation of programmes.

The Deans appointed in 2006/07 are set out below.



Professor Jim Phelan
Dean of Agricultural Science



Mr Jim Murphy
Dean of Architecture



Dr Joe Brady
Dean of Arts



Professor Tom Begley
Dean of Business



Dr David Timoney
Dean of Engineering



Professor Joe McMahon
Dean of Law (interim)



Professor Bill Powderly
Dean of Medicine



Professor Gerard Fealy
*Dean of Nursing, Midwifery
and Health Systems*



Professor Mark Rogers
Dean of Science



Dr Bairbre Redmond
Dean of Social Science



Professor Grace Mulcahy
Dean of Veterinary Medicine



Professor Cecily Kelleher
*Chair of the Public Health,
Physiotherapy, Performance and
Population Science Programme
Board*

Student Recruitment and New Programmes

Clear objectives have been set to ensure that UCD remains the university of choice for the most talented and ambitious students. As part of a co-ordinated recruitment strategy, the university has worked hard to:

- Increase the quality and number of contacts with individual prospective students;
- Increase the quality and level of information available to the individual student and his or her advisers.

Progress to date

A key task has been implementation of the first stages of the student-centred recruitment model developed in UCD. The model recognises that prospective students have different needs at different stages in the process of choosing the right university and degree course, as well as the value of better quality and more accessible Information. The university must meet this need in recruiting and communicating with prospective students.

UCD increased its market share of high achievers with over 456 students attaining more than 545 points in their Leaving Certificate or equivalent. Nationally 8% of Leaving Certificate students secured over 500 points. In recognition of their excellence, 108 students were awarded entrance scholarships. The top students in each programme were presented with their scholarships at a ceremony which acknowledged their achievements and raised the profiles of UCD high achievers in national and local media.

Activities in the year included a drive to bring prospective students to UCD and improve the quality of contact with them. Fifty UCD Student Ambassadors offered over 8,000 prospective students from Ireland and overseas a campus tour which included an information session in the new UCD Welcome Centre.

The March Open Days were replaced with school group and individual campus visits. The December Open Days for final year and mature students saw significant improvements in programme talks and information provision.

A Graduate Opportunities Day was introduced in the O'Reilly Hall in February.

Stronger strategic links were developed with schools through the inaugural UCD Guidance Counsellors' Seminar with its focus on training the trainer and curriculum information. There was a major research-driven redesign of the prospectus and the development of the UCD Guidance Counsellors' Information Manual for schools and guidance counsellors.

Future objectives

A focal point for 2007/08 is the development and rollout of *MyUCD*, the first Irish university undergraduate student portal. It will offer additional academic programme search

UCD offered five new undergraduate programmes during the period for students entering the university in autumn 2007. These were:

- Law with Economics
- Health and Performance Science
- Medicinal Chemistry and Chemical Biology
- Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- Climate and Earth System Science

functionality and further opportunities to communicate with prospective students and allow them become part of the UCD community before they arrive on campus.

Efforts will continue to attract potential students to visit UCD through the provision of information talks and campus tour and increased programme-specific open evenings.

Recognition of high achievers will include the introduction of the Entrance Exhibitors' award for all students with over 545 Leaving Certificate points or equivalent.

UCD Student Ambassadors welcome transition year students from St Colmcille's Community School Knocklyon, Dublin 16 on a campus tour



International Student Activity

In 2006/07, the number of international students attending UCD rose to just under 3,300, an increase of 4% from 2005/06. These students came from 110 different countries. Over the last two years there have been particularly significant increases in the number of students from France, Germany, Lithuania, Nigeria, Poland, Singapore and Spain.

Progress to date

In 2006/07, 281 UCD students spent time abroad as part of the ERASMUS programme and a further 74 students participated in outbound non-EU exchanges.

Progress towards providing UCD students with interesting opportunities to study abroad via exchange programmes has continued. In 2006/07, for the first time, there was student mobility between UCD and the University of Otago in New Zealand, Keio University in Japan and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in the USA. In addition, seven new exchange agreements have been established with universities in Canada,

Korea, New Zealand and the USA, providing an additional 38 new outgoing exchange places outside the EU. This is in addition to 25 new exchange programmes with prominent European institutions via the ERASMUS programme, which together provide almost 40 new exchange places to UCD students.

In 2006 UCD joined *Universitas 21*, a major international network of over 20 research-led universities in ten countries. Membership provides UCD students and staff with a wide range of mobility options, collaborative research initiatives, joint academic programmes and best-practice benchmarking opportunities.



International students at the UCD Cultural Diversity Week in February 2007

Significant steps have been taken towards meeting the objectives of the *Universitas 21* Shanghai Declaration, which promotes the seamless mobility of students between member institutions. UCD now has active exchange programmes with 13 of the 20 *Universitas 21* partners and agreements are being discussed with the remainder for signing in 2008.

UCD students will also have the opportunity to participate in annual *Universitas 21* events such as the summer conference, undergraduate research conference and doctoral students' conference.

In May 2008 UCD will host the *Universitas 21* annual President's meeting and AGM, as well as the annual *Universitas 21* symposium.

