

3

Achieving Excellence in Teaching and Learning

The UCD Strategic Plan 2005–2008 set out a compelling vision and appropriately ambitious objectives in undergraduate and graduate education. As the current UCD Strategic Plan reaches the end of its term and the 2009–2013 period enters planning stage, it is appropriate to reflect on the achievements to date and aspirations for the future.

UCD is justifiably proud of its achievements in developing and implementing a fully modular, semesterised and credit-based undergraduate curriculum – *UCD Horizons* – which is now seen nationally and increasingly internationally as a model for student-centred, flexible, quality education at undergraduate level. UCD is also to the forefront of developments in doctoral education, with the introduction of the UCD Structured PhD and the development of the thematic doctoral programmes.

The focus in coming years will be on consolidating these developments, strengthening undergraduate programmes, growing and developing graduate education and improving the links between education and research.

Student numbers for 2007/08 continue to reflect the university's strategy of attracting the best students from Ireland and beyond, as well as increasing the diversity of intake in areas such as mature, New ERA and international students.

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an increase of 8%
from the previous
academic year*



Student Numbers

Modularisation, Semesterisation and *UCD Horizons*

Student Recruitment and New Programmes

Fourth Level – UCD Graduate Studies

International Activity

Widening Participation

Innovation in Teaching and Learning

Adult Education

Quality

Student Numbers

UCD continues to enjoy and maintain its tradition of a diverse, buoyant student community, with total numbers of students remaining broadly constant into the 2007/08 academic year (see Table 1).

UCD reaffirmed its standing as a Higher Education Institution (HEI) of international repute, enjoying an almost 20% increase in international student numbers during the year. UCD's students come from all over the world: 116 countries are now represented on campus. Table 2 shows the origin and composition of the undergraduate and graduate student body, while Table 3 shows the breakdown of international students by undergraduate (66%) and graduate (34%). UCD's strategic efforts to increase the numbers of graduate research students are also bearing fruit: UCD PhD students now account for 30% of the Irish university PhD community. Table 4 shows the breakdown of students awarded qualifications in 2007/08.

Table 1: Student Numbers 2007/08

Undergraduate Students	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Honours Degree	13,005	628	13,633
Certificate/Diploma	52	1,485	1,537
Exchange Students	286	184	470
Occasional	533	424	957
Total Undergraduate	13,876	2,721	16,597
Postgraduate	Full-time	Part-time	Total
PhD	1,395	158	1,553
Master's Research	311	63	374
Master's Taught	1,607	841	2,448
Certificate/Diploma	540	704	1,244
Total Postgraduate	3,853	1,766	5,619
University Total	17,729	4,487	22,216

Note: UCD delivers a number of programmes off campus, and these are not included in the figures above

Table 2: Student Origin

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Dublin City and County	7,348	2,181	9,529
Rest of Ireland	6,706	2,153	8,859
Northern Ireland	280	51	331
Great Britain	170	132	302
Rest of EU	706	435	1,141
Europe	51	43	94
North America	652	122	774
Asia	509	316	825
Africa	120	149	269
Other	55	37	92
Total	16,597	5,619	22,216

Table 3: International Students

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
International*	1,460	1,285	2,745
JYA/Occasional/Exchange	1,083		1,083
Total	2,543	1,285	3,828

