

Annual Quality Report (Institution) Reporting Period 2023-2024

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2023-2024

PREFACE

The **Annual Quality Report (AQR)**; formerly AIQR) forms part of Quality and Qualifications Ireland's (QQI) quality assurance (QA) framework of engagement with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The AQR provides documentary evidence of the development and evolution of each institution's internal quality system. It provides QQI with assurance that internal QA procedures have been established and are being implemented consistent with regulatory requirements.

The AQR, particularly part A, should assist with **document management** in the institutional review process and will facilitate institutions in providing review teams with procedural QA documentation in preparation for the external review process. It is an important part of the evidence base considered by external **review teams** as part of QQI's CINTE cycle of institutional reviews, demonstrating that the institution's internal QA system is aligned with QQI's Core and relevant Sector- and Topic-specific Statutory QA Guidelines, and with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area 2015 (ESG). It enables the review team to satisfy itself of compliance with these requirements for the purpose of the institutional review process.

Each AQR is **published in full on QQI's website**, providing transparency on the HEIs' assurance and enhancement of quality to external stakeholders. (As such, institutions should ensure that their submissions do not contain any data that they consider to be commercially sensitive.) Collectively, the AQRs comprise a single national repository of quality assurance practice in Irish higher education institutions.

Each year, QQI produces a synthesis report of the key themes highlighted across the AQRs, primarily arising from Part B of the reports.

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Guidelines on Completing the Report

The AQR is aligned with QQI's Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines and with the ESG (2015). A mapping of the ESG to QQI Core QA Guidelines is included in Table 1 below; the structure of Part A of this report template aligns with the first column of the table. Additional guidance on completing this template and reference material is included in each section. Institutions should adhere to this guidance and have regard to QQI Core, Sector and Topic-specific Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines. **The guide text within each section should be deleted before submission of the report.**

Submission Process and Timeline

The deadline for submission of the AQR each year is in February of the relevant year, with the call for submission sent to institutions in November of the preceding year. Once the call for submission has been made, QQI will provide access to QQI's provider portal, QHub, to the designated institution contact(s) to facilitate submission of the report. Through QHub, each institution will have access to an editable version of its AQR for the previous reporting period. This document can then be amended/updated to reflect any changes or developments that occurred during the current reporting period before submitting the final report to QQI.

Completing the AQR

- When completing the AQR template, all relevant colleagues in the institution should be consulted.
- Consider whether external audiences will be able to understand the terminology used (particularly local abbreviations and acronyms); it may be helpful to include a glossary.
- Aim to avoid duplication in the report – where information is relevant to more than one section, the first mention may be referenced in subsequent sections.
- Provide reflections on what worked well, but also what may have been tried but did not work.

Report Structure

Part A: Internal QA System

Part A of the AQR comprises a record of each institution's current QA policies and procedures and should provide links to those policies and procedures. Private HEIs may provide links to the policies and procedures approved by QQI during initial access to validation (IAV) or reengagement. It is the responsibility of each HEI to ensure before submission of the AQR that all links are correct and functional, and that the policies and procedures referred to are the most up-to-date versions available. Given that the AQR is submitted in respect of a discrete reporting period, it may be helpful for institutions to establish a SharePoint/OneDrive folder (or similar) for each reporting period that contains the current versions of their policies and procedures, and that hyperlinks to these versions of the documents be provided in the AQR

Part A is to be completed only if there have been **material** changes to QA policies and procedures during the reporting period. Such changes may include the approval and implementation of new policies or procedures, or significant amendments to existing ones.

Part B: Quality Assurance (QA) and Quality Enhancement (QE)

Part B of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**. Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Case Studies

In each reporting period, QQI may request updates on specific thematic areas or may invite the institution to submit case studies in response to specific topics. Further, institutions may include case studies to share good practice on topics of their choosing, demonstrating QA and QE in action. In formulating case studies, institutions are encouraged to reflect on and highlight areas that may be of interest to other institutions and would benefit from wider dissemination. Further guidance is provided in Part B.

Links to Reference Documents Cited in this Template¹

Legislation

- [Qualifications and Quality Assurance \(Education and Training\) Act 2012](#) (as amended)
- [Regional Technical Colleges Act 1992](#) (as amended)
- [Technological Universities Act 2018](#)
- [Universities Act 1997](#)

QQI Documents

[Statutory QA Guidelines \(QAG\)](#)

- [Core QAG](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Independent/Private Providers](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Designated Awarding Bodies](#)
- [Sector-specific QAG for Institutes of Technology](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Statutory Apprenticeship Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes](#)
- [Topic-specific QAG for Blended Learning](#)

[Other QQI Policy Documents](#)

- [QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012](#)
- [QQI's Code of Practice for Provision of Programmes of Education and Training to International Learners, 2015](#)
- [QQI Policy Restatement on Access, Transfer and Progression, 2015](#)

Other National/International References

- [European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(2015\)](#)
- [IHEQN Guidelines on Collaborative Provision](#)
- [National Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland](#)
- [Ireland's Framework of Good Practice for Research Degree Programmes, 2019](#)
- [HEA National Framework for Doctoral Education](#)
- [The Salzburg Principles](#)
- [The Salzburg II Recommendations](#)
- [SOLAS Code of Practice for Employers and Apprentices](#)
- [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#)

¹ These links will be updated as further guidance documents are published.

PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Table 1

Table 1 Mapping of ESG (2015) to QQI QA Guidelines (QAG)				
AQR Part A Section	QQI QAG Core Sub-section No	QAG Core Sub-section Title	ESG Standard No.	ESG Standard Title
1.0 – Internal QA Framework	2.1	Governance and Management of Quality	1.1	Policy for Quality Assurance
	2.2	Documented Approach to Quality Assurance		
2.0 – Programme Development and Delivery	2.3	Programmes of Education and Training	1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
4.0 – QA of Research Activities and Programmes			1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review				
5.0 – Staff Recruitment, Development and Support	2.4	Staff Recruitment, Management a Development	1.5	Teaching Staff
2.3 – Teaching, Learning and Assessment	2.5	Teaching and Learning	1.3	Student-centred Teaching, Learning and Assessment
	2.6	Assessment of Learners		
3.0 – Learner Resources and Support	2.7	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 – Information and Data Managemen	2.8	Information and Data Management	1.7	Information Management
7.0 – Public Information and Communication	2.9	Public Information and Communication	1.8	Public Information
2.0 – Programme Delivery and Development	2.10	Other Parties Involved in Educatio and Training	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review			1.2	Design and Approval of Programmes
9.0 – Details of Arrangements with Th Parties				
2.0 – Programme Development and Delivery	2.11	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review o Programmes
8.0 – Monitoring and Periodic Review			1.10	Cyclical External Quality Assurance
4.0 – QA of Research Activities and Programmes	QAG for Providers of Research Degree Programmes			

Introduction and Overview of Institution

This is the AQR for University College Dublin (UCD) for the reporting period **1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024**.

The AQR is submitted by Bronwyn Molony, UCD Director of Quality and has been considered by the [Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee \(ACQEC\)](#) and the [University Management Team \(UMT\)](#).

The Institution

UCD traces its origins to the foundation of the Catholic University of Ireland (CUI) by John Henry Newman in 1854. UCD is a leading research-intensive university and is Ireland's largest university. There are currently nearly 40,000 students, including over 2,000 PhD students, over 5,000 international students in overseas operations, and over 11,000 international students on the main UCD campus, with 151 nationalities in total represented in the student body. There are over 2,000 Academic staff (FTEs) and over 2,200 Professional Staff (FTEs), with 37% international staff. More than 12,000 awards are conferred each year. UCD plays a key role in the national system of higher education and in the wider Irish society, and is distinguished by its scale, its diversity of programmes, the quality of its graduates, its focus on research and innovation, and its global engagement.

UCD is globally recognised for its excellence in teaching and learning with 43 world-ranked subjects and four in the top 50 ([World University Ranking by Subject](#)). The [QS World University Rankings](#) place the University among the best higher education institutions in the world, and UCD is ranked 126 in the world in the latest rankings.

The University's main Dublin campus at Belfield occupies an estate of 133 hectares and offers world-leading facilities. These include the [UCD O'Brien Centre for Science](#), [UCD Sutherland School of Law](#), [UCD Veterinary School](#), [UCD Lochlann Quinn School of Business](#), [UCD Student Centre](#), [UCD Village Residences](#), [UCD Sport](#) and the [UCD Library](#). UCD's [Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School](#) is located on the Blackrock campus, and the [Lyon's Research Farm](#) provides teaching and research facilities for the Schools of Agriculture and Food Science and Veterinary Medicine.

Through its national and international outreach and its links with alumni, government, industry and society in Ireland, UCD continues to respond to the ongoing and future global challenges. UCD combines its distinctively Irish outlook with its powerful global impact.

As the University has approached the end of its UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future, work commenced in 2024 to develop the new [UCD Strategy to 2030](#). The key aim of the new strategy is for UCD to be a university of influence, impact and excitement, making a clear positive difference to the lives of its students, to Ireland and to the wider world. The development of the UCD strategy in 2024 has been a collaborative process that draws on the great ideas from every part of the community around the future direction for the University. The process has included the appointment of a new Vice-President for Strategy and External Engagement in November 2023, and an extensive consultation process which has included World Cafés, Town Hall meetings, Open Feedback Platforms, Student Engagements, College, School and Units Engagements, and External Engagements. The new UCD Strategy to 2030 will be launched in November 2024.

Further information about UCD is available at <https://www.ucd.ie>.

Process for Development and Approval of the AQR

This Report has been developed by the UCD Quality Office, following consultation with and input from relevant

stakeholders from across the University. Part A: Internal QA System of the report has been updated to reflect current quality assurance policies and procedures and ensure UCD's alignment with regulatory requirements. Part B: Internal QA System of the report has been developed to reflect updates and changes within the reporting period pertaining to internal quality assurance implementation and developments, institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and impacts including activities undertaken in respect of academic integrity, IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period and Case Studies.

The draft report was considered by the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC) at its meeting on 5 December 2024 and by the University Management Team (UMT) at its meeting on 17 December 2024. Feedback received following both meetings led to further updates, and the final version of the report was approved by the ACQEC at its meeting of 5 February 2025 and submitted to QQI by its deadline of 28 February. The final version of the report will also be noted at the UMT meeting of 18 March.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

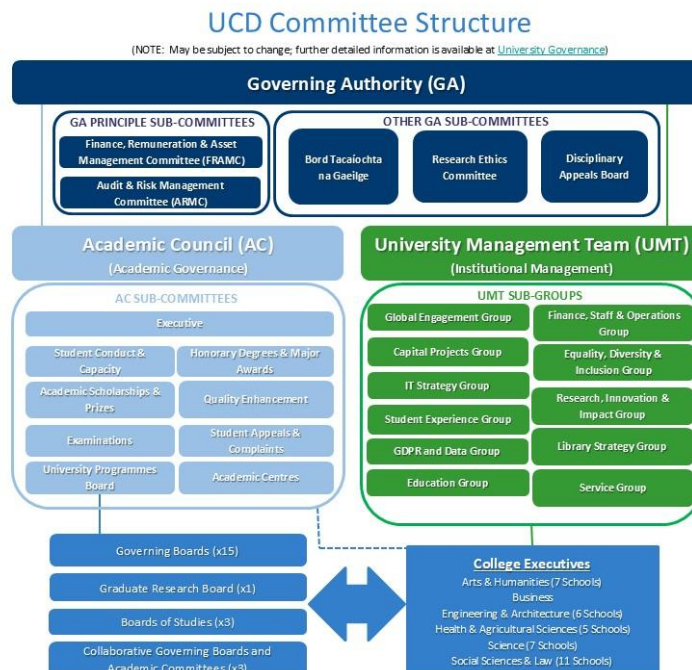
Overarching Governance and Management Structures for Quality Assurance

Within UCD there are systems in place to oversee the education and training, research, and related activity of the institution to assure and enhance the quality of provision. The institutional governance arrangements ensure that operational objectives are aligned with its strategy, and that quality assurance is embedded throughout all levels of the governance infrastructure.

Governance and oversight on quality assurance activity is the responsibility of the UCD Governing Authority as required under the *Universities Act 1997* (Section 35). The primary function of the UCD Governing Authority is to guide the strategic direction of the University and it is the principal decision-making body in the University.

Academic Council (UCD Statute 25, Chapter 6, Section 2) has responsibility for advising Governing Authority on procedures for quality assurance aimed at improving the quality of education and related activity. Responsibility for academic oversight includes directing the educational matters of the University such as curriculum, education provision, academic policy and regulatory oversight through approval of Academic Regulations and student codes, guidelines, procedures and academic policies. Academic Council also advises and makes recommendations to the University on academic institutional and sectoral initiatives and strategic priorities such as the education strategy, Higher Education Authority (HEA) policy and other institutional and national initiatives. Academic Council oversees an academic governance framework which is made up of several sub-committees and it has a key role in setting the annual work programme and reporting requirements for its sub-committees, and it includes responsibility for quality oversight within its functions. The terms of reference for these committees are published on the Governance and Management Committees section of the UCD website and an outline of the UCD Governance Committee Structure is set-out in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1 – UCD Governance Committee Structure



The [Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee \(ACQEC\)](#) fosters a culture of evaluation and reflection and provides oversight of the university's quality processes on behalf of Academic Council. The [ACQEC Terms of Reference](#) outline the committee's responsibilities in the following areas:

- Governance
- Strategic Planning
- Quality Assurance and Standards
- Strategic Enhancement relating to the Quality Assurance Framework
- Engagement and Compliance with Legislation and External Quality Assurance Frameworks

The [University Management Team](#) is responsible for strategic, financial and management decision-making and there are a number of groups which support and report to UMT, including:

- Education Group
- Student Experience Group
- Research, Innovation and Impact Group
- Global Engagement Group
- Capital Projects Group
- Finance, Staff and Operations Group
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group
- IT Strategy Group
- Library Strategy Group
- GDPR and Data Group
- Service Group

The University takes a multi-layered approach to quality assurance and quality enhancement through key decision-making points at University, College and School levels in relation to quality assurance of both its academic and support functions. There are a wide number of roles at senior management level within the University which play a role in monitoring and enhancing quality in their respective domains, including:

- UCD President and the President's Office
- UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs and the Office of the Registrar and Deputy President (which includes the Dean of Students, Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Dean of Graduate Studies)
- Chief Financial Officer/Bursar
- Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact
- Vice-President for Global Engagement
- Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Vice-President for Sustainability
- Vice-President for Strategy and External Engagement
- Chief People Officer and Director of SIRC, Legal Services and Transformation

At College and School level there are several key roles through which oversight and management (including resourcing) of the quality of teaching, learning, research and student experience is managed, including:

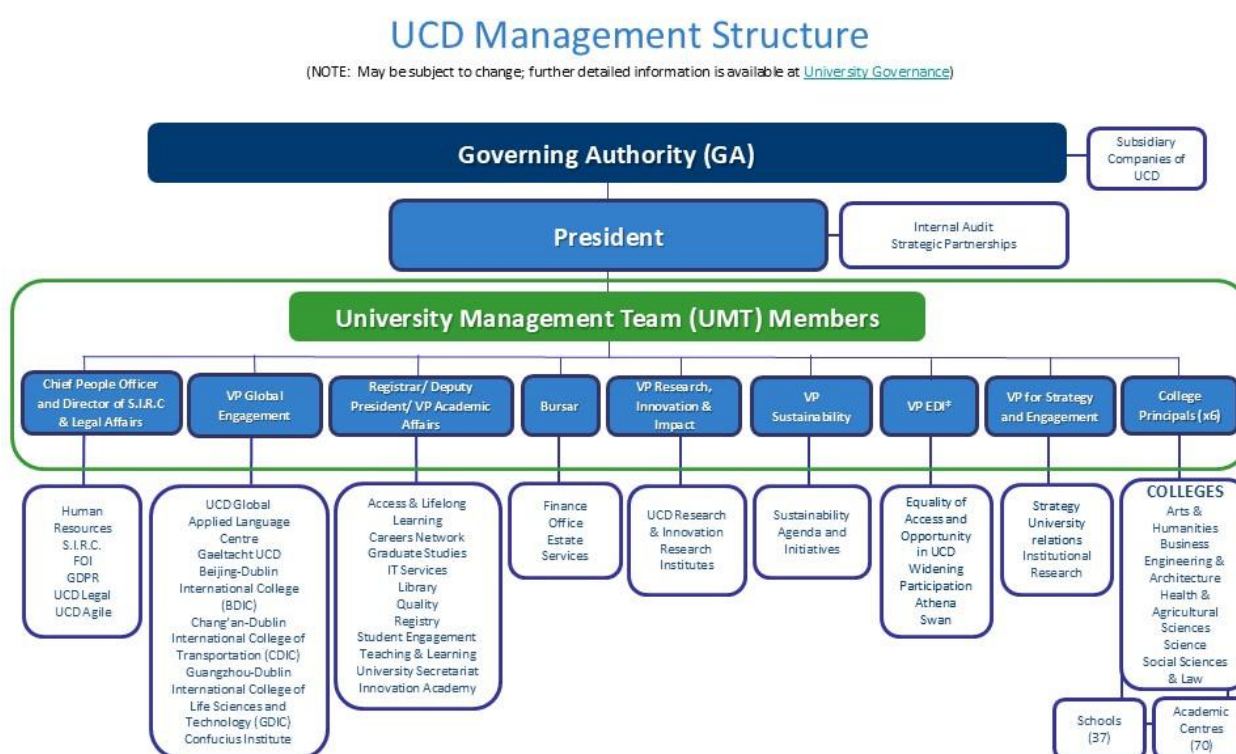
- College Principals
- Vice-Principals for Teaching and Learning
- Vice-Principals for Internationalisation

- Vice-Principals for Research and Innovation
- Vice-Principals for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- College Finance Managers
- College Office Directors
- HR Partners
- Programme Deans/Associate Deans/Heads of Governing Boards
- Heads of School
- Subject Area Heads
- Module Co-ordinators

Reporting to the UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the UCD Director of Quality oversees a formal quality process and seven-year cycle of reviews, and has responsibility for developing, implementing and promoting quality across the University, working with stakeholders to ensure that a culture of enhancement is embedded in all activities of the University.

The UCD Management Structure is set-out in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2 – UCD Management Structure



*Role currently held by one of the College Principals

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures within the Institution related to the Institution's Strategy

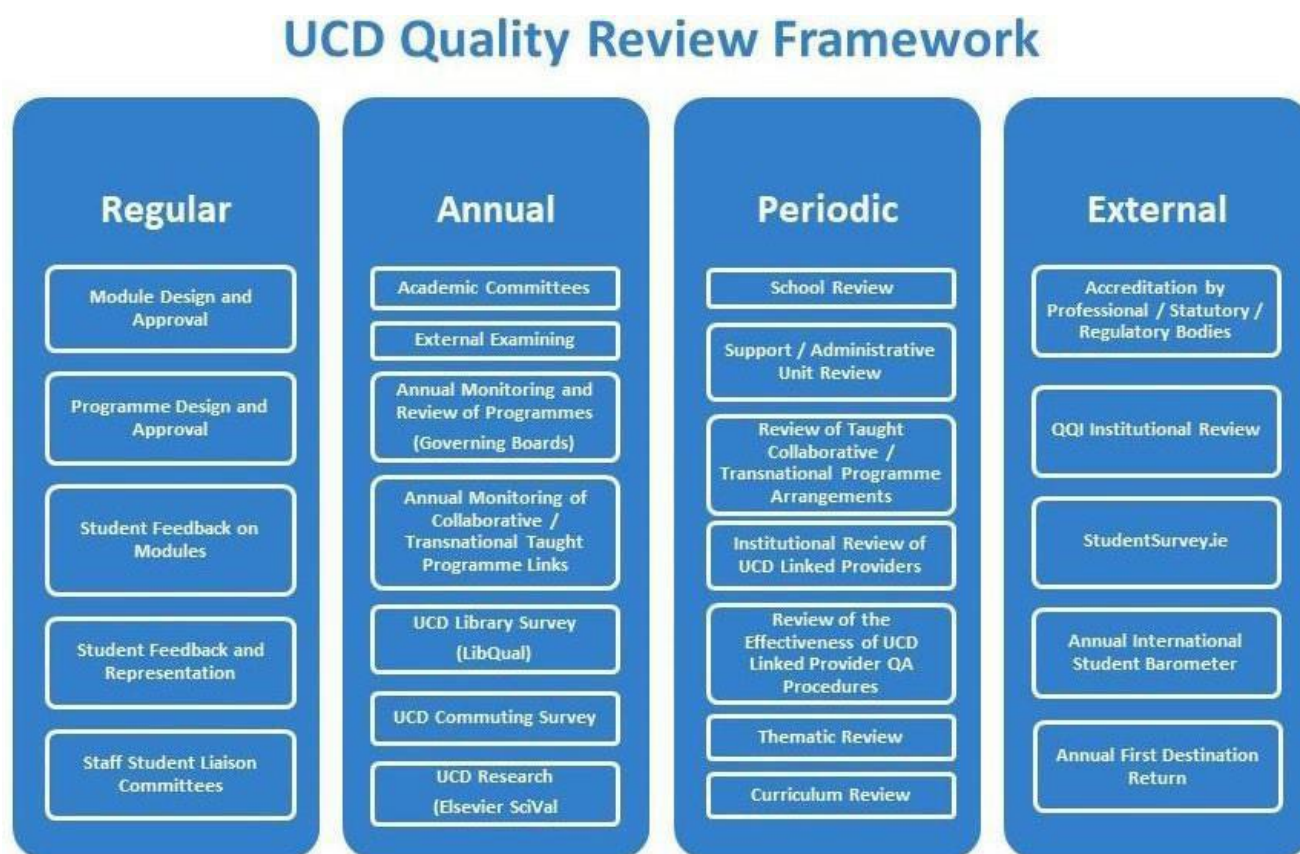
The seventh Governing Authority of UCD, which commenced its term of office on 7 November 2023, is comprised of a total membership of 19: 10 external members that include an external Chair (1), External Members (6) and Ministerial Nominees (3) and 9 internal members that include the Chief Officer/President (1), Academic Staff (3), Professional, Technical and Research Staff (2) and Student Members (3). Further information is provided at [UCD Governing Authority](#).

The UCD Governing Authority is responsible for approving the University's strategic development plan as required under Irish Statute. It also has a responsibility, in consultation with Academic Council, to ensure that procedures for quality assurance are in place to improve the quality of education and related services provided by the University. The University operates an integrated system for quality assurance and enhancement which contributes to the achievement of the [UCD Strategy](#). UCD's policies and procedures support its strategic ambitions.

The aim of the [UCD Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Policy](#) is to enhance the effectiveness of the institution's core activities of learning, teaching and research and their effective management. This policy is also applicable to UCD's collaborative and transnational arrangements, its Linked Providers (referred to as Recognised Colleges within UCD) and its professional units supported by appropriate guidelines and business processes. The policy addresses all areas of university activity taking cognisance of their contribution to, and alignment with, the University's strategic goals. It also recognises the University's commitment to integrating Equality, Diversity and Inclusion into its policies and decision-making structures.

The [UCD Quality Framework](#) is supported by a combination of university-wide policies and procedures ([University Secretariat – Document Library](#)) and a seven-year schedule of Periodic Quality Review of all activity that is enhancement focused, led by the UCD Director of Quality and supported by the [UCD Quality Office](#). UCD's approach to quality assurance and enhancement is underpinned by, inter alia, the *Universities Act, 1997*, the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (2012)*; the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance (2015)*; and informed by the *QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines* as well as other QQI related guidance. UCD engages actively on an ongoing basis with QQI on policy development and other sectoral developments.

Figure 3 – UCD Quality Framework



The University places importance and value on student involvement in its processes and seeks to promote student engagement in quality activity wherever appropriate.

Overview of the System for Quality Assuring Research Activity

The system for quality assuring research activity, which includes governance, design, managing, resourcing, monitoring and review of research activities across the institution, is overseen by the Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact. Research, innovation and impact are central to the UCD strategy, and the [Office of the Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact](#) provides support for researchers and scholars and is responsible for developing and meeting UCD's strategic objectives for research, specifically for:

- Governance and development of research in UCD
- Development and implementation of research policy and ethics
- Supporting a positive research culture
- Strategic management of major research programmes and institutes
- Development and implementation of research impact and engaged research
- Research support services (including support for proposals and grants)
- External partnerships (including academic, government and industry partnerships)
- Infrastructure development
- Commercialisation of research through NovaUCD

The [UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future](#) sets out an objective to 'increase the quality, quantity, and impact of our research scholarship and innovation', and outlines four new major themes for UCD:

- Creating a sustainable global society
- Transforming through digital technology
- Building a healthy world
- Empowering humanity

The UCD Strategy for Research, Innovation and Impact to 2024, [Shaping the Future](#), draws on the active involvement of all units of the University. Actions include:

- A major programme of initiatives in support of a positive research culture, promoting excellence in what and how it is delivered.
- Targeted support for cross-cutting research activity at scale, where researchers come together from across disciplines to address major national and global challenges.
- A design review of the research services and the implementation of improved post award support for research grants.
- Significant expansion of online support for research and innovation, including a new integrated system for end-to-end management of research proposals and grants, called the Research Funding Solution, the [research impact toolkit](#), [Promote Your Research website](#) and other existing support is available through the [UCD Research and Innovation Services Portal](#)
- Further investment by UCD in internal research funding schemes, including the launch of the next phase of the EQUIP programme, and continuation of the HEA-funded scheme of costed extensions for research graduate students and researchers whose research was interrupted by the pandemic.
- The Output-Based Research Support Scheme (OBRSS) was redesigned in 2021 to comply with UCD's Statement on the Responsible Use of Research Metrics (RURM).
- A new research leadership development programme called '[THRIVE - Leadership in Research](#)'.
- Expansion of research and innovation facilities, including a new AgTech Innovation Centre at Lyons Farm and a strong research presence within major capital developments on the Belfield campus.

Both the [UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future](#) and the UCD Strategy for Research, Innovation and Impact to 2024, [Shaping the Future](#), have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are used at University, College and School levels to monitor progress. The new [UCD Strategy to 2030](#), which will be launched in November 2024, will likewise place research and innovation at the core of the University's activities.

Support for the research activities of the University is provided by the UCD Research and Innovation team. This is enabled through the [UCD Research & Innovation Services Portal](#), which provides an online portal of resources for UCD staff.

The [UCD Research Finance Office](#) also provides support for the financial administration of, and quality review process for the wide variety of research activities that University staff are engaged in. The main functions of the office are:

- Overall financial administration of all university research activity in the Post-Award stage;
- Ensuring that research expenditure is compliant with both the funding agencies' terms and conditions and the University's own financial policies and procedures;
- Assessment of VAT status of research accounts;
- Financial Review of Grant Registration Documents;
- Overall financial control of the University research accounts;
- Financial enquiries from researchers relating to research accounts;
- Collection of research balances owed to the University;
- Assisting researchers in the preparation of cost statements/statements of expenditure;
- Management of financial audits conducted by funding agencies.

The internal periodic review process for schools incorporates an assessment of the quality of the research activity within the school review process. It includes an assessment of the school's research strategy and management of research activity, research outputs, how research links with teaching activity, assessing the research performance with regard to research productivity, research income and recruiting and supporting doctoral students and research staff. 'Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity' is a dedicated section in both the School Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and in the Review Group Report. To assist schools in their preparation for Periodic Quality Review, the [UCD Research Analytics and Impact Team](#) (part of the Office of the Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact), in conjunction with the [UCD Library](#) and [UCD Institutional Research](#), provides support to schools, such as the provision of data analytics, and works with schools to develop appropriate metrics for monitoring at all stages of the review process.

A Research Assessment process is available to schools as a resource to assist those who wish to benchmark their research quality internationally and inform their school strategic planning. The research assessment framework does not form part of the formal UCD quality assurance process but is an additional resource for schools.

UCD Research and Innovation is also subject to Periodic Quality Review. The most recent [Review Group Report](#) and the associated [Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\)](#) are published on the UCD Quality Office website under [Reports and Publications](#).

For more information on postgraduate and postdoctoral research training, see Section 4: QA of Research Activities and Programmes.

Representation of Learners and External Stakeholders in the Governance and Management of Quality

As indicated in the previous section the Governing Authority has an external Chair and 53% external members, and 16% student members, representing a broad range of stakeholders.

The [UCD Student Charter](#) outlines roles and responsibilities and expectations of the UCD community. The University works in partnership with the [Students' Union](#) to ensure that students are represented at all levels of the University and facilitated in engaging as part of the University community. Students are represented on many of the University's senior committees by [Students' Union Sabbatical Officers](#) and other elected student representatives such as the [College Student Officers](#). This includes the University's most senior academic and institutional governing bodies: Academic Council, Governing Authority and many of the University Management Team sub-committees. This includes three Students' Union representatives who are *ex officio* members of the [Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee](#), a sub-committee of Academic Council. [Class Reps](#) are elected at the beginning of each academic year by their peers to represent different courses, schools, and stages across the UCD student journey. They are trained to ensure that the student voice is at the heart of life in UCD, both inside and outside the classroom. Class reps also sit on UCDSU Union Council (which meets every 2 weeks during term) to represent the views of their classmates and help to steer Union policy.

The [UCD Widening Participation Committee](#) provides the formal mechanism to oversee, monitor and promote the University's achievement of a diverse and inclusive student community, including the 'University for All' initiative. The UCD Widening Participation Committee is composed of 31 representatives from the University's various programme boards, policy and professional units, and students.

Over a third of UCD's incoming undergraduates are from underrepresented groups. The [University for All](#) initiative

is sponsored by the UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and supported and led by the UCD Widening Participation Committee and UCD Access and Lifelong Learning. Critically, University for All is a whole-institution, evidence-based approach to mainstreaming inclusion in UCD, ensuring that all students feel welcome, belong and are valued. Grounded in the University strategy, University for All recognises, promotes and values the breadth of talent, experience and contribution of all students, and creates an inclusive educational experience for all. Reflecting both the UCD and EDI strategies, the University for All initiative embeds inclusion across the University further developing UCD's capacity to attract, retain and develop our diverse student population. This work relies on engagement and collaboration with students.

The University's leadership in [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#), under the umbrella of the University for All initiative, provides a framework that benefits all students and fosters an inclusive educational environment by promoting access and inclusion across classrooms, facilities and student supports. UCD offers three digital badges to staff; the first of these is the Universal Design in Teaching and Learning, which has been integrated in the Teaching and Learning programme. All staff are encouraged to take the introductory one-hour badge, and the newest badge is focused on Beyond the Classroom, promoting professional development for professional staff and an emphasis on student support. The [Faculty Partnership Programme](#) is designed to support and accelerate the implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) throughout the University. By funding academics to be Faculty Partners for University for All projects, the University has fostered a strong cohort of committed staff who can assist in getting real progress to occur – for example by mentoring other staff to help them obtain their UDL digital badge.

Each year, [Access Leaders](#) are selected to represent UCD Access and Lifelong Learning. Access Leaders' first-hand understanding of UCD's diverse entry pathways and of the journey students have taken means they are uniquely placed to help incoming students adjust to their new environment. Their presence, voice, and own experiences help reassure newer students that their goals are achievable. Access Leaders are involved in a variety of activities across the campus and beyond. These range from assisting at events such as the annual Access and Lifelong Learning Symposium and ALL Student Welcome, in implementing the University for All Initiative, as well as with diverse outreach activities where they meet potential students who would like to know more about UCD. Access Leaders have even represented UCD at committee level and national conferences.