In May 2007, during the annual UCD Breakfast at the NAFSA (Association of International Educators) Conference, held in Minneapolis, USA, UCD announced the establishment of its UCD Centre for Study Abroad. The Centre will build on the success and good practice of existing Study Abroad/Junior Year Abroad programmes in Colleges and Schools and will support the co-ordination of incoming Study Abroad opportunities across UCD. It will also provide a high level of service to all of UCD's Study Abroad students and partner institutions.

Future developments

Consultation is underway with Colleges and Schools on the shape and content of the UCD Internationalisation Strategy, and its specific objectives and targets will form part of the next UCD Strategic Plan.

During the course of 2007/08, the International Office plans to conduct recruitment activities in China, India, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Middle East and the USA in collaboration with Colleges and Schools, and engage in a range of recruitment activities with sponsors and representatives in other key countries.

Progress will continue towards increasing the range of student mobility opportunities available to UCD students both within the ERASMUS framework and outside of Europe.



UNIVERSITAS 21 STUDENTS SUMMER CONFERENCE

In July 2007, five UCD students participated in the *Universitas 21* Student Summer Conference at the University of Virginia in the USA. The UCD students joined students from 15 of the *Universitas 21* partners for a programme of learning based around the theme of *Leadership in a Global Society*. The programme was designed to help participants understand and develop their own personal leadership skills by exploring the lives of leaders from different disciplines and different areas of the world. The curriculum had a strong experiential learning component and made extensive use of cross-cultural groups.

February 2008 will see UCD and the University of Glasgow collaboratively host the inaugural *Universitas 21* teaching and learning conference, entitled *Does Teaching and Learning Translate?* A strong network of *Universitas 21* leaders, academic and administrative, will be formed to tackle the global challenge of the student higher education learning experience.

Innovation in Teaching and Learning

Strategic Innovation Fund

UCD has made further progress during the year in introducing and expanding on its support mechanisms for staff to innovate in their teaching. The university is working to transform student learning, stimulating innovative teaching and widening participation. This work is supported by the government-funded Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), a €300m five-year fund co-coordinated by the Higher Education Authority (HEA) to promote collaboration, support change and enhance quality in Irish higher education. UCD's SIF teaching and learning projects are co-coordinated by the Registrar and a steering committee chaired by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Gerry Doyle, which reports to the University Teaching and Learning Board.

Stimulating innovative teaching

UCD made a successful proposal, through SIF for a Fellowship Scheme in Teaching and Academic Development. The purpose of the scheme, which is co-ordinated by Dr Bairbre Redmond (Vice-Principal, Teaching and Learning, UCD College of Human Sciences) and Elizabeth Noonan (Director of Academic Policy and Programme Development), is to implement a development structure for the promotion of excellence in teaching and academic development which is responsive to the changing needs of students.

The scheme uses an innovative hybrid model which promotes the strengths of each of the Fellows in specific disciplinary areas, whilst harnessing this through a group approach to address these issues in a university-wide manner for wider change and development. Eight Fellows were appointed in May 2007 from a range of disciplines across the university to form a community of practice focused on developing teaching excellence and with responsibility for leading academic development in two areas of strategic importance to UCD — first year experience and engaging students.



Pictured is the first cohort of UCD staff who graduated with a Diploma in University Teaching and Learning in the autumn of 2006, along with the staff of the Centre for Teaching and Learning, are Dr Bairbre Redmond, Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning, UCD College of Human Sciences and the Registrar, Dr Philip Nolan (centre)

The Fellows are:

- Dr Amanda Gibney, UCD School of Architecture, Landscape and Civil Engineering
- Dr Eilis Hennessy, UCD School of Psychology
- Dr Patricia Kieran, UCD School of Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering
- Dr Feargal Murphy, UCD School of Irish, Celtic Studies, Irish Folklore and Linguistics
- Dr Henry McLoughlin, UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics
- Dr Niamh Moore, UCD School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Policy
- Dr Sara O Sullivan, UCD School of Sociology
- Ms Maria-Rosario “Charo” Hernandez, UCD School of Languages, Literatures and Film

The work of the Fellows in the initial stages will focus on understanding the expectations of students engaging in university life with a view to tailoring the student learning experience both from the perspective of teaching and assessment. A key outcome of the Scheme will be to foster the development of teaching scholarship through publication in peer reviewed journals nationally and internationally.

Transforming student learning

The Enquiry/Problem-Based Learning (EPBL) project, co-ordinated by Geraldine O'Neill and Terry Barrett from the UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning, commenced in January 2007. In addition to discipline-specific knowledge, this approach to teaching and learning encourages students, working with a problem/enquiry, to develop their group-work, information retrieval, critical and creative thinking skills. This approach which builds on existing practices in UCD has been implemented since January 2007 in programmes across the university, for example, in Geography, Psychology, Diagnostic Imaging, and is in the design phase in modules in English Literature, Engineering, Physiotherapy and Languages. The project team are developing the use of a variety of models in some varied contexts, for example, with large-group classes in first year to graduate masters programmes in professional practice. Research is being carried out on the project and the findings to date have been disseminated at international and national

conferences. Links have been made with national and international partners, for example, the *Centre for Excellence in Enquiry-Based Learning* at the University of Manchester.