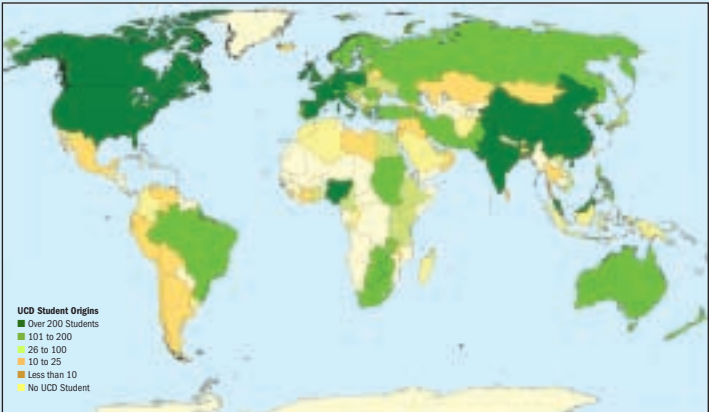
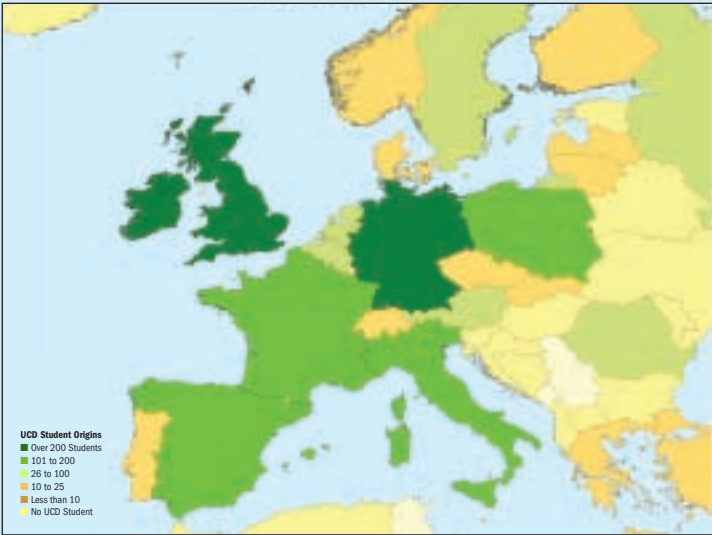
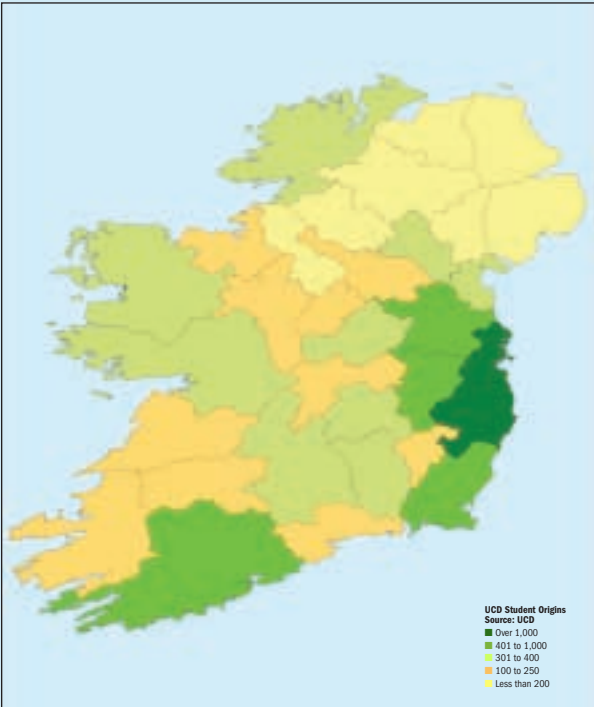
Note: *International is defined as students with domicile from outside the Republic of Ireland and excludes those students on Exchange, JYA or other occasional programmes (these are presented separately)

Table 4: Students Awarded Qualifications in 2007

Undergraduate	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Honours Degree	3,421	557	3,978
Certificate/Diploma	47	1,050	1,097
Total Undergraduate	3,468	1,607	5,075
Postgraduate	Full-time	Part-time	Total
PhD	185	92	277
Master's Research	57	39	96
Master's Taught	1,357	428	1,785
Certificate/Diploma	685	615	1,300
Total Postgraduate	2,284	1,174	3,458
University Total	5,752	2,781	8,533

Note: Figures show those students who were conferred between the dates of 1 Jan and 31 Dec 2007

STUDENT ORIGINS



Modularisation, Semesterisation and *UCD Horizons*

The ambitious objectives of the UCD Strategic Plan 2005–2008 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 continues to make strides in embedding the mechanisms and processes to govern and enable the effective management of all programmes — taught and research — while facilitating continued strategic 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 (SSTI) 2006–2013.

Progress to date

Almost all of the university's undergraduate programmes – with some exceptions currently in transition – 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, such as the BSc in Archaeology and Geology, have been established to bring together areas of study for a unique degree.

Student flexibility and academic mobility are supported by how electives are delivered. Students can choose to go 'deeper' by taking so-called in-programme electives or go 'broader' by taking general elective modules in areas outside their main area of study. Typically, students can choose two electives in a given year in this way, with a variety of approaches taken. Table 1 shows how electives were taken by students in the five Colleges.

Table 1: % of electives taken 'outside' the programme

College	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Arts and Celtic Studies	22%	18%	17%
Business and Law	64%	68%	40%
Engineering, Mathematical and Physical Sciences	57%	64%	61%
Human Sciences	48%	38%	34%
Life Sciences	41%	48%	47%

Interesting year-on-year variations can be seen in student 'mobility' – whether they stay in their programme for electives or 'travel' to other areas of study. Business and Law students are very 'mobile', while the numbers for Arts and Celtic Studies and Science reflect the scope for students to pursue broad interests within their programmes.

Modules in Applied Languages and Psychology were very popular elective choices for students in September 2007 – see Table 2. Policy on the provision of electives was developed and approved in 2007, setting 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.