The University has put in place a [Student Experience Group \(SEG\)](#) that reports to the University Management Team (UMT). This group articulates key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the student experience at UCD and links its activities to supporting the development of the student experience by providing high-level oversight and co-ordination of student supports. The group leads the development and operationalization of University activities, processes and procedures related to the student experience, including, for example, the development of support for [Mental Health and Wellbeing in UCD](#). The Athletic Union Council joins the Students' Union and the Societies Council to make up the Student Activities Committee. This is the "umbrella body" which oversees the allocation of capitation funds to the various areas of student activities, including sport and it also provides an opportunity for clubs and societies, as well as the Students' Union to air their views on matters relevant to student life.

The [UMT Student Experience Group](#) has introduced a Student Representation and Partnership Agreement and [Student Partnership Forum](#). This Agreement expands and strengthens the University's commitment to student partnership outlined in the Student Charter and sets out a shared vision for student representation. It includes principles to guide a shared approach and outlines the responsibilities of both the University and the Students' Union in relation to student representation. The purpose of the Forum is to provide a platform to advance, support and operationalise the student partnership.

Student feedback is an important mechanism for the University. It helps identify opportunities to improve and

enhance student services and engagement and plays an important role in quality assurance processes. Students are among the wide range of stakeholders that Review Groups meet during periodic quality reviews of schools and professional units. Formal survey mechanisms include [StudentSurvey.ie](#) or University student feedback, or through liaising with student representatives, such as Class Reps, who participate in staff-student committees, so that they can represent their views or concerns at relevant school or programme meetings and other staff/student fora. UCD operates an anonymous, online student feedback system to ensure that students are given a voice in the module enhancement process as part of UCD's evidence-based quality assurance of modules. The [UCD Student Feedback system](#) provides students with an opportunity to voice their opinion and provide constructive feedback to the University. All feedback received is confidential and student details are never shared with the school or teaching staff. Some examples of annual student surveys include but are not limited to the [Start of Term Survey](#), [StudentSurvey.ie](#) (national), the [EDI Survey](#) and the UCD Commuting Survey.

In relation to additional external stakeholder input in the governance and management of quality, several schools and colleges throughout the University have established Advisory Boards which are typically comprised of individuals based outside of the University and in some instances, outside of Ireland. These Advisory Boards provide input and guidance to the respective areas in relation to programme development, student recruitment and research. Some examples of these include the [UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School Irish Advisory Board](#) and the 3D-NET research project [External Advisory Boards](#).

A significant number of UCD programmes, schools and institutes are also accredited by national and/or international Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). This external accreditation complements the various internal quality assurance and enhancement processes, as articulated through the [UCD Quality Framework](#). The [UCD Policy for Internal Reporting on Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body \(PSRB\) Accreditation of UCD Programmes and Units](#) ensures that the University quality assures its PSRB provision. The policy enables the consideration of the outcomes of professional accreditation exercises by Governing Boards, the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC) and Periodic Quality Review Groups. The policy enables the provision of support in relation to the preparation for professional accreditation reviews and Periodic Quality Reviews.

Links to Relevant Governance Policies and Procedures/Regulations

A full list of the University's policies, procedures and guidelines is available on the [University Secretariat – Document Library](#).

1.2 Linked Providers, Collaborative and Transnational Provision

Collaborative Provision of Programmes

UCD engages in a wide range of collaborative arrangements, including access/feeder, articulation, exchange, franchise, joint degree awards and off-campus delivery, and these are subject to the appropriate quality assurance policies and procedures for the development, approval, implementation, monitoring and review of university programmes. A number of institution-wide decision-making fora are involved in quality assurance procedures for engagement with third parties for the provision of programmes, including the [University Management Team \(UMT\)](#), [UMT Global Engagement Group](#), [University Programmes Board \(UPB\)](#), [Academic Council](#) and its relevant sub-committees.

The University has a [Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework \(PDARF\)](#) which provides guidance on establishing new programmes and changes to programmes. Further information regarding this is provided under Section 2.0 Programme Development and Delivery. A dedicated set of resources is in place that are specific to collaborative provision. These include guidance on various topics from initiating a new programme, to development of the programme, as well as its implementation, monitoring and review phases. UCD's framework for collaborative provision is benchmarked against international best practice and comparator institutions, and complies with relevant policies and guidelines.

Transnational Delivery of Programmes

The [Vice-President for Global Engagement](#) is responsible for the development and implementation of UCD's Global Engagement Strategy. The current strategy – [UCD Global Engagement Strategy 2021-2024](#) – continues to build on UCD's collective achievements. It focuses on delivering two key objectives, firstly to achieve *A Global Experience for All* and secondly to showcase *UCD's Global Impact*.

The [UCD Office of Global Engagement](#) comprises UCD Global, UCD Centre for English and Global Languages, UCD Irish Institute for Chinese Studies, UCD Confucius Institute and Gaeltacht UCD. Led by the Vice-President for Global Engagement, it supports UCD's aim to bring the best of the world to Ireland and the best of Ireland, including its distinct cultures, to the world. Within [UCD Global](#), the [UCD Global Partnerships Team](#) provides guidance and support to University staff on the development and management of global partnerships.

The [International Student Recruitment Team](#) has responsibility for international student recruitment and their support, managing inbound and outbound student mobility and the provision of international elements of the student experience. UCD also has a network of [Global Centres](#) that support its activities.

The [UMT Global Engagement Group \(UMT-GEG\)](#) is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to the [University Management Team \(UMT\)](#) regarding the strategic case for new international partnerships and reviewing existing memorandums of agreement. Following UMT approval, the [University Programmes Board \(UPB\)](#) separately considers the programme elements. Typically, new partnership proposals are initiated at a Governance Board or school level and are subject to a due diligence assessment. A Memorandum of Agreement setting out partner responsibilities is in place for each collaborative taught programme arrangement.

Quality Assurance arrangements for major collaborative taught programme partnerships are subject to the same processes that apply at UCD, including analysis of student progression, student evaluation of modules, student consultative forums, programme monitoring, and external examiner feedback. UCD also recognises the challenge and potential risks associated with transnational provision. Major collaborative arrangements that deliver UCD

taught programmes are, therefore, required to undergo [Periodic Quality Review of Collaborative Programme Partnerships](#). The procedures regarding the internal approval, monitoring and review of collaborative taught provision are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Periodic Quality Review of these arrangements is undertaken within a seven-year cycle and provides another key quality assurance mechanism by which UCD assures itself of the quality of its awards delivered through the collaborative partnerships. An evaluation of the student experience is undertaken as part of this programme review. A similar approach is undertaken to the internal Periodic Quality Review of Schools and Professional Units i.e. Self-Assessment Report, on-site visit by a peer Review Group; Review Group Report and recommendations for enhancement; a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), and a Progress Report that monitors progress implementation of the QIP. These also cover all modules and programmes that a School contributes to or delivers.

Linked Providers

The University has published [Procedures for the Approval of UCD Linked Provider Quality Assurance Procedures](#) and draft [Guidelines for Linked Provider Institutional Review](#), which provides oversight of the quality assurance and enhancement of the provision delivered by UCD's partner institutions. This requires the Linked Provider to outline the quality assurance framework in place within their institution, its governance, policies and procedures, and its quality monitoring and review mechanisms. These are reviewed by the University as required under its statutory requirements as a Designated Awarding Body (*Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*) by i) approving the quality assurance procedures of those partner institutions; and ii) undertaking an institutional review of the effectiveness of those quality assurance procedures. The procedures include provision for the withdrawal of approval.

UCD has two Linked Providers: the [National College of Art and Design \(NCAD\)](#) and the [Institute of Banking \(IoB\)](#). UCD has formal agreements with each Linked Provider, and each Linked Provider is separately reviewed prior to the renewal of the partnership, typically every seven years. The [UCD Governing Authority](#) is required to approve the establishment of a new Linked Provider, and UCD has clear governance arrangements for Linked Providers that are aligned with the wider University structures. For example, Linked Providers are represented on the [University Programmes Board \(UPB\)](#). UCD, in its role as Designated Awarding Body (DAB) has approved the quality assurance procedures for NCAD and IOB and undertakes periodic institutional review of the effectiveness of their quality procedures.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

Academic Governance

The roles and responsibilities of Academic Council are defined by University Statute which requires it to oversee the University's academic activity. This includes an advisory role on the University's education strategy and other academic initiatives. The Academic Council also maintains regulatory oversight on academic policies, regulations and the Student Code. It is also responsible for maintaining the integrity of the curriculum including oversight of programme development and approval. It also oversees the academic governance framework which is made up of several sub-committees and has a key role in setting the annual work programme and reporting requirements for its subcommittees.

Under the delegated authority of Academic Council, the Governing Boards are responsible for overseeing the development of a Programme Specification. In accordance with the University's regulations, a Governing Board's responsibilities in relation to the programmes it governs, and the students registered to these programmes, include the following:

- Ensuring the implementation of University strategy, policies, and procedures;
- Design, development, regulation, delivery, and quality assurance and enhancement;
- Assuring outcomes-based emphasis in programme design and assessment;
- Ensuring that assessment strategy is appropriate and measures achievement of programme outcomes;
- Approving the structure and content of the programme and any special regulations relating to the programme;
- Oversight of the admission of students;
- Oversight of internships;
- Oversight of study abroad opportunities;
- Adjudication on student applications for leave of absence and transfer between programmes;
- Academic welfare of the students registered to the programmes and identifying students whose academic welfare is of concern;
- Consideration of extenuating circumstances and approval of appropriate actions;
- Progression of students within the programme;
- Where a student's academic performance is deemed to be unacceptable by the Governing Board, the Governing Board will follow policies and procedures approved by Academic Council;
- Overseeing and enhancing the academic quality of programmes and the student learning experience; and
- Where applicable, ensuring appropriate supervisory arrangements are in place for research students.

Governing Boards appoint a member of faculty as Programme Director, reporting to the Chair of the Governing Board, for each taught programme it governs.

The University Programmes Board (UPB) reviews, approves and monitors the design, delivery, assessment and quality of the educational programmes within its remit and provides University level oversight for all programmes governed by Taught Programme Boards, the Graduate Research Board, Joint Academic Programme Boards and Boards of Studies established by the University.

The University Management Team – Education Group (UMT-EG) provides high-level oversight and coordination of the development and implementation of the University's education strategy. It reports to UMT with progress updates and advises on oversight and review of existing education activity and proposals for new education activity within UCD.

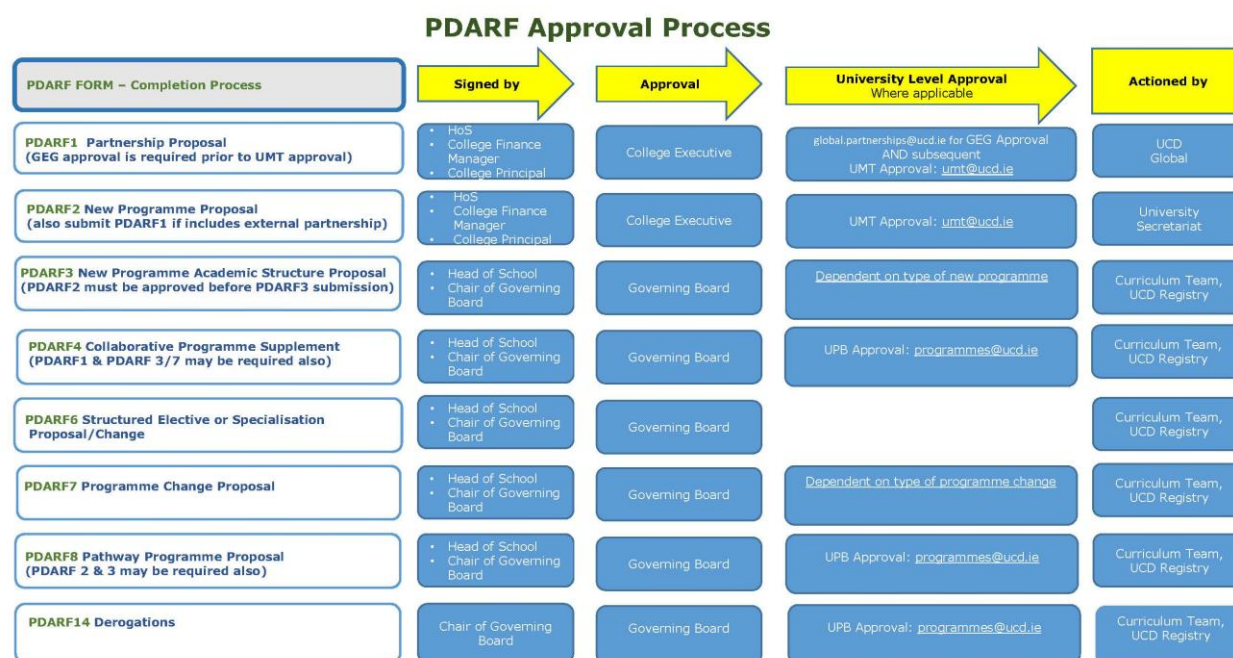
Academic Regulations and Policies

The procedures and requirements relating to programme design are contained in the [Academic Regulations](#), which is a high level, overarching framework governing the University's educational offerings and which define the parameters within which programmes may be designed and developed. This includes support for a modularised and trimesterised curriculum, utilising the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) for all programmes. All of the degree award programmes offered by UCD are mapped to the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and Irish Register of Qualifications through articulation of learning outcomes and their alignment with the relevant NFQ level. This includes international and transnational programmes with an award on the NFQ.

Process Operationalisation and Quality Assurance

The [Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework \(PDARF\)](#) sets out the formal institutional approval process by which new programmes and programme changes are developed, approved and implemented through the University's academic governance structures, including [Academic Council](#) and its relevant sub-committees.

Figure 4 – Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework (PDARF) Flowchart



The [Curriculum Team](#) in Customer and Curriculum Operations (a unit of UCD Registry) provides support and advice to staff and faculty on [curriculum management](#) and [programme approval](#). The [Curriculum College Liaisons](#) who are part of the Curriculum Team are the key point of contact for staff and faculty and they are responsible for the management and enhancement of the Curriculum Management System of curricular information at module, major and programme level. They manage the [Current Students Course Search](#) which enables users to see current undergraduate curriculum information as well as an archive from previous academic years. The team is also responsible for the creation of programmes and majors on foot of formal approval processes (outlined in Figure 4), the assignment of module codes on behalf of schools and the set-up of new registration terms. The remit of the team includes support for the implementation of [Academic Regulations](#) as they relate to programmes, majors and

modules, and for the University's Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework (PDARF) process.

Extensive support for programme and module design and enhancement is available through [UCD Teaching and Learning](#), including accredited courses, workshops, self-help online guides, [resources](#) and customised support for programme teams. A six-stage [curriculum design process](#) is advocated which addresses issues of programme context, support for staff and students, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The wide range of dedicated projects, resources and tools supported by and available through [UCD Teaching and Learning](#), which help to underpin programme design, include:

- Module and Programme Design
- Assessment and Feedback
- Technology Enhanced Learning
- Teaching Toolkit
- Review and Research your Teaching
- Inclusive and Intercultural Learning

[Universal Design in UCD](#) is the core component of the University for All initiative in UCD. Using the framework and principles of Universal Design it is possible to create an inclusive educational environment to benefit all students. There are several resources and training opportunities available to staff involved in teaching, support, technical, policy or any other role. Individuals can complete the short [Introduction to Universal Design in UCD](#) training on Brightspace to examine how Universal Design impacts all work in the University. Over 400 UCD colleagues have completed the [Digital Badge for Universal Design in Teaching and Learning](#).