Widening participation project

This project is the first quantitative evaluation of the New ERA Access Initiative. The primary aim of New ERA has been to promote and support the participation of students from lower socio-economic groups who, in general, are under-represented in higher education. The New ERA programme has been carrying out excellent and important work, yet the effectiveness of the programme has largely been measured by social observations rather than quantitative evidence. If the New ERA programme is to develop and maximise its potential, then an evaluation of the programme is a timely necessity. The first stage of the project will be a retrospective evaluation of New ERA programme over the last seven years. The effectiveness of the New ERA programme will be evaluated across three domains: increased access from disadvantaged schools, retention rates and overall exam performance. The second stage will involve devising and implementing new/modified services that will be delivered across a subset of New ERA and MAP schools. Rigorous social science methods will be used to evaluate their effectiveness.

President's Teaching Awards

President's Teaching Awards are made to recognise excellence in teaching. Awards consist of one semester's paid sabbatical leave plus €12,000 to be spent on professional development activities during that time. A further allowance of up to €4,000 is available to fund dissemination of any results or findings from these activities.

There were three recipients of President's Teaching Awards during the year:

Dr Katherine O'Donnell, UCD School of Social Justice

Dr Debra Laefer, UCD School of Architecture, Landscape and Civil Engineering

Dr Oonagh Breen, UCD School of Law

Funding was also provided to conduct a feasibility study on the use of the modular curriculum to facilitate part-time learning within a broader lifelong learning framework. Work on this project is ongoing.

UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning

The UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning promotes excellence and innovation in teaching at UCD by:

- Facilitating, creating and providing professional development activities at institutional and individual levels;
- Promoting reflective practice and scholarly dialogue on teaching and learning in universities;
- Conducting research into learning in higher education;
- Disseminating information about good practice in teaching and curriculum design;
- Providing advice on teaching and learning that can inform the strategic management decisions of UCD.

Progress to date

The Centre hosted the Inaugural International Colloquium on University Teaching and Learning in June 2007, organised on the theme *Communities of Practice in the Digital Age*.

Twenty four students enrolled in January 2007 on the Graduate Diploma in University Teaching and Learning programme. Thirteen sessions took place on the Centre's main workshop programme and there were additional project based and School specific workshops.

Work is ongoing on the National Digital Learning Repository — an online service which allows users to search for and contribute teaching and learning resources. The Repository project is part of the Higher Education Authority's strategic initiative to support collaboration in e-learning within the higher education sector.

The Centre provides mechanisms for peer-observation and self-evaluation of teaching in UCD whereby lecturers can have their teaching observed in a way that they retain control over all elements of the process.

President's Teaching Grants

President's Teaching Grants are competitive and given to fund projects for the improvement of teaching and learning at UCD. Grants can be up to a maximum of €8,000 to fund the project, plus a further €4,000 to disseminate findings.

There were eight grants made during the year:

Dr Gavin Barrett, UCD School of Law

Dr Joe Brady et al, UCD School of Geography, Planning and Environmental Policy

Dr Fionnuala Dillane, UCD School of English and Drama

Dr Juliet Hewish and Ms Katie Long, UCD School of English and Drama

Dr Peter Holloway, UCD School of Medicine and Medical Science

Ms Mary Catherine Lucey, UCD School of Law

Dr Patrick Orr, UCD School of Geological Sciences

Quality

Operating in a globalised competitive environment, the university recognises that it must continually enhance the quality of its educational programmes and its supporting infrastructure. UCD has been a pioneer in the development of quality assurance/quality improvement, establishing the first formal quality assurance unit within the Irish university sector.

The university's implementation of its quality assurance/quality improvement procedures enable it to demonstrate how it discharges its responsibilities for ensuring the quality and standards of its awards, as required by the Universities Act 1997. UCD will continue to build on this to further develop its quality mechanisms and to create a quality improvement culture throughout its educational and related support activity.

Progress to date

In 2006/07 the university began the process of reviewing its quality framework and a revised review schedule for Colleges, Schools, and support units is under development.

In April 2007, Roy Ferguson was appointed as the new Director of Quality, to take forward an upgraded quality agenda.

As part of this review process, the university also initiated a number of quality-related projects including:

- Establishing a register of university links with professional and statutory bodies and other external organisations;
- The development of an institutional framework for collaborative programmes, including associated policies and procedures for the approval of collaborative arrangements;
- A review of the quality assurance/quality improvement mechanisms for the approval and review of taught programmes.

Future objectives

UCD is developing ambitious plans to further enhance its quality systems including:

- Establishing an integrated framework for quality improvement in order to systematise the range of quality assurance/quality improvement processes across the university;
- Using the quality assurance/quality improvement process and results, together with an increased institutional research capacity, to support strategic planning and actions;
- Examining how the student body might become progressively more aware of the quality assurance/quality improvement process and involved in this: in particular, the introduction of a university-wide mechanism to measure student engagement.
- Exploring options for synergies between professional accreditation procedures and the internal quality assurance/quality improvement process.