Table 2: Most popular elective subjects for Stage 1 students

Subject	Elective Overall	Registrations Outside
Psychology	596	294
Nursing Studies	445	26
Applied Languages	424	424
Philosophy	259	97
Law	212	18
Politics	186	107
Sport Management	185	136
Business Management	174	98
Computer Science	155	37
Economics	148	110

Online registration in 2007 was successful and achieved an overall satisfaction rating of 78% in a start-of-term survey to which 2,600 undergraduates responded – up from 48% in the challenging 2006 registration season. The annual start-of-term survey of students and the annual review of the main registration season play a key role in the university's process of continuous improvement. Close co-operation between UCD Registry and academic and administrative staff is another key factor in developing supports for the modular university.

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

The implementation of modularisation in UCD has had a significant impact on the recording and approval of grades. A working group was established to review the existing process and made recommendations for a revised process that will streamline and improve the current assessment procedures and lead to results being published earlier for students.

The summer 2008 exam session witnessed the largest examination sitting in UCD's history. Some 3,370 students attended an examination sitting on Monday, 12 May 2008 in the RDS.

The Academic Secretariat provided leadership and support across a range of governance initiatives, including a recent collaboration with academic colleagues which involved a complete mapping of UCD's major and non-major award provision to the National Framework of Qualifications.

Student numbers for 2007/08 continue to reflect the university's strategy of attracting the best students from Ireland and elsewhere, as well as increasing the diversity of student intake in areas such as mature, New ERA and international.

Future objectives

- Making modularisation work – responsibility, engagement and simplicity: moving towards a more integrated administration and strengthening the administrative support behind UCD modularisation;
- Simplifying the tools available for curriculum management, making it easier for Schools and programmes to manage their curriculum through a more effective and efficient process;
- Streamlining and improving assessment policy and procedures, and publishing results earlier for students;
- Developing detailed strategy plans for programmes, working towards a re-launch of *UCD Horizons*;
- Fully reviewing current policies and procedures pertaining to repeats, re-sits and the compensation rule in student assessment.

UCD awards 130 entrance scholarships



UCD awarded a total of 130 entrance scholarships to the students across the university who achieved the highest points in their Leaving Certificate. Including the entrance scholars, 537 first-year students entered the ranks of the UCD High Achievers in 2007. Their achievement will be recorded on their degree transcript when they graduate. High achievers are students who score over 540 points in their Leaving Certificate.

UCD awarded entrance scholarships to 130 students in December 2007

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

Prospective students now have a greater understanding of the opportunities available to them through *UCD Horizons*, and of the unique education that they can receive only at UCD.

They are displaying a strong confidence in choosing to study at UCD, as seen by the 5.2% increase from 2007 in CAO first preferences in February 2008. A successful 'Change of Mind' campaign led to a further increase of 5.8% in May and July 2008. A total of 7,073 students gave UCD their first preference, compared to 6,724 in 2007.

The number of prospective students visiting UCD's campus increased substantially, with over 6,000 secondary-school students and their families attending the Undergraduate Open Days in December 2007. Another 7,000 students received campus tours from the UCD Student Ambassadors throughout the year, as part of the Campus Visits Programme. Additionally, over 400 prospective mature students attended tailored information sessions and campus tours.

There was a major increase in traffic to the UCD website following the launch of MyUCD (www.ucd.ie/myucd), an interactive portal for prospective students to guide them through their contact with the university. UCD is the first university in Ireland to implement such a personalised contact tool. The portal offers a comprehensive database of degree programme information, information on life at UCD and a full listing of admissions events. Students have the opportunity to use the many unique features of the portal, such as requesting literature and booking campus tours. MyUCD replaces the previous *UCD Horizons* site.

UCD has increased its share of high-achieving students, and has increased the quality of communication with them. The UCD Entrance Exhibition Awards were held in November 2007 to recognise the academic achievements of first-

year students who gained 540 points or above in their Leaving Certificate examinations, or equivalent. Some 537 students were presented with the award at a ceremony in O'Reilly Hall. The students represent over 200 schools from 32 counties, as well as schools from other countries. Approximately 4% of more than 63,634 CAO applicants for degree courses attained this achievement, and 21% of this talented group have chosen UCD to pursue their third-level education.

The undergraduate prospectus, *Your Potential Your UCD*, was also redeveloped to mirror the structure of the portal. In particular, the Arts and Science sections of the prospectus now display more information in a format that is consistent with the rest of the publication and that is more beneficial to prospective students.

UCD was also well-represented at large careers and education exhibitions such as Higher Options and FÁS Opportunities, as well as smaller, regional exhibitions.

Future objectives

- The Entrance Exhibition Awards will be opened to all high-achieving first-year students, not just those from the EU;
- The development of MyUCD will continue, with the degree programme webpages restructured to follow the format of the existing Arts and Science pages;
- A Summer School for Irish students who have just completed fifth year in secondary school will take place. This will be offered to prospective students from the 32 counties, and it is hoped that approximately 100 will take part. In particular, the university will be hoping to select students with a good academic record and unique skills and talents, in order to diversify the UCD community.