Professional or experiential learning continues to be an integral component of many academic programmes in UCD. During the reporting period, UCD maintained robust procedures to ensure the quality and consistency of internships and work-based learning experiences, guided by the [Policy on Internships/Work Practice Experience: Guidelines and Good Practice](#). This policy provides a framework to support ongoing activities and facilitate the development of future experiential learning opportunities. UCD activities include professional clinical practice placements, industry-based internships, and fieldwork experiences that constitute planned and assessed components of academic programmes, ensuring that students receive credit for their learning. This approach promotes parity and alignment across the University, maintaining consistent quality assurance practices. Oversight of these programmes, including those with apprenticeship or work-based learning components, remains the responsibility of the relevant [Governing Board](#), which review and approve arrangements to ensure compliance with academic standards. In September 2023, the UCD Academic Council Executive Committee (ACEC) approved a recommendation to establish a Work Integrated Learning Implementation Group (WIL IG) to oversee and embed a comprehensive WIL Framework in UCD. The WIL IG is due to formally convene in September 2024, with preparatory works having taken place during the reporting period, focusing on defining the strategic priorities, identifying common opportunities and foundational elements needed to support the framework's successful implementation. These efforts laid the groundwork for a cohesive and unified approach to Work Integrated Learning, ensuring alignment with UCD's strategic objectives and facilitating collaborative engagement among internal and external stakeholders.

[UCD Global](#) also offers extensive information and support for students who are interested in learning abroad during their studies. UCD has over 400 university exchange partners in more than 50 countries across the globe. These provide a wide range of opportunities for our students to experience studying within Europe and outside of Europe. UCD also welcomes incoming students from partner universities each year, adding to the vibrant international student community on the Dublin campus.

Learners also have an opportunity to upskill in highly specialised areas with short, flexible, industry-aligned courses that are fully accredited through the [UCD Micro-Credentials](#). Developed at a sectoral level through Human

Capital Initiative (HCI) funding they aim to address many of the barriers to life-long learning and enable learners to successfully balance further study with work and other commitments. When a learner completes a UCD micro-credential they acquire university credit (ECTS).

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

Recruitment, Pre-Entry and Admission

UCD admits students to programmes from NFQ level 6 to level 10 and at various stages within these programmes. The [Admissions Policy](#) outlines the University's framework on how it admits students, who has responsibility to do so, the overarching general principles for admission, and the policies and procedures related to the Admissions policy. Co-dependent related policies and procedures are in place to align with the Admissions Policy and include:

- Academic Regulations
- Admissions Privacy Statement
- Applicant Appeals
- Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Relevant Offence Risk Assessment Policy
- Student (Garda) Vetting
- Student Fitness to Practice Policy
- Taught Programme Transfer and Re-Admissions Policy
- Child Protection Policy and Guidelines
- Entry requirements criteria for EU/EFTYA/UK Applicants

UCD Registry - Admissions has overall responsibility, acting under delegated authority from Academic Council, for the admission of students to the University and for ensuring compliance with published entry criteria and enrolment plans. For undergraduate Level 8 national/EU/EFTA/UK students' application is via the Central Applications Office (CAO). The Admissions team reviews and/or assesses all non-standard applicants (e.g. mature, EU examinations). In particular, there is a growing volume of EU applications.

For graduate entry, UCD Registry - Admissions manages the [UCD online application system](#) which, to date, is used primarily for applicants to graduate taught programmes. It is planned that all graduate research programmes will apply via the application system in the near future. In addition to graduate applicants, application for certificate and diploma programmes, international (non-EU students) for undergraduate programmes, exchange and occasional students (e.g. Erasmus), transfer applicants and applications for modular study/microcredentials are also made via the online application system. Decisions on graduate applications are made by the relevant school/college or UCD Global. UCD Registry - Admissions together with UCD Global audits application decisions based on established and published entry criteria and manages the checking of qualifications. UCD Registry - Admissions also carries out a process to verify applicants' documents and qualifications.

UCD Registry - Admissions, together with UCD Student Recruitment and UCD Global, provides comprehensive information and advice to prospective, current, and other stakeholders on the admissions process. Specific programme requirements are published on the [UCD Admissions](#), [UCD Student Recruitment \(MyUCD\)](#) and [UCD Global](#) websites. Prospectuses for undergraduate and graduate programmes are also available with digital versions hosted on the [MyUCD](#) and [Graduate Admissions](#) websites and all programmes are included in the course catalogue which is managed by Student Recruitment.

For undergraduate recruitment & admissions, the [MyUCD portal](#) provides extensive information including:

- Admissions process
- UCD Course Catalogue
- CAO application
- Summer schools
- Open evenings and career fairs
- UCD Open Day
- UCD Prospectus
- UCD Horizons (the modular and credit-based structure for taught degrees at UCD)
- UCD Peer to Peer chat platform
- UCD Schools Liaison and Campus Tour Programme
- Dedicated resources for Guidance Counsellors and Parents
- Information on Campus Life
- Virtual Campus Tour, supported by programme information videos

UCD Global provides information about [study at UCD for international students](#) (non-EU) which includes details regarding pre-entry, [entry requirements](#) and the UCD student experience.

For graduate applicants, there is extensive information for prospective students on the [UCD Graduate Studies website](#) and in the Course Catalogue on taught and research programmes that includes advice and guidance on the application process and coming to UCD, Campus Life (Virtual Campus Tour, Open Days and events, international student supports, accommodation) the student experience and future careers.

As part of the University's commitment to widen student participation, ensure equitable access to education, and to create a diverse and inclusive community on campus, the '[University for All](#)' initiative is a whole-institution, evidence-based approach to mainstreaming inclusion in UCD, ensuring that all students feel welcome, belong and are valued. Developed in response to the [National Policy for Equity of Access To Higher Education](#) to "integrate the principle of equity of access more fully into the everyday life of the HEIs so that it permeates all faculties and departments, and is not marginalised as the responsibility of the designated access office" (HEA, 2015, p.25).

The University has systematically enhanced and mainstreamed supplemental entry routes to all programmes, including, Higher Education Access Route (HEAR), Disability Access Route to Education (DARE), Quality and Qualifications Ireland Further Education and Training (QQI-FET), Mature, Graduate Entry, University Access, and Open Learning. Each programme has set targets for the individual access pathways. Unassigned places on any programme are reallocated within the access quota to maximise participation of under-represented groups. Under-represented groups are targeted through UCD's outreach programme, through linked DEIS schools, Further Education Colleges, and community groups. The University has a widening participation target of 33% which includes entrants via the above pathways and other students identified post-admission.

The [UCD Widening Participation Committee](#) provides the formal mechanism to oversee, monitor and promote the University's achievement of a '[University for All](#)'. UCD's Widening Participation Committee plays a key role in supporting the University to recognise, promote and value diversity, foster the spirit of inclusion, appreciate the breadth of talent, experience, and contribution of all students, and strive to remove the barriers to access, participation and success. The Committee reports to the [UMT Education Group \(UMT-EG\)](#). Membership is drawn from all Governing Boards, Policy, and Support Services, in addition to Student Access Leaders and the UCD Students' Union. The Committee is provided with policy advice, expertise and operational support by [UCD Access & Lifelong Learning](#) and the Committee has a three-year term with meetings taking place five times per year.

UCD has put in place a range of [financial supports and scholarships](#), offering the largest scholarship programme in Ireland. The [UCD Cothrom Na Féinne \(meaning justice and equality\) Scholarship Programme](#) is the overarching brand for UCD scholarships for access students and is now Ireland's largest access scholarship scheme at undergraduate level. These scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate motivation to pursue higher education and offer leadership in their communities while overcoming significant socio-economic and educational barriers. These awards are named after UCD's commitment and historical connection with justice and equality, or in common parlance - level the playing field. The Cothrom na Féinne scholarships awards are made to students who experience significant financial, social, and educational barriers.

UCD has also been accredited as a University of Sanctuary since 2018. The [Sanctuary Programme](#) is offered to students who are asylum seekers/refugees.

Progression

Following admission to UCD, there is extensive information and support available to students to assist them in their transition to university life and their programme. This is available through the [New Students](#) website and it includes a broad range of advice and guidance, as well as detailed information about peer mentoring, [Orientation Week](#) events and schedule which is compulsory for all new students. Detailed and specialised information is provided to undergraduate students, graduate students, and international students.

For current students, there is a dedicated [UCD Current Students](#) website. This includes information on registration, term dates, fees, assessment, and student services with a view to providing a 'one-stop-shop', holistic and student-centred set of resources. Support for international learners is provided through [UCD Global](#) and [UCD Student Services and Support](#).

A peer mentoring system - [Peer Mentors at UCD](#) - is in place to support new students transition to university. Additional supports are provided by Student Advisors, College and School Offices.

A full list of the University's policies, procedures and guidelines, including in relation to student access, transfer and progression, is available on the [University Secretariat – Document Library](#).

Recognition

UCD is responsible for making its own awards as a Designated Awarding Body. UCD's academic awards are linked to the [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#), and on the Irish Register of Qualifications (IRQ) which in turn is matched to the [European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#). An agreed process is in place to provide UCD programme and award information to QQI who manage the IRQ – this typically takes place in November each year and UCD has submitted the information to QQI by the relevant deadlines. Each NFQ level is based on nationally agreed standards of knowledge, skill and competence. This enables clarity on the qualifications held or on the current programme of study, provides confidence that NFQ qualifications are quality assured, and enables a comparison of Irish qualifications with national and overseas qualifications. It supports student and graduate mobility, a recognition of prior learning, both formal and informal. The list of UCD awards are aligned to an NFQ level and their ECTS credit values are included in the [Academic Regulations](#) (see Figures 5a and 5b below).

Figure 5a – UCD Academic Regulation 2.5, University Awards Table – Taught Programmes

	Award Type	Credit Range	Minimum UCD Level Requirements	GPA Award Classification
NFQ Level 6				Greater than or equal to 3.68 Distinction
Certificate of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	5-15		
Diploma of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	20-30		
NFQ Level 7				
Certificate of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	5-15		Greater than or equal to 2.48 and less than 3.68 Merit
Diploma of Continuing Education	Special Purpose	20-30		
Professional Certificate	Special Purpose	5-15		
Professional Diploma	Special Purpose	20-30		
University Certificate	Minor Award	20-40	20 credits at UCD Level 1 or above	
University Diploma	Minor Award	60-120	45 credits at UCD Level 1 or above	
NFQ Level 8				
Certificate of Continuing Professional Development	Supplemental	5-10		
Professional Certificate	Special Purpose	5-15		
Professional Diploma	Special Purpose	20-30		
University Certificate	Minor Award	20-40	20 credits at UCD Level 3 or above	
Higher Diploma	Major Award	60-120	30 credits at UCD Level 3 or above	
Honours Bachelor's Degree	Major Award	180-360	40 credits at Level 3 or above	Greater than or equal to 3.68 First class honours Greater than or equal to 3.08 and less than 3.68 Second class honours, Grade I Greater than or equal to 2.48 and less than 3.08 Second class honours, Grade II Greater than or equal to 2.00 and less than 2.48 Pass
NFQ Level 9				
Certificate of Continuing Professional Development	Supplemental	5-10		Distinction Merit Pass As above
Professional Certificate	Special Purpose	5-15		
Professional Diploma	Special Purpose	20-30		
Graduate Certificate	Minor Award	30-40	20 credits at Level 4 or above	Greater than or equal to 3.68
Graduate Diploma	Major Award	60-80	45 credits at Level 4 or above	First class honours Greater than or equal to 3.08 and less than 3.68
Master's Degree / Professional Master's Degree	Major Award	90 - 180	70 credits at Level 4 or above	Second class honours, Grade I Greater than or equal to 2.48 and less than 3.08 Second class honours, Grade II Greater than or equal to 2.00 and less than 2.48 Pass

Figure 5b – UCD Academic Regulation 7.2, University Awards Table – Research Programmes

	Award Type	NFQ Level	Registration Period	Taught Credit Requirements
Research Master's Degree	Major Award	NFQ Level 9	3-6 trimesters (FT) 6-12 trimesters (PT)	No taught programme requirement
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD)	Major Award	NFQ Level 10	9-12 trimesters (FT) 15 – 18 trimesters (PT)	Minimum 30 taught credits
Doctor of Medicine Degree (MD)	Major Award	NFQ Level 9	6 trimesters (FT) 12 trimesters (PT)	Maximum 20 taught credits
Doctor of Governance Degree (DGov)	Major Award	NFQ Level 10	12-18 trimesters (PT)	Minimum 90 taught credits
Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation Degree (DVMS)	Major Award	NFQ Level 10	9-12 trimesters (FT)	Minimum 20 taught credits
Doctor of Educational Psychology Degree (DEdPsych)	Major Award	NFQ Level 10	9 trimesters (FT) 15 trimesters (PT)	Minimum 60 taught credits
Doctor of Clinical Psychology Degree (DPsychSc)	Major Award	NFQ Level 10	9 trimesters (FT)	Minimum 60 taught credits

Certification

Academic Regulations (regulations 2.5 and 7.2) outline the awards made by the University. The University confers major awards, minor awards, special purpose awards and supplemental awards and provides ECTS credits for micro-credentials. All learning achievements are measured and described in terms of acquiring knowledge, skills, and competencies. Each award requires an accumulation of credits as per Figures 5a and 5b above. Programme Offices ensure degree compliance for all students prior to degree award. Awards are classified based on an award Grade Point Average (GPA), with the exception of grade neutral awards. The award GPA is determined by the Programme Examination Board applying one of the four Award GPA Rules articulated in the Academic Regulations.

Following completion of a UCD programme of study, the UCD Conferring Unit manages the University process for awarding degrees including the graduation ceremony. A meeting of the University to confer degrees takes place at the conferring ceremony designated for the degree immediately after passing the degree examinations.

The Student Desk in UCD also provides an integrated service for online provision of all official documents required by students such as academic statements, certificate of attendance, statement of results, academic transcripts, diploma supplement. Summary information on Student Desk interactions in 2023-24 is included below:



Student Desk Contact Channels Activity for Academic Year 2023/2024

EMAIL

NO. OF EMAILS LOGGED - 35,896

The Student Desk team use a 'Connector', a purpose-built form, which provides information on frequently asked topics. If students don't get the answer they need they can submit a query and chat with a team member over email.



CALL CENTRE

NO. OF CALLS LOGGED - 22,781

The Student Desk call centre is open 5 days a week, all year around and supports students, parents and the university community with all manner of queries.

IN-PERSON VISITS

NO. OF VISITS LOGGED - 15,976

Open 5 days a week students are welcome to drop into the Student Desk space in the Tierney building on the Belfield campus and talk to a team member in person.



AI CHATBOT

No. of conversations - 11,260

Providing out of hours assistance for students, Rua is the UCD Registry chatbot. Powered by AI, the chatbot is available worldwide, 24/7.

DOCUMENTS

NO. OF ORDERS PROCESSED - 2,401

The Student Desk provides online document ordering service to alumni where they can order their transcript and receive it printed on secure paper within 5 working days.



Data has been taken from UniShare the Student Desk's CRM where all interactions with students are recorded.

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

All programmes leading to awards in the University are overseen by a Taught Programme Board, Graduate Research Board, Board of Studies, or Joint Academic Programme Board (collectively referred to as Governing Boards), which are responsible for approval of programmes (including their National Framework of Qualifications level), monitoring the overall performance and progression of students registered to programmes and ensuring their academic welfare. Governing Boards are established by [Academic Council](#).

