



University College Dublin
University for All

Money Management Guide

How to prepare financially for coming to UCD by being aware of the costs you may have and the financial supports that you may be eligible for.



**UCD Access & Lifelong Learning, Level 1,
James Joyce Building, Belfield, Dublin 04 V1W8**

Glossary of Terms

A quick guide to help you understand the terms in this booklet.

ALL

Access & Lifelong Learning Centre.

Bursary/Scholarship

A sum of money given to a person by an organisation, such as a university, to help cover costs at university.

Budget

An estimate of income and expenditure for a set period of time.

Fees

Fees are the costs students may have to pay towards their tuition.

SUSI

Student Universal Support Ireland is the funding body that awards grants to eligible students.

Student Contribution

The portion of fees that is not covered by the Free Fees Initiative, which all UCD students pay.

Student Levy

UCD students are liable for this Levy. The Levy fee provides you with the opportunity, support & facilities to enjoy your college experience outside of your studies & includes access to the Sports Centre.

Reckonable Income

SUSI regards reckonable income as the gross income from all sources. Some social welfare payments & financial support payments are excluded from reckonable income see www.susi.ie

Spending Tracker

A tool to record your expenses.



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Welcome Message

Congratulations on securing your place in UCD. We are delighted to welcome you. Now that you have secured your seat, it is our job to guide you to that seat and to help you keep it!

The Access and Lifelong Learning Centre can offer you advice and guidance on how to successfully transition to higher education.

One very important aspect of this is making sure that you are aware of the costs you are likely to have while at college, then you can start to budget.

Getting Started

- This **Money Management Guide** offers you advice and guidance on the costs that you may have.
- It also lists the financial supports that are available to help cover those costs. The advice and common sense shared in this guide, will give you a head start in planning your finances.
- Please read this handbook, review the tips and advice and use the budget template to help plan your finances for the coming year.



Don't forget that if you want help or advice around your finances, you can email all@ucd.ie to arrange a meeting with one of the support team.

Establish Expenses

These costs are **monthly** estimates to help guide you.
You can fill in your own costs in the green box below.

Cost	Note	Your cost
Rent: €650 - €900 	Remember that you may have to pay a deposit, admin fees and cleaning costs. Sharing can be cheaper.	€
Food: €70 - €200 	Plan your meals. Cooking in bulk can save on takeaways & bought lunches. Know where your closet supermarket is.	€
Bills: €80 -€100 	Gas, electricity, phone, wifi, TV licence, or anything else not included in rent. Consider additonal costs like childcare if relevant.	€
Transport: €44 - €64 	Getting to/from lectures, nights out, trips home. Biking or walking would be cheaper & remember to get a student LEAP card.	€

Other Expenses

Remember there can be other costs to consider, unexpected or less frequent expenses.

Cost	Note	Your cost
Study Costs: €20 -€30 	Books, lab kit, stationery, printing and photocopying, field trips or placements.	€
Entertainment: €20 - €100 	Gym, sports, societies, film and music and anything else you like to do. Remember that the Student Centre Levy allows you to use the UCD gym.	€
Personal Costs €20 - €30 	Toiletries, medical expenses, clothes or shoes. You'll need to set money aside for these expenses as well.	€
Gifts & One off costs €10 - €200 	It is important to plan for birthdays and Christmas. Don't forget once off costs such as moving house or your bike needing repair work.	€



University Fees

When studying a full-time undergraduate course there are three fee costs to consider:

- **Tuition Charge**
- **Student Contribution**
- **Student Centre Levy**

The good news is that there is a **Free Fees Scheme** & undergraduate students are generally automatically eligible for “free” fees. This scheme has qualifying criteria including that you are a first time undergraduate.

Nationality and residency are also considered. Visit the [Free Fees Scheme](#) for details.

Part-time and postgraduate programmes are not covered under the Free Fees Initiative. Current UCD students can check their UView record in [SISWeb](#), which will show whether HEA Free Fees apply to your student account.



University Fees

Students who are eligible for the Free Fees Scheme are still required to pay the Student Contribution Charge and the Student Centre Levy.

Eligible students can apply to SUSI, which is Ireland's national awarding authority. SUSI can pay up to 100% of the Student Contribution charge and a monthly maintenance.

If you are eligible for both the Free Fees scheme and a full SUSI grant, you may only have to pay the Student Centre Levy every year.

The Student Levy fee provides you, as a student of UCD, the support, and facilities required to strive at life outside of the lecture theatre.



REMEMBER: If you are SUSI eligible, the grant may cover the student contribution charge depending on which grant level you are awarded but you must still pay for the student levy.