Fourth Level – UCD Graduate Studies

Graduate education at UCD includes both graduate taught programmes and graduate research programmes. The academic year 2007/08 was a defining year in further establishing the platform for the success of UCD Graduate Studies: the university's Graduate Schools, supported by the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Training, made significant strides towards growth in both graduate taught and research provision.

UCD is leading the way to Fourth Level Ireland and has the highest number of graduate research students in Ireland. UCD has over 1,500 PhD students spread across the five UCD Graduate Schools. UCD has continued to attract high-quality PhD candidates and is well placed to meet the government's SSTI targets to double the PhD numbers by 2013. The increase in UCD PhD student numbers has been facilitated by the recruitment of students into a number of thematic PhD programmes developed as a result of successful funding of research programmes in the PRTL 4 funding from HEA and also from funding obtained from SFI Strategic Research Clusters (SRCs).

In the region of 6,000 students – over 25% of the total student population in UCD – are graduate students. Of these 6,000 graduate students, approximately 4,000 are reading for a graduate taught award.

Progress to date

UCD actively seeks to make progression from undergraduate to graduate and doctoral education an attractive and viable option for a greater number of students – and ensure a seamless transition between education cycles to make this a reality. UCD offers an extensive suite of graduate taught programmes, with over 230 different graduate programmes ranging from Certificate, to Diploma to Master's awards and geared to the specific interests of students. The university has led the way in Ireland with the introduction and expansion of Structured and Thematic PhD programmes, underpinned by improvements in research supervisory procedures and individual personal development and research skills training for students. The academic year 2007/08 saw more than 20 Thematic PhD programmes established.

During the year, the Research and Development Plan (RPDP) for doctoral students was improved, following the pilot phase development with the UCD Ad Astra Research Scholars in 2006/07. The RPDP was made available to each incoming PhD student in September 2007. New students also availed of opportunities to participate in generic, skills-based modules as part of their doctoral training. These modules included: Core research skills; Project management for researchers; Innovation and knowledge transfer I – Introduction to entrepreneurship; Innovation and knowledge

transfer II – Transferring technology from research to the knowledge economy; and Preparing to teach in a university.

Raising the institutional profile of doctoral education and its function in society was a constant theme during the year. The inaugural Graduate Research Achievements Day, held in October 2007, included a keynote speech from Professor Patrick Cunningham, Chief Scientific Advisor to the Irish Government, on *Guardians of Knowledge, Drivers of Change – Universities Serving Society*. An expert panel, chaired by Dr John Bowman of RTE's *Questions and Answers*, then held a discussion on *The Role of Research and PhD Education in the Knowledge Society and Economy*.

Notable achievements

Among the notable achievements during the year was UCD's great success in the Irish Research Council's competition for the development of Graduate Research Education Programmes (GREPs). Of the five GREPs awarded across the university sector, four were led by UCD academics, with UCD a partner in the fifth. This was an outstanding achievement and testament to the value of the UCD structured PhD model. The successful GREPs were: Bioinformatics and Computational Biomedicine; Gender, Culture and Identity; Sustainable Development; Quantitative Social Sciences; and Micro-nano-engineering.

Several thematic PhD programmes have also been developed in research programmes funded under the HEA PRTL Cycle 4 and SFI Strategic Research Clusters.

2007/08 saw the completion of the modularisation of all UCD graduate taught programmes. This achievement now places UCD in an excellent position to clearly maintain its leadership position in graduate education and provides the opportunity to custom-design graduate programmes specifically to the interest of the graduate student. On 5 March 2008, a Graduate Opportunities Day held on campus proved a popular event both for existing UCD undergraduates and others coming from other institutions who showed an interest in finding out more about the UCD graduate experience.

A range of new UCD graduate taught programmes was introduced as follows:

Arts and Celtic Studies Graduate School

- Graduate Diploma in American Studies
- MA in Social and Cultural History of Medicine
- MA in Comparative Literature
- MA in Film Production
- MA in Gender and Writing
- MA in Directing for Theatre
- MA in Creative Writing

Business and Law Graduate School

- Diploma in Advanced Management Business and Executive Coaching
- Graduate Certificate in Innovation and Technology Management
- Graduate Diploma in Law
- MBA in Financial Services/Regulatory and Compliance
- MSc in Business x 4 Streams: e-Business; International Business; Marketing; and Management and Organisation Studies
- Master's in Management



Pictured at the 2008 Graduate Opportunities Day, a prospective graduate student speaks with Dr Porscha Fermanis of the UCD School of English, Drama and Film about opportunities in the UCD Graduate School of Arts and Celtic Studies