Extensive support for programme and module design and enhancement, including the development and implementation of programme learning outcomes, is available through [UCD Teaching and Learning](#), including accredited courses, workshops, self-help online guides, [resources](#) and customised support for programme teams. A six-stage [curriculum design process](#) is advocated which addresses issues of programme context, supports for staff and students, learning outcomes and assessment, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The wide range of dedicated projects, resources and tools supported by and available through UCD Teaching and Learning, which help to underpin programme design, include:

- Module and Programme Design
- Assessment and Feedback
- Technology Enhanced Learning
- Teaching Toolkit
- Review and Research your Teaching
- Inclusive and Intercultural Learning

Furthermore, the University has developed an online system to support curriculum teams to engage in periodic curriculum review and enhancement activities. Developed in UCD InfoHub, this system incorporates a repository for **Programme Vision and Values** statement and **Programme Outcomes** for all taught programmes and an interactive curriculum mapping tool to facilitate programme teams to examine alignment of individual modules to programme outcomes; understand the nature and amount of assessment across a programme stage; and ensure coherence within and between programme stages. The tool provides visual maps to aid programme teams to review and enhance an aspect of their programme or the entire programme on a periodic basis. Guidelines, including discussion prompts and resources, are provided by [UCD Teaching and Learning](#) to support programme teams to undertake a curriculum mapping and enhancement process.

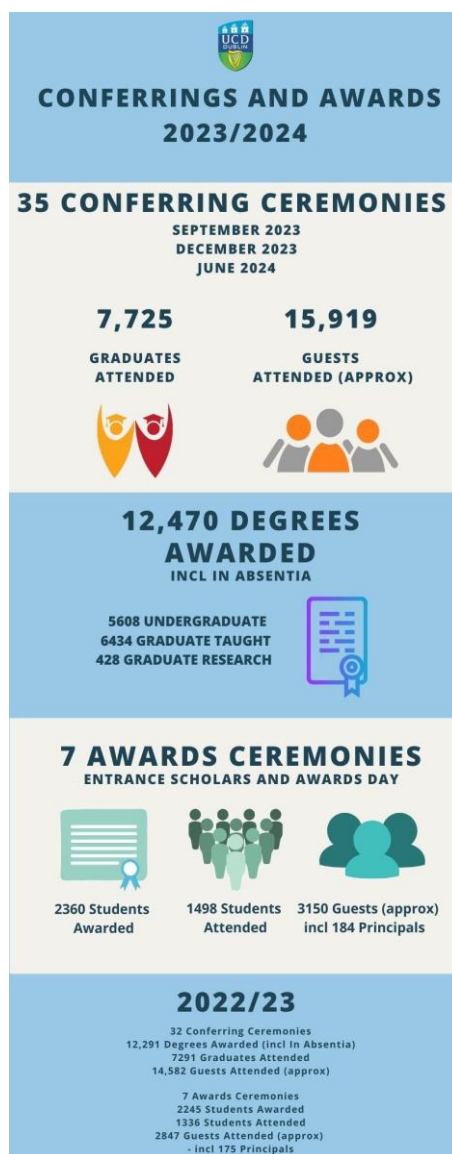
The quality of the learning experience at UCD is monitored on an on-going basis, primarily by the Governing Boards, on delegated authority from Academic Council. The Governing Board prepares annual academic operational programme plans in consultation with the Head of School, College Principal and College Executive. Agreed plans are subject to review/approval at the University level for their alignment to the programme and University strategic plans. The Governing Board is also required to prepare strategic academic programme plans, at such intervals as the University may require. The Governing Board shall also, within the resources made available by the University and the relevant College, ensure that appropriate supports are in place to meet the welfare, pastoral and academic administrative needs of students registered to the programmes. Module development is the responsibility of individual schools.

The University policy on the [Role of the Head of Subject](#) outlines the role of Subject Head in supporting the Head of School by providing academic leadership in the relevant Subject area. The Head of Subject is, for the duration of their appointment, *primus inter pares*, the academic leader for the subject within the University. The role is normally held by a senior member of academic staff from within the relevant School.

The measurement and assurance of the achievement of learning outcomes by learners is principally mediated through the system of assessment in UCD. Section 4 of the [Academic Regulations](#) outlines the regulations with

reference to assessment, grading, and feedback. Colleges, schools and UCD Registry ensure that information for students on all aspects of their assessment is explicit, transparent, targeted towards students, up-to-date, readily available, and emphasised at the outset of a module to guide student learning. The principles that underpin assessment in UCD aim to promote consistency across the University, and parity in student experience of assessment; and act as an important reference point for setting and maintaining UCD's academic standards. These academic standards are also assured through input from Extern Examiners, student surveys including the Start of Term Survey, StudentSurvey.ie (national) and student Module Feedback surveys. The Review Group Reports for each School (and Linked Provider) within the University as part of the Periodic Quality Review Process also include a dedicated section on the Quality of Programmes and the Student Learning Experience, which ensures that school (and Linked Provider) approaches to ensuring that learners acquire the relevant standard of knowledge, skill and competence are reviewed and evaluated externally.

Customer and Curriculum Operations, a Unit within UCD Registry, provides direct support to staff, faculty, and students. This unit oversees several essential administrative functions in the University, including curriculum management, programme approval, and the handling of official documents. Within this unit, two teams - the Student Desk and the Conferring Team - gather analytics for planning and quality assessment. Information on Conferring and Awards in 2023-24 is highlighted below:



2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The mission of [UCD Teaching and Learning](#) is to foster a culture of continuous enhancement of teaching and learning - supporting staff to deliver inclusive, innovative and research-informed teaching that leads to engaging and meaningful learning experiences for all UCD students. The Unit has six high-level objectives:

- Lead and contribute to strategic educational initiatives in response to current institutional needs and priorities.
- Provide a suite of professional development offerings for those who teach and support student learning.
- Recognise and reward those who demonstrate excellence in teaching and supporting student learning.
- Promote, learn from and extend the reach of exemplary and innovative teaching practices.
- Support evidence-based approaches to the enhancement of teaching and learning through research and scholarship.
- Expand and maintain networks of leaders and enthusiasts of teaching and learning to extend and shape practice across the university community.

Areas of current focus for UCD Teaching and Learning, agreed in consultation with University Senior Management, include:

- [Academic advising](#) to support student success.
- [Online assessment](#) and [academic integrity](#).
- Designing [inclusive assessment and feedback](#).

UCD Teaching and Learning reports to the [UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs](#). The [Teaching and Learning team](#) adopts an evidence-based enhancement approach to all aspects of its work. The development of the Assessment for Inclusion framework in 2023-24 is a good example of this evidence-based approach in action. This was an action research project undertaken by member of the Teaching and Learning team. The framework is the result of interviews with UCD students and staff and external experts, workshops and iterative cycles of research; the comprehensive framework is designed for staff, working in partnership with their students, to:

- Think about the meaning of 'inclusion', 'equity', 'fairness' and 'justice' in the context of assessment (assessment literacy)
- Explore the purposes and benefits of adopting an Assessment for Inclusion approach
- Consider the practical use of the Assessment for Inclusion design principles
- Reflect on your professional values, identity and emotions in relation to Assessment for Inclusion
- Support dialogue between key stakeholders, in particular between students, staff and the wider institution
- Enhance your understanding of the processes for change related to Assessment for Inclusion practices and policies at module and programme levels

The UCD Teaching and Learning team worked with an illustrator/cartoonist to visualise the framework and key insights from the data to create meaningful artwork as a means of sharing the framework and engaging others with the core ideas.

The UCD Teaching and Learning team works in partnership with Colleges, Schools, and academic administrative units, liaising closely with the Vice-Principals for Teaching and Learning (College-level), Associate Deans and School Heads of Teaching and Programme Directors. UCD Teaching and Learning provides an extensive number of online [resources](#) and also facilitates the sharing of knowledge and expertise across the institution through an online [Teaching and Learning Community](#). The Teaching and Learning Community (hosted in Google Spaces) is for sharing and discussing any information relating to Teaching and Learning. Members of this community can

post information, resources, reports, and notifications across a range of topics. It complements face-to-face events, workshops and lunch-time fora organised by UCD Teaching and Learning.

[Teaching and Learning Conversations \(TLC\)](#) is a new initiative hosted by the unit for the first time in 2023-24. It aims to promote meaningful conversations on key topics in teaching and learning across the university community. The series is designed to facilitate opportunities where colleagues and students come together to understand and explore their various perspectives and experiences of teaching and learning. It provides in-person and online opportunities to connect with others through conversation to find common solutions to shared problems. Each academic year, the team will select a theme for exploration via the TLC Series. The theme will be informed by queries from those who teach and support learning across UCD while more broadly responding to changes happening within the higher education landscape. The chosen theme in 2023-24 was GenAI in Education.

UCD Teaching and Learning also provides a [Teaching Toolkit](#), which is designed to offer immediate, intermediate and long-term opportunities for developing teaching practice; the core aim is to provide practical advice and resources to all faculty, regardless of their longevity, discipline or class size. The Teaching Toolkit Thursdays series was initiated in 2023-24, offering lunchtime webinars to explore popular topics from the UCD Teaching and Learning website. These sessions are open to all and take the format of a short presentation followed by open conversation and sharing with colleagues. The presentation element is recorded and shared via the units YouTube channel. There are also resources available for [Technology Enhanced Learning](#), which is an inclusive term which supports a spectrum of learning delivery modes; from face-to-face/web-enhanced to learning that is delivered as part of a blended/hybrid approach to that which is delivered fully online.

UCD Teaching and Learning also issues a regular Teaching and Learning Newsletter to all faculty and staff which highlights events and developments relating to the enhancement of teaching and learning within the University, including the dissemination of outputs from enhancement projects and examples of teaching practice from across the University. UCD Teaching and Learning also hosts an annual Teaching and Learning Symposium.

UCD offers a wide variety of assessment opportunities to students underpinned by the following principles:

- Clear and high standards are communicated through assessment tasks that address learning outcomes and motivate students, and address learning outcomes. Assignments should be challenging, but achievable, and reflect appropriate work and effort. Assessment requirements should be clearly understood. Summative assessment load should be the minimum required to sample the students' learning.
- Assessment is central to curriculum design and learning where assessment guides and encourages effective approaches to learning; where assessment is valid and reliably measures expected programme outcomes and where grading defines and protects academic standards.
- Alignment between expected programme outcomes and assessment where each school has a clear policy that guides assessment and where module assessment is integrated into programme assessment.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: All students shall have equal opportunity to effectively demonstrate their learning and be assessed by different, appropriate and applicable methods across their programme, subject or major. UCD upholds the principle of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Assessment ensuring that assessment does not bear more heavily against any group and no bias, either conscious or unconscious impacts upon the assessment process.
- Variety of assessment approaches: A variety of methods should be used so that there is not over reliance on specific methods of assessment, tasks assess generic skills as well as subject specific knowledge and there is a clear progression in the complexity and demands of assessment requirements over the sequential levels of modules and stage programme outcomes. A variety of assessment approaches will mitigate against inherent biases that may disadvantage particular student groups.

- A comprehensive assessment design framework which operates at programme level; takes into account student and staff workloads when scheduling and designing assessment tasks and provides students with defined periods for examination remediation opportunities and the resubmission of assignments; where assessment tasks are balanced between formative, summative and self-assessment approaches; and where grades are calculated and reported on the basis of clearly articulated programme outcomes and criteria for levels of achievement.

UCD Assessment (a unit within UCD Registry), in consultation with the Academic Council Committee on Examinations (ACCE), will be commencing a comprehensive review of the published UCD Assessment Code of Practice in the academic year 2024-25. This procedural document draws from the Academic Regulations and other assessment related policies to provide guidance to staff around the general principles, responsibilities, norms and standards required to ensure appropriate conduct of assessment in the University. The University has also adopted a Framework for Programme Assessment and Feedback to support programme teams to take a programmatic approach to addressing the well-documented challenges associated with diversity of assessment and assessment load in modular curricula.

There is also a defined Grade Approvals Process which articulates the process by which the University formally reviews, audits and ratifies its grades and degree awards each trimester.

The process includes:

- Grading and grade entry;
- School review, audit and assurance of the grades for the modules coordinated by the School, and students individual performance in the modules coordinated by the School;
- Programme review, audit and assurance of students individual performance on the programmes governed by Programme; consideration and approval of grades submitted by Schools; progression; and recommendation of degree awards and honours classifications;
- Publication of grades and degree awards to students;
- The responsibilities of faculty and staff with respect to grading and grade approvals, and functions of examination boards and committees, are defined in the Academic Regulations. All grading activities are expected to be delivered in accordance with the principles set out in the Academic Regulations and the Assessment Code of Practice.

Subject Extern Examiners provide an important consultative and advisory function in supporting and quality assuring subjects' development that contribute to UCD programmes as well as the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment practices. Subject Extern Examiners play a vital role in assisting the University in fulfilling its obligations to assure the academic standards and integrity of its awards and form part of the University's broader system of quality assurance and enhancement. Subject Extern Examiners are appointed to subjects at undergraduate or graduate level, as appropriate. Each subject on the University's Subject Register shall have an Extern Examiner. Some subjects may require more than one Subject Examiner while some Subject Extern Examiners may be given responsibility for more than one subject. The key principles that underpin the role of the Subject Extern Examiner are academic expertise, quality, equity, enhancement, objectivity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

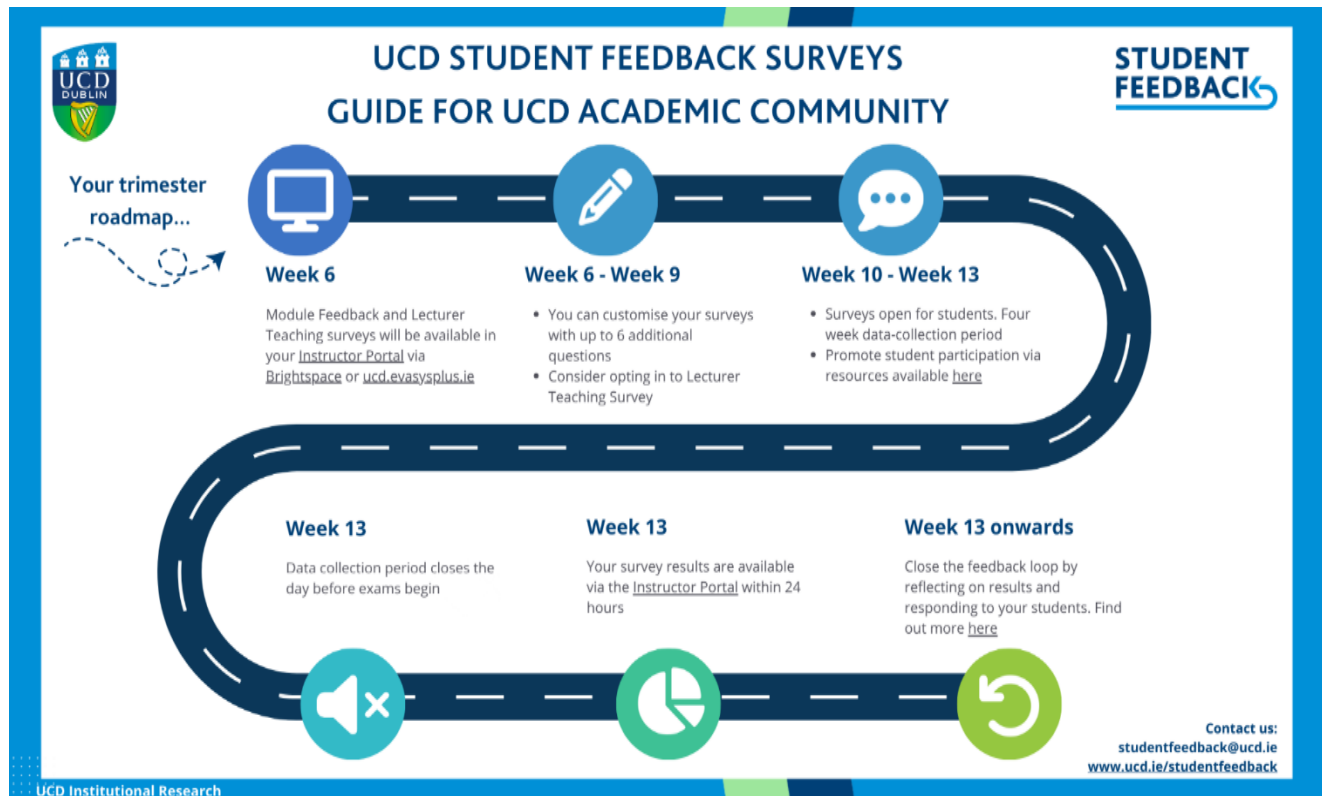
UCD Assessment also publishes online information and guidance for staff and information for Special Extern Examiners (Research Degrees).