Cost of Living

Useful Resources to help establish your cost of living

- [Daft.ie rental price report 2025](#)
- [UCD Belgrove/ Merville Residence](#)
- [Money Guide Ireland](#)
- [UCD Global Cost of Living](#)
- [TU Dublin Cost of Living guide](#)
- [Zurich - The Cost of College in Ireland 2024](#)



“
This guide really helped me think about how I would pay for my time at UCD and what financial supports I could apply for
”



Financial Supports

To be eligible for these supports your household income must be below a certain threshold, please follow the links in each section for more details.

UCD has a range of financial supports to help with expenses you may have while studying.

Support	Eligibility
<u>PATH 1916 Bursary</u> This scholarship is not counted as reckonable income by SUSI	To be eligible to apply, applicants must meet financial, priority group and college entry eligibility criteria. For more details email: ucd1916bursary@ucd.ie
<u>Cothrom na Féinne Scholarship</u> This scholarship is not counted as reckonable income by SUSI	Open to students coming to college for the first time who are completing an undergraduate course and who are experiencing socio-economic barriers.



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Financial Supports

You may be eligible
for all or some supports
even if getting SUSI.

Applications open
in early September.

**Apply
Early!**

Support	Eligibility
<u>Student Support Fund</u>	This is a means-tested fund for students experiencing financial challenges due to ongoing low income. It is open to registered full or part-time students who have a household income below €50,840.
<u>Parenting Support Fund</u>	Means-tested annual funding for Irish / EU students who are parenting and have an annual income below €50,840.

Other Supports



SUSI

Ireland's national awarding authority for further and higher education grants. It offers support to eligible students in approved, full-time courses at PLC, undergraduate and postgraduate levels. For more information visit www.susi.ie



International Students

UCD has a range of supports available to International Students. This [link](#) will bring you to supports available for international students.



Access & Lifelong Learning Student Support

1 to 1 budgeting support & practical guidance is available from Access & Lifelong Learning. You can email all@ucd.ie to make an appointment or drop in to the Centre from 11am. to 12pm. Monday to Thursday. There are a range of other personal, social & disability supports offered through ALL, please visit www.ucd.ie/all/

Other Supports



UCD Student Advisers

UCD is unique within the Irish university sector in providing student support that is programme based. There are student advisers attached to every programme along with a range of other supports including health, counselling & many more. Please visit the UCD website for more info.



Social Welfare Schemes and Services

Some students may be eligible to receive a Social Welfare payment while attending college. This is a [link](#) to Social Welfare Schemes and Services.



UCD Student Health Service

UCD Student Health Service offers subsidised prices for medical appointments. Students with a valid PPS number can also avail of free contraception. Click this [link](#) for more information on the UCD Health Service.



Plan Ahead

**Are you
financially
ready?**

Top tips for successful budgeting

- Track money in & out and create a budget that works for you.
- Identify reliable sources of income. This is money you can depend on weekly or monthly.
- Reliable income includes the UCD Cothrom na Féinne Scholarships, the Student Support Fund and the SUSI grant. Some students may be eligible to receive a social welfare payment while studying such as the Back to Education Allowance.
- Be realistic about the amount of part-time work you will be able to do especially during exams. There are part-time job opportunities on campus including being part of the Access Leader Programme, working with the SU or being a UCD Campus Assistant. Check out ucdsu.ie/jobs
- Be mindful that SUSI or other scholarships, may not issue the first payment until the term has started. This means you will have to have some money to pay for a deposit on accommodation, your travel expenses & other living costs including food and materials for your course.

Sample Budget Planner

These costs are indications of the costs you may have.

DATE	01/09/2025	INCOME	€11,892
YEAR	2025/2026	EXPENSES	€11,343
		ENDING BALANCE	€48.19

INCOME	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	AMOUNT
Susi	477.88	477.88	477.88	477.88	477.88	477.88	477.88	477.88	477.88	4,292**
Student Support Fund		500								500
Scholarship			1,000		1,000					2,000
Work	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	3,600
Savings										1,500
TOTAL										11,892

EXPENSES

EXPENSE	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	AMOUNT
Rent*	923.34	923.34	923.34	923.34	923.34	923.34	923.34	923.34	923.34	7,992
Utilities	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	450
Travel	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	576
Groceries	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	1,350
Social Life	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	900
Medical Expenses			25				25			50
Books	100					75				175
Other										
TOTAL										11,493

*The rent is based on 2024 price for UCD student accommodation in the Belgrove Residence.
**This income is based on the SUSI non adjacent Band 1 rate.

NOTES

Budget Planner

Use the template below to create your budget or download a template from [UCD Money Management webpage](#).

DATE		INITIAL BALANCE	
YEAR		ENDING BALANCE	

INCOME

[illegible]

EXPENSES

[illegible]

NOTES

Advice from Students



Apply Early

Make enquiries/apply for scholarships in the first two weeks of term.



Student Offers

Take advantage of your student card, get your student leap card & look out for other student deals like at the cinema or the hairdressers.



Increase Income

Have you considered getting a part time job while you're in college? Consider being a UCD Access Leader or a UCD Campus Assistant.