Human Sciences Graduate School

- MSocSc in Migration, Race and Ethnicity

Life Sciences Graduate School

- Higher Diploma in Psychotherapy Studies
- Graduate Diploma in Musculoskeletal Medicine
- MSc in Group Analytic Psychotherapy
- MSc in Safety, Health and Welfare at Work
- MSc in Nursing (Advanced Leadership Practice)
- MSc in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy
- MSc in Clinical and Diagnostic Virology
- MSc in Health Systems
- MSc in Child Art Psychotherapy

Future objectives

UCD recognises the value of the three-cycle bachelor's-master's-doctoral framework which is at the centre of the Bologna process. UCD will:

- Develop its strategy to provide clear pathways and expectations from bachelor's to master's and doctoral level, ensuring that UCD becomes a national and international destination of choice for graduate students;
- Use the three-cycle framework to bring clarity to the range of educational opportunities available to prospective students, enabling lifelong learning – including skills acquisition – through a focus on Continuing Professional Development opportunities;
- Drive forward and facilitate inter-institutional collaboration and increase opportunities for international mobility.

International Activity

The main benefits of UCD's internationalisation include diversity and tolerance among its student and academic population, a broader talent pool and exciting overseas research partnerships. In 2007/08, the number of international students attending UCD rose to just under 3,600, an increase of approximately 8% from 2006/07. These students came from 116 countries. There were particularly significant increases in the numbers of students from Canada, China, Germany, India, Italy, Nigeria, Poland, Romania, South Africa, UK and the USA.

Progress to date

Progress towards providing UCD students with stimulating opportunities to study abroad via exchange programmes has continued. In 2007/08, for the first time, there was student mobility between UCD and University of Queensland in Australia; Fudan University, Renmin University and the University of Hong Kong in China; Tec de Monterrey in Mexico; University of Auckland in New Zealand; National University of Singapore; and Connecticut University, San José State University and University of Virginia in the USA. Thirteen new exchange agreements have been established with universities in Australia, Canada, China, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand and the USA, providing a large number of additional exchange opportunities for UCD students at leading universities outside the EU. This is in

addition to new exchange programmes with 11 prominent European institutions via the Erasmus programme. In 2007/08, 269 UCD students spent time abroad as part of the Erasmus programme. A further 93 students participated in outbound non-EU exchanges, an increase of over 25% from the previous year.

In December 2007, UCD hosted a UNESCO-sponsored workshop for eight Iraqi academics. Titled *Training of Trainers in Teacher Education for Sustained Quality Education*, the programme was aimed at contributing to the rebuilding of the Iraqi education system with the assistance of the international community. The workshop provided curriculum review methods, new teaching methodologies and training content design in the field of physics education. The programme was administered jointly by the UCD International Office and the UCD School of Physics.

Recent international students who graduated from the UCD Medicine programme





UCD hosts *Universitas 21* AGM

In May 2008, UCD hosted the *Universitas 21* Annual General Meeting, welcoming 50 presidents, vice-chancellors and senior managers from across the network. A highlight of the week was the *Universitas 21* Symposium, which addressed the topic *Strategic Partnerships with the Developing World: A new direction for Universitas 21 in research and education*. The symposium brought together 150 experts and practitioners in the field of international development, senior university representatives from the *Universitas 21* member institutions, representatives from major international funding bodies such as the Wellcome Trust and the Ford Foundation, and invited speakers to discuss the potential role of universities in contributing to large-scale international development projects. The President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, formally opened the symposium and gave an address on the challenges of international development. As an outcome of the symposium, UCD has taken the lead in co-ordinating the *Universitas 21* networks' combined efforts in international development studies and will be spearheading a number of major funding applications in support of this work. Professor Paul Walsh will be the lead academic on this project with support from Dr Erik Lithander in UCD International.

The Universitas 21 Presidents in Dublin 2008 with Irish President Mary McAleese

UCD's John Hume Institute for Global Irish Studies hosted a workshop on Irish and Diaspora Studies which brought together 20 academics from around the *Universitas 21* network. This was an opportunity for UCD to showcase the work of the John Hume Institute and also take the lead in establishing a dynamic framework for the study of Irish and diaspora studies across the network. Dr Brian Jackson will be leading this initiative on behalf of the network.

The UCD Centre for Study Abroad came into operation in August 2008. The Centre builds on the success and good practice of existing Study Abroad/Junior Year Abroad programmes in Colleges and Schools and is supporting the co-ordination of incoming Study Abroad opportunities across UCD. It is also providing a high level of service to all of UCD's Study Abroad students and partner institutions. Enda Carroll's appointment as the first Manager of the Centre for Study Abroad was announced at the annual UCD Breakfast at the NAFSA (North American Association of International Educators) Conference, held in Washington DC in May 2008. Advanced discussions are already under way

about broadening the delivery of Study Abroad programmes across UCD's Schools during 2009.