A key element of the teaching and learning process is feedback. Students receive feedback on their work within 20 working days of submission as stipulated by the Academic Regulations. Students have the opportunity to offer feedback on their module experience at the end of each trimester. UCD Teaching and Learning provides further

guidance on [Assessment and Feedback](#).

UCD operates a confidential, online [Student Feedback](#) system to ensure that students are given a voice in the module enhancement process as part of UCD's evidence-based quality assurance of educational offerings. See Figure 6 below for information on the UCD Student Feedback Surveys.

Figure 6 – UCD Student Feedback Surveys



Academic Integrity and Freedom Among Staff and Students

Academic integrity is fundamental to teaching and learning. UCD has developed a number of standards and guidelines to support students, ensuring that academic integrity is at the heart of what they do in their assignments and assessments. [UCD Student Engagement, Conduct, Complaints and Appeals](#) has published a [Student Guide to the Plagiarism Policy](#) and the UCD Library has also published a [Library Guide on Academic Integrity – Referencing, Citation & Avoiding Plagiarism](#) as well as offering an [Academic Integrity Course - Brightspace Explore Module](#) which provides a comprehensive basic understanding of academic integrity to all students. The interactive course teaches students the principles of citing, referencing, and avoiding plagiarism. The focus is on the principles and includes examples of different referencing and citation styles. It is composed of an interactive tutorial, a quiz, and a certificate. The course is available to all students for the duration of their study in UCD. UCD Teaching and Learning has developed resources to assist faculty in supporting the development of academic integrity literacy in the context of assessment. The resource focuses on developing an understanding of academic integrity, ethical practice and academic misconduct; assessment design approaches to support academic integrity; and specific advice on different forms of academic misconduct. This comprehensive resources, with embedded links to University policies and regulations relating to academic integrity, is presented in the form of a website at [How Do I Support My Students' Academic Integrity?](#)

Academic integrity is one of the three key principles of the [UCD Student Code of Conduct](#). According to the

[Student Plagiarism Policy](#), "Academic Integrity is one of the core values of the UCD Education Strategy and includes adherence to the highest ethical and academic standards. Students, researchers and staff achieve academic integrity through sound academic writing, avoiding plagiarism, and use of appropriate referencing and citation". This policy reflects the legislative changes brought in by the *Amendment Act 2019 to the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*. The University also works closely with QQI on its developing and supporting a sectoral approach on academic integrity.

Academic integrity requires every member of the academic community at UCD to act ethically, honestly and fairly. A lack of academic integrity in any sphere of university activity undermines the credibility and value of all that UCD does and of the awards that it makes to students. Every member of the UCD community shares responsibility for upholding the academic integrity values that underpin our scholarly practice in teaching, research, and student learning; activities that underpin the foundations of our intellectual community at University College Dublin.

In May 2024, the Academic Council approved the new [Academic Integrity Policy](#). This policy has been developed through consultation with faculty, students and the wider community of stakeholders in the University. It reflects current research and best practice nationally and internationally in academic integrity in higher education. In particular, this policy is informed by relevant national legislation¹ and is consistent with the principles and guidelines produced by the [National Academic Integrity Network \(NAIN\)](#), including the [National Principle and Common Lexicon of Terms](#) for academic integrity (NAIN, 2021); the [National Academic Integrity Guidelines](#) (NAIN, 2021) and the [National Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management](#) (NAIN, 2023).

The [Brightspace Virtual Learning Environment \(VLE\)](#) is used to support teaching, learning and assessment activities, facilitating communications between lecturers and students, guidance and resources to help students to navigate the module, a space for discussion, reflection, formative assessment and feedback. [Ouriginal](#) is UCD's originality/similarity checking or plagiarism prevention tool in Brightspace. In February 2024, UCD piloted Turnitin's [iThenticate](#). iThenticate is an originality checking tool which is targeted at researchers and academics publishing articles. It compares submissions to premium scholarly journals, books, law reviews, patents, dissertations & theses, pre-prints, conference proceedings, and internet pages.

The University has a [Statement on Academic Freedom](#) which has been endorsed by Academic Council and Governing Authority of UCD, and is contained in Chapter 1, Statute 25 of the University Statutes.

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

Library, Student Social and Study Facilities

UCD Library supports overall University strategy in the areas of student experience, education, research, innovation, and promulgation of Irish cultural heritage. The Library plays a critical role in the life of the University supporting students, researchers and faculty.

UCD Library provides services from five libraries across two campuses, and online. Across these sites, the facilities and services provided include in-person information and support services, access to collections, study spaces, laptop loans and group study facilities. Library spaces support a range of learning activities. These include the two 'Hub' spaces on Level 1 of the James Joyce Library which are social learning spaces that enable students to engage in interactive learning activities. The Writing Centre and the Maths Support Centre are both located inside the James Joyce Library envelope, connecting students to a range of learning services and supports in one place. The available space across the five UCD Library sites is identified below:

Figure 7 – UCD Library space

	No. of seats	Singles Study Rooms (research students)	Group Study /PBL Rooms	Social Learning Spaces	Postgraduate Research Centre
James Joyce Library	2,369	38	5	306	39
Jan-Aug 2023*	1,500				
Health Sciences	434	0	5	7	0
Blackrock Library	153	0	2	14	0
Veterinary Library	121	0	1	13	0
Richview Library	92	0	2	3	0

*Closure of Level 3 for refurbishment

In 2023, UCD Library launched new services for students including lending noise cancelling headphones and free charging facilities for laptops and mobile phones. During the academic term, all five libraries remain open in the evenings and throughout the weekend. Furthermore, in the weeks preceding and during exam time, the James Joyce Library extends its opening hours further to facilitate students' revision.

UCD Library's online services include an [integrated platform that is fully searchable](#) and provides access to an extensive e-book collection and a wide range of online journals and databases. Students can seek support and advice from the Library via the online chat service. In January 2024, the Library introduced a range of new roles

to better support new and emerging needs of students. These include a Student Experience Librarian, an Academic Integrity Librarian and a Digital Learning Librarian who are all focused on supporting students throughout their studies.

Through its website and through UCD's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) students and faculty have access to a [range of guides and tutorials](#) that support the development of students' study skills such as conducting literature reviews, developing critical thinking skills, evaluation skills, understanding and avoiding plagiarism and how to reference correctly. In addition, the Teaching and Learning Librarians deliver a range of bespoke classes and tutorials, both online and in person within specific modules and programmes. These support the development of critical literacies, including digital literacy, and the librarians work closely with Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Boards, Teaching and Learning Committees, Research Committees and Schools and Colleges.

UCD Library hosts three major cultural heritage repositories: UCD Library Special Collections, UCD Archives (UCDA) and the National Folklore Collection (NFC) which is one of only two items in Ireland inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World. The material held in each repository is accessible to readers in each of the cultural heritage reading rooms under staff supervision. These unique and distinct collections are of national and international significance and form the basis of research for internal and external scholars. Material from the Cultural Heritage repositories have been integrated into the undergraduate and postgraduate curriculum and the collections are promoted through a series of [webpages](#), social media, liaison with the University community and regular exhibitions. Over recent years, UCD Library has engaged in creative ways to actively build new cultural heritage collections in areas not developed nationally. Examples of this include the [Irish Poetry Reading Archive \(IPRA\)](#). Each of the Cultural Heritage Units is also actively engaged in collaborations with external bodies and has been successfully awarded a range of grants for these activities.

An ongoing Capital Development Programme for the UCD Library is in place to refurbish the James Joyce Library to create more modern library facilities, supporting a range of study modalities and needs, and meeting the expectations of a twenty first century university library. The first phase of this was the refurbishment of Level 3 which opened in September 2023 and created 535 high quality study spaces including silent study areas, study facilities specifically designed for students with sensory needs, Zoom rooms and height adjustable desks

Plans for the next phase are well underway and will include the refurbishment of Level 2 and the creation of a new Cultural Heritage Centre on Level 1, bringing together the three world-class Cultural Heritage repositories and making them more accessible and visible to students.

The UCD Library is also subject to Periodic Quality Review and also supports academic schools undergoing quality review through the provision of subject data and reports. The most recent [Review Group Report](#) and the associated [Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\)](#) are published on the UCD Quality Office website under [Reports and Publications](#).

In relation to social activity, the [UCD Student Centre](#) provides a range of student facilities that include:

- [Venues](#) – includes the Astra Hall, FitzGerald Debating Chamber, Seminar Rooms, Meeting Rooms, UCD Cinema and DramSoc Theatre
- [Student Services & Support](#) – includes Health Service, Student Support, Pharmacy, Students' Union Shop, The Clubhouse Bar, Poolside Café and UCD Sport and Fitness
- [UCD Student Societies](#)
- [UCD Students' Union](#)
- [UCD Sports Clubs](#)
- [University Observer newspaper](#)
- [Belfield FM radio](#)

The [UCD Village](#) provides additional student supports and activities, in particular for those living on campus. Located on the Belfield Campus, the UCD Village offers state-of-the-art student accommodation in a safe, communal environment, and is only a short walk from UCD's world-class academic and sports facilities. The Village Centre contains ultra-modern self-contained studios and a mix of social and retail spaces, alongside a gym, Student Health Centre, bank point, a bookable auditorium, eating facilities, a small supermarket and an ongoing programme of activities.

IT Services: Infrastructure & Supports for Students

[UCD Connect](#) provides inclusive access to all the central applications available such as Brightspace (virtual learning environment - VLE), Google Mail, SISWeb (Student Information System), Calendar/Timetable and Google Drive. A range of software applications are available to download free of charge, as well as other services such as a library account, online file storage, UCD noticeboard and UCD news. UCD Connect is available 24/7. Wireless access to the UCD network is available campus-wide including student residences 24/7.

Regular communication with students via Brightspace VLE and their UCD Connect email account provides University and programme information from College/School Offices, the Dean of Students, and the Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

Google Workspace enables users to log-in with their UCD Connect details to communicate and collaborate through an integrated range of apps, accessible across multiple devices. As well as accessing UCD email (Gmail), Google Calendar, Google Drive, Google Chat, Google Spaces and Google Keep. Zoom has been fully integrated with Brightspace VLE and is the Virtual Classroom service for teaching, allowing students to attend lectures that are online and collaborate with peers remotely.

The [Student IT Guide](#) is designed as a user-friendly introduction for students to the key IT services available at UCD. The Support Hub has been designed as a solution orientated tool to help students easily find answers to a broad range of questions, supported by a series of quick Knowledge Base guides to enable a speedy solution to student queries. Furthermore, a wide range of technologies to assist with learning difficulties, teaching, research and career development are also provided (e.g. e-Portfolios, High Performance Computing, etc.)

Incoming students have access to a free UCD Mobile App that provides useful information on orientation and the range of IT services and supports available. They are also encouraged to check out the IT Services website and the Discover IT section in the 'Introduction to UCD' module when they first log into Brightspace VLE. The Student IT Guide provides detailed information in relation to core services, including:

- UCD Connect – the gateway to IT Services' supports
- Brightspace – UCD's Virtual Learning Environment
- IT Accounts at UCD (e.g. email, etc.)
- IT Facilities (e.g. Computer labs, Google Drive, etc.)
- IT Support Hub – solution focused self-help system
- IT Security, keeping students and devices safe online
- Software Applications Downloads (e.g. Office 365, etc.)
- Wireless Services across campus

Students can follow UCD IT Services updates on Twitter ([@ucditservices](#)) for the latest news and service

announcements, to keep them engaged with ongoing technology enhancements impacting them. UCD IT Services has also published an extensive list of [Policies and Guidelines](#). Knowledge Base and Virtual Agent are available to further assist students and live chat is available at ucd.ie/ithelp.

Student Supports/Welfare

The University makes available an extensive range of support for all learners from pre-entry through to graduation and beyond. UCD recognises that studying at university can be challenging at times for students. There is a strong support network for students at UCD, from health services to specific programme advisers, student welfare and support with additional supports for specific cohorts of students (mature students and postgraduate students). The [UCD Current Students](#) website includes information on registration, term dates, fees, exams, and student services with a view to providing a 'one-stop-shop', holistic and student-centred set of resources. The [Student Support webpage](#) on the UCD Student Centre website provides additional information and links to student supports and services on campus. The [Student Advisers' website](#) hosts a series of student guides which are a helpful resource to support students during their time in UCD.

UCD Dean of Students

The Dean of Students has responsibility for the student experience in UCD and is committed to the continued enhancement of UCD's programmes and educational environment so that every student is fully supported in reaching their potential. The Dean of Students also acts as the University Child Protection Officer.

College/School Offices

The College/School Office is the main point of contact for most of the academic services students require during their studies. Programmes have a dedicated Programme Manager available to assist and support students throughout their time at UCD. Among the range of support provided by the College/School Office are assistance with general queries, module registration, timetable queries, advice on extenuating circumstances, leave of absence and withdrawals, visa queries and collection of visa letters, out-of-hours access forms, and official form signing and stamping, as well as sign-posting to the University's range of student supports such as Student Advisers, the Student Health Service and the Student Counselling Service, the Chaplaincy, and Disability Services offered through the Access and Lifelong Learning Centre.

Student Desk

The Student Desk in UCD helps students with questions that they might have, whether they are a student (current, former, or prospective), parent, third party or staff member and are typically the main contact for students for most administrative services. Assistance may include information on admissions, registration, fees, funding, grants, official documents, form stamping, thesis submission, examinations, and assessment. Students can contact the Student Desk by email, phone, chatbot or in person.

UCD Access and Lifelong Learning

UCD Access and Lifelong Learning helps to accommodate different learning contexts and fosters a university culture that is inclusive and responsive to all including school leavers, regardless of socio-economic background or disability, adults beginning their higher education, those wishing to study flexibly and people who wish to continue learning and pursue intellectual enrichment and fulfilment. UCD Access and Lifelong Learning's primary function is to be the bridge to inclusion; offering connections, engagement and building relationships between communities that are distant from higher education and the University community. This is achieved by:

- Developing and implementing a range of responses to widen access and ensure participation by diverse student cohorts, including students with disabilities, mature students, part-time learners, and students

from communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage.

- Supporting and enabling the University to integrate and embed the principles of equity of access and universal design throughout the institution.

Once admitted to UCD, there is extensive information and support available to students to assist them in their transition to university life and their programme. This is available through the [New Students website](#) and it includes a broad range of advice and guidance, as well as detailed information about UCD Orientation events and schedule which is compulsory for all new students. Detailed and specialised information is provided to undergraduate students, graduate students, and international students. There has been a significant and welcome increase in the diversity of the student population, with over 38% of undergraduates coming from under-represented groups.

UCD Access and Lifelong Learning also promotes and facilitates digital inclusion in UCD. Through Brightspace, Ally generates feedback to staff on the overall accessibility of their modules and related learning materials, as well as instant feedback on quick adjustments which can be made to ensure digital materials are accessible. The introduction of Ally to Brightspace and SensusAccess to the UCD website conveys how digital accessibility is a collective responsibility. The adoption of the universal design concept of 'plus one' encourages UCD staff to make incremental changes to make their teaching, support and communications accessible and inclusive.

UCD Global

UCD Global signposts on a range of support for international students, such as Student Advisers, the Student Health Service and Student Counselling Service, the Chaplaincy, and Disability Services offered through the Access and Lifelong Learning Centre. The UCD Global Experience Team provides information, guidance, and support on the international elements of the student experience. This could include support with complex immigration queries, cross-cultural advice, assistance during a crisis, or settling into life in Ireland and integrating into the UCD student community. Students are encouraged to engage with other international students through the [UCD Global Lounge](#) and ongoing support is provided by UCD Global.