Tap into supports

Make sure to avail of the services that UCD offers health, counselling, sports etc. It is important to be mindful of your physical and mental health.



Ways to Cut Costs

Cook meals at home, make lunches, refill water & bring your own tea/coffee. Use a meal planner, plan for social activities & set money aside for them.

Build Money Management Skills

Attend Workshops

Access and Lifelong Learning hold money management workshops at the beginning of the first trimester and as part of the Academic Skills series run by the Access & Lifelong Learning Centre. This is an opportunity to identify the expenses you will have and also learn about the financial supports available.



Use Resources

Read this guide, use the budget template, spending tracker & meal planner to get organised. Apply for the financial supports at the start of the first trimester & if you have any questions a member of the ALL team is here to help.

Spending Tracker

MONTH

[illegible]



Meal Planner

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	Grocery Shopping List	



Closest Supermarkets

There is a Centra on campus. Supervalu & Tesco are within walking distance of the campus, Lidl & Aldi are a short bus journey away.

Description	Address	Eircode
Tesco	The Merrion Centre Dublin 4	D04 H2H4
SuperValu	The Rise Mount Merrion	A94HP90
Lidl	Main Street Dundrum Dublin 14	D14A1K9
Aldi	Rockbrook, Sandyford	D18VW81

Use Google maps to figure out which bus to get.

FAQ's



Can I apply for a scholarship if I receive a SUSI grant ?

Yes, you can.

Can I apply for the Student Support Fund if I receive SUSI and /or a scholarship ?

Yes, you can.



When do the scholarship applications open?

Applications usually open at the beginning of the first trimester and remain open for about 3 weeks. Cothrom na Feinne Scholarships are now open - [apply here](#).



Can I get some help with a budget ?

Yes, you can meet with a member of the ALL team who will work with you to create a budget.





Further Supports

This is a guide to other supports that may be available. Further information can be found on the individual websites.

Description	Information	Contact
<u>Citizens Information</u>	Provides information on your rights and entitlements.	www.citizensinformation.ie Tel: 0818 074000
<u>Intreo Office</u>	This is a single point of contact for the Irish Public Employment Service offering advice on employment and income supports.	Website: www.gov.ie
<u>Irish Refugee Council</u>	Offers free and confidential advice and information to international protection applicants.	Website: www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie Tel: 01 764 5062



Further Supports

Description	Information	Contact
<u>MABs - Money Advice & Budgeting Service</u>	MABs is the Irish money advice service. It is a free, independent and non-judgemental service. MABS also have a useful budgeting app.	Website: www.mabs.ie MABS app: https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/mabs/id1408590141 Tel: 081807200
<u>Threshold</u>	Threshold provide free, independent, confidential advice to anyone in Ireland with tenancy problems.	Website: www.threshold.ie Tel: 1800 454 454
<u>Vincent de Paul Education Bursary Fund</u>	The SVP Bursary fund has been established to help undergraduate students stay in higher education.	Website: www.svp.ie Tel: 01 884 8200



Other Services

Description	Information	Website
<u>An Post Money App</u>	An Post Money Manager links your accounts and keeps tabs on your spending in one place.	<u>www.anpost.com</u>
<u>Back on Track</u>	Calculate your household's monthly Reasonable Living Expenses.	<u>www.backontrack.ie</u>
<u>Childcare</u>	Ireland's National Childcare Directory, includes information on available funding for childcare.	<u>www.childcare.ie</u>
<u>Minimum Essential Standard of Living (MESL)</u>	It produces detailed household budgets which establish what is needed for an acceptable minimum standard of living, for 90% of households in Ireland.	<u>www.budgeting.ie</u>

Other Services

Description	Information	Website
<u>Olio App</u>	App to share more, care more and waste less - neighbourhood sharing.	<u>https://olioex.com/en/</u>
<u>Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEAI)</u>	Sustainable energy Ireland website which has tips on how to reduce your energy use and it also has a section on grants that are available like solar electricity grants.	<u>www.seai.ie/energyacademy/</u>
<u>Too Good to Go App</u>	Another food waste app linked with businesses - The Too Good To Go app lets customers buy and collect Surprise Bags of surplus food at a great price.	<u>www.toogoodtogo.ie/en-ie</u>



Contact List

The list below contains contact details for some of the supports listed in the guide.

Name	Email	Telephone
<u>UCD Access & Lifelong Learning</u>	<u>all@ucd.ie</u>	01 716 7123
<u>Vincent de Paul</u>	<u>info@svp.ie</u>	+353 1 884 8200
<u>Cothrom na Féinne</u>	<u>all@ucd.ie</u>	01 7167123
<u>PATH 1916 Bursary</u>	<u>all@ucd.ie</u>	01 7167123
<u>SUSI</u>	<u>support@susi.ie</u>	0818 888 777



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