Future developments

The focus for UCD International in the coming academic year will be to work with Schools and Colleges to establish medium-term priorities and targets in the area of international student recruitment. In parallel, enhancing the international student experience will remain a key objective across the university. Discussions on facilitating programmes aimed specifically at top international research students will be ongoing with major international funding bodies and overseas scholarship agencies. A range of initiatives involving both bilateral and multilateral links with leading universities around the world will be put into place to support and enhance UCD's profile nationally, regionally and globally. It is expected that UCD's participation in the Internationalisation strand of the Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance, through which UCD was awarded over €1.25 million, will lead to significant benefits in areas such as international student recruitment and international positioning.

Widening Participation

UCD aims to be a socially inclusive university where students from diverse backgrounds participate fully and equally in all facets of university life. The university welcomes students with a disability, mature learners and students from lower socio-economic groups.

As part of Ireland's leading research university, policy and practice within the Office of the Director of Access is research-informed and driven. It delivers timely and relevant supports to a diverse student body. This diversity places UCD at the forefront of national efforts to promote a social and economic culture of lifelong learning.

The support areas within the Office of the Director of Access – New ERA (targeted programme to increase access from lower socio-economic groups), the Disability Support Service and the Mature Student Advisor's office – support over 1,700 undergraduate students in UCD. Supports provided by the university include orientation programmes, skills workshops, needs-based accommodation, accessible materials and technologies, advice, guidance and financial bursaries to assist students to participate fully in university life.

Progress to date

At the close of the 2006/07 year, the entry profile for September 2007 showed students from under-represented groups and non-standard entry routes comprised 14.5% of the undergraduate population. Since 2000, 442 New ERA students have graduated from UCD, and the full-time degree enrolment by mature students in UCD has increased 85% since 2004/05. Close to 400 students are supported by the Disability Support Service. Support programmes for all students are individualised based upon a detailed assessment process.

UCD seeks to continuously innovate in the provision of Access-related services. During 2006/07, the New ERA team, working in partnership with the UCD School of Medicine and Medical Science, made further and significant strides to open the medical profession to students from under-represented groups. Since 2003, 15 New ERA students have successfully graduated from the undergraduate Medicine programme.

A culture of continuous improvement in support and service delivery underpins the approach taken. This year saw the first outputs of a quantitative evaluation of the New ERA programme, led by the Office of the Director of Access and the UCD Geary Institute. Funded by the HEA's Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF), the project has produced a white paper entitled *An Historical Overview of the Evolution of Access Programmes in Ireland and Internationally*, and completed a detailed survey of the secondary schools linked to UCD, from which data will be analysed and used to inform

required improvements to the New ERA programme approach.

Notable achievements

- 100 mature students participated in the Mature Student Advisers Office three-day Critical Writing Academy for entering mature students;
- Full-time mature degree student numbers continue to rise, with over 300 mature students accepting UCD offers;
- Targeted pre-entry initiatives and increased collaboration with FETAC-linked institutions resulted in an increase in entrants through the FETAC links scheme;
- The Kathleen Rooney Miller Scholarship has benefited over 40 mature students since 2004;
- The Bank of Ireland | UCD New Irish Scholarship has now awarded eight undergraduate or graduate degree scholarships to members of Ireland's new immigrant communities;
- A new AIB New ERA scholarship scheme has provided scholarships for 30 New ERA, disability or mature students;
- The UCD 150 scholarship was awarded to a further 16 highly motivated students in 2007;
- Some 63 second-level schools are now linked with the New ERA programme, including some newly designated schools participating in the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools scheme;

- New ERA's comprehensive primary-school programme, involving 33 primary schools, facilitated local primary-school students to investigate UCD through school visits, worksheets and campus visits, in collaboration with NUI Maynooth;
- New ERA, in partnership with the UCD School of Irish, Celtic Studies, Irish Folklore and Linguistics, and local visiting teachers for Travellers, hosted another Traveller Parents' workshop.

In collaboration with the UCD School of Mathematical Sciences, New ERA offered final-year Mathematics undergraduates the opportunity to work with mathematical teachers and students in six local secondary schools through the UCD Undergraduate Ambassadors Scheme.

New ERA received scholarship funding from a number of donors, both public and private. The UCD Alumni Arts Scholarship, Irish Life and Permanent Scholarship and Citigroup Scholarships were among the new scholarships New ERA was successful in securing.

The Disability Support Service, in collaboration with other higher education institutions (HEIs), and the Irish Universities Association (IUA) are developing a new data and information system that will allow for standardised and transparent entry criteria to be used across HEIs for students with disabilities.