Peer Mentoring in UCD

Peer Mentors are senior students who volunteer to welcome incoming students and are supported by their Student Adviser or Student Progression Manager. Over 600 volunteers participate across all programmes. The UCD Peer Mentoring Programme aims to help new students make friends and settle into their programme. Students are encouraged to get involved in social activities and develop specific study skills. Peer Mentors, with their knowledge and experience of academic and personal support available in UCD, assist new students in solving problems which can easily overwhelm them at the beginning of their journey. Peer Mentors enhance the overall quality of the first-year experience whilst also enhancing the core skills of the Peer Mentors as they develop their organisational, communication and leadership qualities. Peer Mentors are that reassuring voice that new students need so that they are eased into their new environment where they will continue to develop into resilient and self-assured UCD graduates.

Student Advisers

UCD has a comprehensive support system through its Student Advisers, with each programme having a dedicated Student Adviser, along with specific Student Advisers for mature students and postgraduate research students. The Student Advisers are easily identifiable, approachable and knowledgeable student affairs professionals who support students with a wide range of personal, financial and social matters. Typically based in student buildings, they provide accessible, person-centred support, and have a comprehensive knowledge of the university support ecosystem, guiding students to additional services as needed. This early-intervention service empowers students to develop skills for managing challenges within a supportive framework throughout their UCD journey.

Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy Team offers student support, pastoral care, spiritual direction and the opportunity to be part of a community of understanding, respect and dialogue. The team is available to support people from all denominations and religions and to students from all faiths and none. The UCD Chaplaincy values are Compassion, Conversation, Contemplation and Companionship. [St. Stephen's Chaplaincy Centre](#) at UCD welcomes all students who wish to explore, nurture or celebrate faith and spirituality. It hosts a variety of student society and faith-based events, and its facilities include a function room, a contemplation room, a small library and a private room for pastoral care.

Student Engagement, Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (SECCA)

SECCA delivers fair, impartial, and transparent procedures for responding to student complaints and appeals to a range of university decisions relating to student assessment, progression or standing and to allegations of student misconduct. Processes are accessible to all students through the following policies: [Student Complaints Policy](#), [Student Appeals Procedure](#), [Assessment Appeals Policy](#), [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [Student Discipline Procedure](#). The SECCA team provides advice to students and staff in relation to their application. Learning from complaints and appeals processes supports the enhancement of the student experience. The SECCA team also supports the [Student Partnership Forum](#), established to provide a platform for students and staff to work together towards the development of an annual plan of agreed priority projects or objective and act as a consultative forum for discussion on emergent issues or evolving University proposals impacting students.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Supports

Under the remit of the Dean of Students, and together with [UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\)](#), a range of initiatives are available such as the [UCD ESHTe \(Ending Sexual Harassment and Violence in Third Level Education\)](#), a staff/student group that has led to a proactive and coordinated approach to the consideration of sexual assault and harassment and most recently leading on actions in response to the [Framework for Consent: Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions](#). In addition, SECCA and EDI established a [Report and Support Tool](#) for students and staff to report incidents of bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct. This initiative has led to UCD representation on several national groups focused on ending sexual violence in third level education, including the project and steering group established to develop a sector version of a reporting tool. The University also has a published [EDI Policy](#) which is applicable to all members of the UCD Community.

EDI also oversees a [Dignity and Respect Support Service](#) which works proactively with employees and students who disclose issues of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, and those who are reported for such issues. The Dignity and Respect Support Advisers, who are experienced and trained to support, respond, and advise on all reports of a dignity and respect nature, provide a supportive, confidential environment in which to discuss the issues and will support students and employees in making decisions that are right for their situation.

Healthy UCD

Healthy UCD is a thriving health-promoting campus initiative, established following publication of UCD's 2016 health promotion strategy. A cross-university Steering Committee includes representatives from student sport and societies, the Students' Union, UCD Culture and Engagement, UCD Estates, UCD Student Health, UCD Student Counselling, UCD Registry, UCD Residences, the University Management Team and faculty from a number of Schools. Healthy UCD's vision is to establish UCD as a model for a healthy campus, advancing the health and well-being of all members of the UCD community. The goal is to embed health and well-being as an integral part of the University's culture and everyday life and to ensure that UCD is a healthy place to study, work and visit, creating an environment that accommodates and promotes well-being, nested in social relations and community. The Healthy UCD work programme supports service learning for students, such as Healthy Eating Active Living Week (HEAL) and Smoking Cessation programmes, and through extensive engagement with the

Students Union, Student Services and UCD Estates.

A key milestone reached within the reporting period was the Platinum Status awarded to UCD by the Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire (FISU) Sports. The award recognises Universities that promote opportunity and access for students and staff to engage in healthy lifestyle behaviours as part of campus life.

Student Financial Supports

Students may experience financial problems during their time for various reasons and the University provides some financial support to students undergoing temporary difficulties and to those with ongoing low-income challenges. UCD Access and Lifelong Learning also provides information on [Financial Support](#) for students. The Think Again Scholarship, for women on low income aged 23 and above, who want to study part-time or full-time for a degree, provides funding for living costs, as well as a range of other vital supports such as career and personal development. UCD has a long history of striving for equity of access to education.

Student Health Service

The Student Health Service offers a range of healthcare services to support our students in their journey through UCD. These include doctor and nurse appointments, blood tests, contraception, STI tests, HPV vaccination, cervical screening, mental health and psychiatric appointments, and information on medicals and medical records,

Student Counselling Service

The Student Counselling Service is a confidential service available to all registered students, free of charge. The aim of the service is to provide easily accessible professional psychological support to assist students with personal challenges that affect their lives as university students.

Alumni Buddy Programme

The UCD Alumni Buddy Programme links incoming international graduate students with local UCD Alumni. The programme provides friendly support for students, especially just after they arrive in Dublin.

Students' Union

All UCD students are members of the Students' Union (UCDSU) which supports all UCD students during their education by providing a voice and space for them to enhance their college experience as well as welfare support. The UCDSU consists of six sabbatical officers working full-time for the union (President, Entertainments Officer, Campaigns and Engagement Officer, Graduate Officer, Welfare Officer, and Education Officer) and nine elected College Student Officers.

The **Maths Support Centre (MSC)** is an informal drop-in centre available as a free service to all UCD students registered to a level 0, 1 or 2 module, irrespective of their programme of study. Students receive one-to-one or small-group maths tuition during drop-in service hours. Students can attend during these hours to use the MSC as a maths study space, where they can work at their own pace with a tutor on-hand if they have any questions. Outside of these hours, the MSC is open as a group study space for mathematics (and other students) during library opening hours. The MSC aims to enhance students' knowledge of mathematics and guide them to becoming more self-directed learners. Most importantly, the MSC is staffed by dedicated and experienced tutors who can offer individual support in Mathematics, Statistics, Applied and Computational Maths (ACM), or any other numerate subject such as Architecture, Economics, Engineering or Nursing.

The **Writing Centre** offers high-quality tuition in writing to all undergraduate and postgraduate students interested in improving their writing skills. It offers one-to-one tuition and a range of workshops/seminars. The Centre strives to ensure that students are helped to communicate, structure, and present their knowledge and ideas in a written

format, and develop their subject expertise and critical thinking skills. Students can drop-in without an appointment or they can book 50-minute or 30-minute sessions.

Following completion of a UCD programme of study and conferring, student interaction with the institution is through [UCD Alumni](#) that offers a varied programme of reunions, events, communications, and membership benefits. In particular, UCD engages with its alumni through the annual [UCD Festival](#), which draws alumni back on to campus for a wide range of activities and links UCD with the surrounding community.

Supports for International Learners

For international students, there is a dedicated website supported by UCD Global for [study at UCD for international students](#). UCD offers a range of supports for students, such as a network of Student Advisers, the Student Health Service and Student Counselling Service, the Chaplaincy, and disability services offered through the Access and Lifelong Learning Centre. The UCD Global Experience Team provides information, guidance, and support on the international elements of the student experience. This could include support with complex immigration queries, cross-cultural advice, assistance during a crisis, dealing with culture shock or settling into life in Ireland and integrating into the UCD student community. Students are encouraged to engage with other international students through the [UCD Global Students Facebook group](#) and [UCD Global Lounge](#) as well as the wide variety of student clubs and societies within the University. Students can also submit any query they may have via the [UCD Global Student Connector](#). Further support and information is also provided such as Campus Support, Student Advice, Academic Support, Campus Life, UCD Global Lounge, Global Guides, Visas and Immigration, Working in Ireland and Orientation.

Supporting Student Engagement

In addition to the supports outlined in the previous section, the University has put in place a [Student Experience Group \(UMT-SEG\)](#) that reports to the University Management Team (UMT). This group leads the development and operationalisation of university activities, processes and procedures related to the student experience and university strategy.

The [UCD LEAP project](#) focuses on developing a dynamic student engagement model that enables tailored, effective interventions by student affairs staff based on real-time insights. By leveraging Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) data, the project enhances UCD's ability to identify and proactively support students who may be facing challenges, facilitating a more responsive approach to student wellbeing. The project also emphasises knowledge sharing to broaden the impact of successful strategies across UCD and beyond. Ultimately, this research aims to create a model applicable across higher education, supporting other institutions in optimising student support and easing students' transition into university life.

In addition to on-campus provision outlined in a previous section, UCD offers a small number of online modules and programmes, delivered through [Brightspace](#) similar to onsite campus delivery. UCD academics and personal tutors make module content available to students, enabling them to access and download content from wherever they are. Some modules are delivered on demand, meaning that students can study at times that suit them. Many modules use continuous assessment providing flexibility and ongoing feedback which supports independent learning. Lecture material may be presented in a variety of formats including recorded lectures, interactive learning materials, podcasts, videos etc. [UCD Teaching and Learning](#) has developed extensive resources and support for staff to facilitate and enable blended and online teaching and learning.

The [Ally accessibility tool](#) has been integrated with Brightspace. It is a content accessibility tool that helps build a

more inclusive learning environment and improve the student experience by helping students take clear control of course content with usability, accessibility, and quality in mind. Ally will assist both with the University's objective of University for All and the Universal Design principles for Teaching & Learning, providing the student population with alternative options to receive their learning materials.

UCD Teaching and Learning also provides expert supports and guidance on core [UCD Educational Technologies](#) which are focused on the pedagogical application of educational technologies, demonstrating how they can be used effectively to support learning in face-to-face, blended or online teaching and learning contexts. It also provides resources for staff in relation to designing, developing and reviewing [Assessment and Feedback](#) approaches.

[UCD Institutional Research](#) oversees, coordinates and analyses a wide range of UCD surveys, including [StudentSurvey.ie](#), [Student Feedback on Modules](#), Graduate Outcomes, UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion student and staff surveys, [International Student Barometer](#), [Eurostudent](#) and the [Irish National Digital Experience \(INDEx\)](#) survey.

4.0 QA of Research Activities and Programmes

This section is focused on UCD's research programmes; section 1.1 above addresses the University's research activities.

The [Academic Regulations](#) include regulations on a variety of research degrees, including Research Masters, PhD, MD, Doctor of Nursing (DN) and Doctor of Midwifery (DM), Doctor of Governance (DGov), Doctor of Veterinary Medical Specialisation (DVMS), Doctor of Educational Psychology (DEdPsych) and Doctor of Clinical Psychology (DPsychSc). These regulations, together with the [Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework \(PDARF\)](#) and the resources provided by [UCD Graduate Studies](#), set out the procedures for the design, approval, delivery, assessment and monitoring of research programmes. There is a [Graduate Studies Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2025](#), and the University is also cognizant of the [QQI Statutory QA Guidelines for Providers of Research Degree Programmes](#).

The [UCD Structured PhD programme](#) is characterised by a significant original contribution to scholarship, based largely on a major research project which is also complemented by the development of a range of transferable and professional skills. Promotion of and support for the quality assurance and enhancement of the Structured PhD programme is provided through UCD Graduate Studies, which has published a number of resources online for students including resources and good practice for supervising PhD candidates, via the [UCD Research Student Hub](#). This includes resources for:

- Research Programmes
- Research Student Handbook
- Thesis Submission
- IUA PhD Graduate Skills Statement 2021
- Register for Taught Modules
- Research and Professional Development Plan (RPDP)
- Training and Development
- Promote Your Research
- Research Integrity Training
- Student Supports
- Working with your Supervisor
- Graduate Research Board
- Dean of Graduate Studies Award for Excellence in Doctoral Supervision (student driven)

An in-person Research Student Induction Day is delivered for all September-start and January-start research students. The purpose of the induction sessions is to provide information on the research degree in UCD i.e. the regulations, the expectations the students can have of the University, and supports available to the student; and to develop a PhD community.

Each student will have a Principal Supervisor, and Co-supervisor if appropriate, assigned to them who will provide quality supervision, mentoring, guidance, and advice throughout their programme of study. In addition to Supervisor(s), Schools will appoint a Research Studies Panel for each research student early in their first year. The purpose of the Research Studies Panel is to support and enhance the supervisor-student relationship, to monitor student progress during the course of their doctoral studies and to provide advice and support both to the student and their supervisor(s).

The UCD Structured PhD programme, which is aligned to the [National Framework for Doctoral Education](#), comprises two stages: Stage 1 is a period when the student defines their research plan, develops their research

skills and initiates original research work for their doctorate. Stage 2 is primarily dedicated to continuing original doctoral research but may also include some advanced education and training. In order to progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the doctoral programme students must undergo a Stage Transfer Assessment to establish that they are making progress and have the competence and capacity to complete the proposed research. The information regarding this is outlined in the University's [Policy on Progression in Doctoral Programmes](#).

Research and professional development planning is integral to the Structured PhD programme at UCD. The purpose of such planning is to ensure that a student's work is clearly focused on achieving their research and professional development goals. This will play a major part in informing the trajectory of their PhD research and in their training and development as a researcher. To this end, each student, supported by the Research Studies Panel must document their educational, training and personal and professional development needs which along with the proposed programmes of research and training generates a [Research and Professional Development Plan \(RPDP\)](#). Review of a student's RPDP is an essential part of the student's Stage Transfer Assessment.

For UCD PhD graduates, their skill set will naturally include the advanced research and analytical techniques required to undertake high level research in their field. Students are also expected to possess a range of transferable skills, relevant to the successful completion of their research project and to broader career development, and these are benchmarked against the [Irish Universities Association \(IUA\) PhD Graduate Skills Statement](#). Graduate Studies have developed a portfolio of Transferable Skills workshops aligned with the IUA skills recommendations and have grouped these workshops into those which are relevant for Stage 1 and Stage 2 doctoral students. Workshops which assist students in navigating the structured elements of the PhD and also the key relationship with their supervisors are provided by UCD Graduate Studies (Navigating your PhD @ UCD, Mind the TAP, Working with your Supervisor). Workshops are also developed internally with colleagues in the Writing Centre (Doctoral Week and WOW - Writing on Wednesdays), UCD Library (Research Tool Kit), UCD Careers Network and Student Advisors. External experts in doctoral training are also incorporated into the annual programme (e.g. Thesis Boot Camp, Turbocharge your Writing, Imposter Syndrome).

PhD students are also required to gain 30 credits through core and optional modules during their PhD programme. There is a large selection of modules available across the University, both discipline-specific modules to broaden and deepen a student's knowledge of their discipline and research skills modules to provide advanced training in relevant research methodologies. All modules are selected in consultation with the Principal Supervisor, and students are advised to talk to their School about any School-specific requirements. UCD Graduate Studies provides further information about, and useful directory of, [Discipline Specific Modules for PhD students](#).