Future objectives

Conscious of the lifelong learning needs of the greater Dublin community, UCD has committed to full participation in a new Higher Learning Network, a HEA SIF-funded initiative with other Dublin-based HEIs. The network establishes structured collaboration in order to more effectively plan for and articulate the available pathways for lifelong students in the Dublin area.

A number of strategic developments are under way, including:

- The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR), also supported by HEA SIF funding, which is currently undergoing a significant review with the aim to develop and introduce a national scheme for 2010;
- Two further initiatives supported by HEA SIF funding due for completion in the 2008/09 year: results from the New ERA Access

Evaluation project and from an Equity of Access project, co-ordinated by the IUA. This initiative aims to create and implement a new data and information system to provide greater transparency and standardisation for disabled students' application to HEIs.

Overview of Undergraduate Students by Programme

	New Entrants	Total
DSS	109	420
New ERA	117	425
Mature Students	336	971 FT
FETAC	27	45

Bank of Ireland | UCD New Irish Scholarship Awards



Bank of Ireland, in association with UCD, has introduced a New Irish Scholarship Scheme targeted at members of ethnic groups from outside the EU, now resident in Ireland.

Applicants for the scholarship scheme must be resident in the Republic of Ireland for a minimum of three years and must be legally entitled to remain based on Irish naturalisation, refugee status, humanitarian leave or leave to remain, or be holders of an Irish work permit for the past three years.

Ronan Murphy from the Office of the Director of Access at UCD said the scholarships – valued at up to €5,000 per annum for the duration of the student's undergraduate or postgraduate level degree programme – are aimed at individuals who face significant economic obstacles to entering university.

Pictured above: Bank of Ireland | UCD New Irish Scholarship recipients – Olakunle Animashaun from Nigeria, Yombo Rahman from Nigeria, Samuel Ogwu Lekwadi from South Africa and Shane Liz Andaloc from the Philippines – with the Registrar, Dr Philip Nolan, and Sinead Mulryan from Bank of Ireland

Innovation in Teaching and Learning

Emerging from an intense period of academic restructuring and curriculum redesign through the *UCD Horizons* initiative, 2007/08 saw the university's academic community begin to reflect on its teaching methodologies and practice and student-learning approaches in the new curriculum. An increase in practice-based reflection on the issues facing students in their learning – and teachers in their pedagogical approach – was evident, with a new Fellowship scheme in Teaching and Academic Development gaining momentum and raising awareness, College-specific case-studies on a range of issues increasing under the leadership of the Vice-Principals for Teaching and Learning, and formal and informal training opportunities offered through the Centre for Teaching and Learning.

Fellows in Teaching and Academic Development

The UCD Fellowships in Teaching and Academic Development were established in May 2007 with the appointment of eight Fellows. The Fellows were drawn from disciplines as diverse as computing, engineering, geography, languages, linguistics and psychology, and united in one goal: to promote innovation and excellence in teaching and learning through researching current practice in areas of strategic importance. During the first year of the scheme the Fellows chose two strategic themes:

- What are first-year students' expectations of university?
- How are students engaged in and motivated by their learning experience?

First-year experience

The project team, led by Dr Niamh Moore (UCD School of Geography) and including Dr Sara O'Sullivan (UCD School of Sociology), Dr Amanda Gibney (UCD School of Architecture, Landscape and Civil Engineering) and Feargal Murphy (UCD School of Irish, Celtic Studies, Irish Folklore and Linguistics), set out to investigate students' expectations of university in their first year and the ways in which these needs may be addressed at this critical juncture in the students' learning experience. The team identified a number of variances across subject areas in terms of first-year students' levels of confidence and learning skills. The research identified that 83% of students had a positive experience of first year, and some students had concerns about becoming socially integrated, managing their time and aspects of their academic abilities.

Engaging students

This project team, led by Rosario Hernandez (UCD School of Languages and Literatures), Dr Ellis

Hennessy (UCD School of Psychology), Dr Patricia Kieran (UCD School of Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering) and Henry McLoughlin (UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics), set out to investigate the experience of students enrolled on non-programme electives and the staff experience of teaching and assessing these students. The findings of the project showed that the majority of students (80%) were satisfied with their experience of non-programme electives, and changes in operational issues as well as academic development matters would be required to enhance the experience for future students.

The outputs of both teams' research were well received at the *Universitas 21* Teaching and Learning Conference (Glasgow, February 2008). The first-year team successfully presented a paper at the European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR) (Copenhagen, August 2008) and have been invited to present its findings by Southampton University as part of a major university colloquium. The Engaging Students Team had a paper accepted for the Society into the *Higher Education Research Annual Conference* in December 2008.

Incentivising innovation in module design and pedagogical practice

To facilitate teaching and learning innovation at module level, a Module Support Grant scheme was introduced in 2008. The objective of the scheme was to support staff in developing and implementing new pedagogical approaches to enhance existing modules for delivery in academic session 2008/09. Up to €5,000 was made available to module co-ordinators through a competitive process. An assessment panel, including an external colleague from the Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance, was constituted and recommended a total of six awards for module development. During 2008/09, these innovations

will be evaluated and the findings disseminated to inform the development of good practice in teaching and learning innovation.

Graduate Diploma in University Teaching and Learning

In January 2008, eight people were awarded a Graduate Diploma in University Teaching and Learning and a further three were awarded a Graduate Certificate.

This year saw the creation of two new modules designed to be particularly valuable for experienced university academics wishing to catch up with the latest developments in curriculum design and problem-based learning.

Increasing Enquiry- and Problem-Based Learning approaches (EPBL)

The Enquiry- and Problem-Based Learning project is co-ordinated by the UCD Centre for Teaching and Learning and funded by the HEA through SIF. This project provided education and staff development support for the design and implementation of enquiry- and problem-based learning initiatives across a range of disciplines in UCD. This included the design of an inter-professional PBL module and two EBL English literature modules. It included the implementation of a PBL psychology module and the implementation of a PBL MSc programme in ultrasound. A PBL Summer School jointly hosted by this project and Facilitate, the Irish PBL network was held in UCD on 23–27 June 2008.

Adult Education

The UCD Adult Education Centre provides part-time, lifelong learning opportunities to a diverse student population of adult learners. Much of its strategic work is informed by current policy on lifelong learning and by the strategic plans of the university. The main components of the programme are: learning for all (interest courses); credit courses; access courses; professional development and learning support; and research.

Progress to date

In 2007/08, the UCD Adult Education Centre:

- Attracted 3,425 registrations to a variety of Adult Education part-time courses;
- Offered Access courses in Arts, Science, Engineering and Commerce that are especially designed to bring students up to entry level for university;
- Offered certificates in key disciplines which attracted 928 students to a broad range of accredited courses;
- Delivered a series of student-support workshops;
- Disseminated a series of Adult Learning Support materials to all 922 credit students on accredited Adult Education programmes.

Notable achievements

Over 300 students received Adult Education awards in the annual Awards Ceremony held in UCD in May 2008. Students received Certificates and Diplomas across a wide variety of subject areas. The Mature Student foundation/access courses offered by Adult Education include Access to Arts and Human Sciences; Access to Commerce; and Access to Science and Engineering.



Exploring the various lifelong learning opportunities in UCD

Future objectives

The UCD Adult Education Centre will facilitate the university in attracting and supporting adult learners through:

- Communicating the rationale for equity of access for mature students;
- Creating routes of access and progression to higher education for mature students;
- Establishing links between Adult Education programmes and Foundation Provision in *UCD Horizons*;
- Promoting and developing a broader range of teaching and learning strategies for adult learners in higher education;
- Developing flexible and varied formats for course delivery.

Quality

The aim of UCD's Quality Framework is to enhance the effectiveness of its core activities of teaching and learning, research, innovation, student experience and community engagement and outreach. The framework addresses all areas of university activity, focusing on their contribution to and alignment with the university's strategic goals.

The underpinning principles of the UCD Quality Framework are:

- Quality teaching and learning, student experience, research and innovation and community and alumni engagement are essential to the university's mission, goals and activities;
- The university will evaluate its achievements against appropriate national and international benchmarks. Its quality review processes are evidence-based, where outcomes and feedback from stakeholders will provide the basis for analysis and conclusions on which improvements are planned;
- Collegiality – the university's procedures reflect the principles of rigorous peer review, as it is aimed to identify areas of improvement, to foster collaboration and exchange of best practice, and to encourage an ethos of critical self-evaluation.

Progress to date

During 2007/08, the university refreshed its Quality Review Procedures and initiated a new, shorter (seven-year) quality-review cycle.

The following reviews were completed during the period:

- A review of Business degree programmes with UCD's partner, Asia Pacific Management Institute, in Hong Kong and Singapore;
- UCD School of Law;
- UCD School of Computer Science and Informatics.

During the year, UCD, working with the Irish Universities Quality Board and IUA, led the preparations for the 2008 national HE Quality conference on the theme of *Opportunities and Challenges in Developing Fourth-Level Education*.

Future objectives

The university will continue to roll out its programme of unit review, and will, in addition to these quality reviews, plan to develop a capacity to undertake university-wide thematic reviews in key areas. In addition, support will be provided for quality-oriented initiatives agreed as necessary for curriculum improvement and enhancement, such as Teaching Quality and means to measure and evaluate student engagement with their learning – and with university life in general. The 2008/09 academic year will also see the university focus on preparations for institutional review, scheduled for 2009/10.