Through the development of the university-wide RSSDf, Research Supervisor Support and Development Framework, Graduate Studies delivers online and in-person professional development supports for research supervisors, which number approximately 1000 in UCD. The [UCD Fundamentals of Research Supervision online programme](#) was designed with senior UCD supervisors and research students and is mandatory for all new academics. A Refresher Programme has been developed for more experienced academics who would like to revisit international developments in supervisory practice, pedagogy and governance. Both courses are available on Brightspace. The in-person [Research Supervisor Support and Development Programme](#) which is run in collaboration with TCD, RCSI and U21 partners supports research supervisors who are new to supervision and those who are more experienced and wish to refresh their practice. As of 2022, the RSSDp is part of the Development Framework for Faculty. A university award for the RSSDp is now being explored. The Dean of Graduate Studies Award for Excellence in Doctoral Supervision captures and recognises excellent practice and is doctoral student driven and nominated. Graduate Studies supports research supervisors with a dedicated [Supervisor Hub](#) on the Graduate Studies website. UCD successfully joined RSVP (Next Generation Research Super Vision Project) in 2024. RSVP is a UK-funded project examining supervision in different disciplines and contexts, team supervision, supervision of different doctoral degrees and understanding and combating poor supervisory practice. RSVP is the largest collaborative, cross-disciplinary, translational research project into

doctoral education.

These resources, initiatives and collaborations, illustrate the University's commitment to enhancing the quality and experience of its research programmes and supporting students and academics in their career and professional development. There are also several policies and codes of practice that are particularly focused on ensuring the quality of UCD's research programmes and the research student experience. These include:

- [Research Degree Examination Policy](#)
- [Policy on Progression in Doctoral Programmes](#)
- [Policy for Supervision of Research Degree Students](#)
- [Policy for Conflict Resolution for Supervisors and Research Degree Students](#)
- [Policy for the Recruitment, Support & Development of Graduate Research Students Supporting Teaching & Learning](#)

Graduate Studies have also developed resources to support the diversity of graduate research student in the university

- [Managing Graduate Study with a Disability](#)
- [Health and Wellbeing for graduate research students](#)
- [Open Online Courses](#)

[UCD Library](#) provides a range of services to support researchers and research activity in key strategic areas including Open Access and Open Science; Publication Strategy and Dissemination; Research Data Management; GIS & Mapping and Citizen Science. In January 2024, two new specialist roles were developed to increase support for researchers in emerging areas: a Citizen Science and Geospatial Support Librarian, and a Research Engagement Librarian with expertise in Systematic and Evidence-based Reviews. Over the past year the Library has also enhanced its orientation programme for research staff and students working in partnership with UCD Graduate Studies, UCD's schools and colleges, and other units across campus. Training and capacity-building is delivered through the Library's annual Build your Research Skills programme of workshops which is open to all researchers, staff and students.

Open Science and Open Access are key drivers of research impact, uptake and innovation, and help increase the transparency and reproducibility of research. As a member of [IReL](#), UCD Library provides access to Open Access Publishing Agreements, which allow UCD researchers to publish their research openly at no cost to authors, enabling greater access to UCD research for those outside the academic community, including policy-makers, practitioners and the general public.

The Library also maintains and provides access to three trusted digital repositories – [Research Repository UCD](#), the [Irish Social Science Data Archive \(ISSDA\)](#), and [UCD Digital Library](#) - to enable UCD researchers to share, archive and preserve their publications, data and other research outputs in line with best practice and international standards.

The Library is also an active member of key organisations including the [Research Data Alliance](#), the [Digital Preservation Coalition](#) and the [Digital Repository of Ireland](#), which ensures UCD and its researchers are connected with national and international research networks and best-practice knowledge and guidance.

UCD has a dedicated and professionally qualified Career and Skills Consultant for Graduate Research Students, who works in partnership with UCD Graduate Studies to support students to explore and plan their career options beyond the PhD programme. This includes coaching and guidance sessions, group and individual career planning workshops and seminars, employer networking opportunities, and applications, CV and mock interview support.

The [UCD Student Advisory Service](#) acts as a point of contact, support and referral for all UCD students throughout their studies. Every academic programme in UCD has a dedicated Student Adviser who offers students time and space to explore issues of concern to them. UCD has a dedicated Student Adviser for graduate research students. Student Advisers work closely with academic and administrative staff as well as with the other student support staff to ensure a positive student experience. The Students' Union also has a dedicated Graduate Officer.

The [UCD Writing Centre](#) supports graduate research students to communicate their knowledge and ideas in a written format, training them how their writing should be structured, developed, presented, and phrased. This will aid the research student in preparing papers for publication in periodical journals and for the writing up of their research. The Writing Centre offers workshops on different topics as well as individual writing sessions.

Support for the next phase of researcher development, beyond completion and award of a UCD graduate research degree, is provided through the set of resources available via [UCD Research Careers and Professional Development](#). UCD Research Careers and Professional Development provides Post-Doctoral Researchers with access to training and development opportunities across various areas. As part of this, the [UCD Research Careers Framework](#) establishes a structured and supportive skills and early-career development model for Postdoctoral Researchers at UCD, as recommended in the sectoral Advisory Science Council policy document 'Towards a Framework for Research Careers'. The UCD Framework represents a joint initiative between UCD HR People & Organisation Development and UCD Careers Network, both working closely with UCD Research, which directly supports UCD in achieving its research goals. The team is committed to building innovative and practical supports to better embed the framework within the university and refine the delivery of its activities and systems in line with the arising needs of our Early Career Researcher community. Training and Development is available in the areas such as research and research management, personal and professional excellence, teaching, learning and mentoring, innovation and transferable skills.

All Post-Doctoral Fellows are encouraged to engage with the [Research Skills and Professional Development](#) process with their Principal Investigator. This process provides a road map that helps identify both professional development needs and career objectives supported through the provision of key resources.

In relation to Supervisor Training, UCD currently operates a supportive, organic approach to supervisor support and development which constitutes a number of local, discipline specific activities as well as a university wide [Research Supervisor Support and Development Programme](#) run by UCD Graduate Studies. All academics new to UCD are required to complete the [UCD Fundamentals of Research Supervision online programme](#).

The [UCD Centre for Support and Training in Analysis and Research \(CSTAR\)](#) operates as an independent not-for-profit centre based in UCD. CSTAR offers a consultancy and training service to individuals, institutions and companies carrying out health research in Ireland. The mission of CSTAR is to enhance the quality and increase the quantity of health research in Ireland.

Research student feedback is captured through local school/programme committees, the periodic quality assurance process and through the graduate survey.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

UCD Human Resources Strategy

The [UCD Human Resources Strategy 2022-2024 – The Revolution of Work](#), builds on successes and progression already achieved through its previous strategy, Growing Through People. The strategy envisages a supportive, developmental environment and culture based on four established strategic pillars, which set out the University's work programme for the Human Resources team to enable the implementation of UCD's people agenda in pursuit of its mission, vision, and strategic objectives. This strategy commits to the achievement of specific and measurable deliverables during 2020-2024, and it is designed to provide a supportive community in which every member of the University is enabled to achieve their full potential. It is aligned with best practice and focuses on all employees: leaders, people managers and individual colleagues. The four key pillars are:

1. Transforming Service Partnership
2. Building Organisational Capability
3. Enhancing our Performance Culture
4. Becoming an Employer and University of Choice

The [HR Partners](#) team has a pivotal role to support local leadership teams in Schools, Colleges and Professional Units to help deliver on the objectives set-out in the [UCD Human Resources Strategy 2022-2024 – The Revolution of Work](#), and to align the strategy to local priorities.

The University has also published [Human Resources policies and processes](#) to support the achievement of both the University and Human Resources strategies.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity is highlighted in the University's strategic plan as one of the core values of UCD, and one of the plan's strategic objectives is the attraction and retention of an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit, as part of Culture and Engagement, supports the achievement of the University's strategic priorities through the delivery of activities under the [EDI Strategy 2021-2024](#). In addition, the [Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty](#), [Athena Swan Gender Equality Action Group and Gender Equality Action Plan \(GEAP\) 2024-2029](#), the [Dignity and Respect Framework](#) implementation and the HEI Framework for Promoting Consent and Preventing Sexual Violence all support the achievement of the University strategy and creation of an inclusive and respectful environment.

Awareness raising is undertaken through running events as well as a dedicated EDI training programme including a new digital EDI Ambassador Badge initiative which recognises those who engage with EDI training. A broad range of EDI groups, including new groups such as the [UCD Neurodiversity Group](#) and [Engaging Men in EDI working group](#), contribute to cultural change and an inclusive environment.

Recruitment

The Resourcing Team is responsible for supporting the recruitment and selection of all faculty and staff at UCD. The University seeks to attract, retain, and develop an excellent and diverse cohort of faculty and staff that reflects the University's values of excellence, creativity, collegiality, engagement, integrity, and diversity.

UCD continues to support the Central Pool Academic Appointments strategic initiative, which has contributed significantly to the growth of the University community and aligns with the goal of increasing the quality, quantity

and impact of the institution's research, scholarship and innovation. The UCD Ad Astra Fellows programme, one of the streams within the Central Pool scheme, is a collaborative effort between the Resourcing Team and key stakeholders to attract a strong, diverse pool of candidates. The programme has successfully hired hundreds of high potential early-stage academics with a strong research focus, positively impacting our faculty:student ratio. Currently, the Resourcing Team is preparing for the upcoming Round 5 campaign.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion remains an issue of utmost importance to the Resourcing Team. Resourcing was one of four workstreams in UCD's successful Athena Swan Silver Award and emphasis is now being placed on achieving project outcomes to ensure UCD remains an employer of choice. UCD is committed to attracting diverse applicants, including underrepresented groups aligned to the University strategy and values. The [UCD Recruitment and Selection Policy](#) informs the University's recruitment practices and it reflects best practice and UCD's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda.

UCD is committed to the principle of appointment on merit and its [wide range of policies](#) set out a fair, rigorous and transparent process which is applied consistently, ensuring the best candidate for the job is selected. All decisions relating to recruitment and selection must be consistent with the criteria advertised for the post and the Resourcing Team works closely with Hiring Managers to ensure these standards are maintained. Standardised questions have been developed for interview boards to ensure consistency for applicants.

The Resourcing Team works closely with colleagues in People Development to provide training for university staff engaged in the recruitment process, presenting annually to groups such as new Heads of School and Researchers, and delivering Interview Skills Training throughout the year including online interview skills training which hiring managers can access as needed.

To ensure a positive and inclusive recruitment process the [Work at UCD website](#) provides candidates with all the relevant information on the recruitment process along with an overview of staff benefits in one location. The website also provides information on living and working in Ireland to assist candidates moving from overseas. A dedicated onboarding page has been developed which brings all the key information together for new staff joining UCD as well as useful checklists for managers.

The role of [Resourcing Consultant](#) continues to provide a single point of contact for candidates and hiring managers and the team offers support and guidance on any aspect of the recruitment process. Further information is available at [UCD Human Resources \(Resourcing\)](#).

Staff Management

UCD has an extensive policy framework for assuring, and enhancing, the quality of its staff. This is provided for through policies and procedures for the recruitment, appointment and ongoing professional development of faculty and staff which is supported by its organisational and management structures and [UCD Human Resources](#). UCD Human Resources has an extensive range of relevant documentation which is published on the online [Employment @ UCD Policy Directory](#), and covers areas such as induction, promotion, career development and leadership, mentoring, recognition, training, access to personal supports and training for the University's wide cohort of faculty and staff.

The University is committed to creating an environment where diversity is celebrated and everyone is treated fairly regardless of gender, age, race, disability, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, civil status, family status, or membership of the travelling community. It is fully committed to meeting and exceeding its obligations under current legislation. A University Management Team [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group](#) is in place, supported by an

EDI Unit and dedicated website for [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#). A University [UCD Dignity and Respect Policy \(and related framework\)](#) with additional supplementary procedures is in place to support staff and students.

Staff Development – Faculty and Research Staff

UCD has in place a range of supports for faculty development. To this end, the [Faculty Promotions Policy](#) has been developed, along with a complementary [UCD Development Framework for Faculty](#), which is a tool used by faculty to reflect both personally and within the context of a development conversation on their strengths and opportunities for growth. This framework identifies several dimensions under each of the categories of Faculty achievement:

- **Research, Scholarship, and Innovation**
 - Qualifications
 - Publication, Outputs and Profile
 - Research Funding
 - Research Supervision and Management
 - Research Culture
 - Innovation and Impact
- **Teaching and Learning**
 - Facilitating Student Learning
 - Curriculum Design, Assessment and Development
 - Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
 - Enhancement of Practice: Personal and Professional Development
- **Leadership and Contribution**
 - Administration and Leadership
 - Recruitment and Outreach
 - Building Community
 - Building Support
 - Professional/Clinical Service
 - Public and Professional Engagement

Faculty can assess their current position on the framework across the various dimensions.

The Newly Appointed Assistant Professor (NAAP) Development Programme continues to support the newly appointed members of faculty in UCD. Since 2020 this Programme has been mainstreamed, offering dedicated development seminars, mentoring opportunities, and networking events to support early career faculty, it also encompasses the Assistant Prof Ad Astra Fellow population. In addition to these development opportunities, the new Faculty Induction programme (introduced in 2020) continues to support new academic employees of UCD which gives an overview of the services and key personnel and provides opportunities to build networks with faculty and colleagues across UCD at an early stage.

UCD has implemented the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI), which is designed to help achieve equality of outcomes in the higher education sector and accelerate the achievement of gender balance at senior levels.

The University also provides the [Leadership in Research Development Programme \(THRIVE\)](#) which provides development for 15 Faculty members at Lecturer/Assistant Professor and Associate Professor level each year. The programme is built around personal engagement with the strategic aims of UCD.

[UCD Teaching and Learning](#) serves a critical function in the ongoing professional development of faculty, including through three [accredited programmes in University Teaching and Learning](#). These NFQ Level 9 programmes equip faculty with the knowledge and skills to effectively plan, innovate, evaluate and research their teaching. The

offerings are designed to be flexible, research-informed and practice-based:

- The Certificate of Continuing Professional Development, University Teaching & Learning, is a single 7.5 ECTS module programme taking place over one trimester. This programme is offered biannually, and participants can choose their start time depending on their schedule and their choice of module.
- The Professional Certificate, University Teaching and Learning, which carries a credit volume of 15 ECTS is awarded to those candidates who successfully complete any two modules. This programme is also offered twice a year.
- The Professional Diploma, University Teaching and Learning, which carries a credit volume of 30 ECTS may be undertaken by participants who have completed the Professional Certificate.

The University celebrates the achievements of colleagues who make an outstanding contribution in the pursuit of teaching excellence and the enhancement of student learning through the biennial Teaching and Learning Awards. The scope of these awards is broad, covering all aspects of teaching and learning. There are two award schemes:

- Teaching Excellence Awards recognise individual faculty and staff in teaching roles for sustained commitment to teaching excellence and student learning.
- Awards for Exceptional Contribution to Learning recognise individual UCD employees who are engaged directly in teaching and/or facilitating student learning, for their exceptional contribution to the enhancement of the learner experience. Examples of employees that this award may apply to include tutors, teaching assistants and laboratory demonstrators, occasional lecturers, fieldwork instructors, teaching fellows, clinical tutors, language assistants/instructors, researchers, career and skills consultants, educational technologists, librarians, technical officers and entrepreneurial specialists.

Both schemes are tiered with awards at College and University level. The scheme allows the UCD community, including students, faculty and staff, to nominate colleagues engaged directly in teaching for an award. All nominees are invited to apply for a Teaching and Learning Award at college level. College application and selection procedures are carried out by each college, culminating in a celebration of college-level awardees university-wide. College adjudication panels also make recommendation from their pool of awardees for consideration for university-level awards. This final stage of the awards process is adjudicated by a panel led by the Deputy President and Registrar, and up to 12 prestigious university awards are made. The nomination stage of the 2023-24 schemes concluded in August 2024. A total of 3032 nominations were received with respect to 1176 faculty/staff. Nominations from students constituted 94% of all nominations.

UCD Teaching and Learning also provides training and support for Tutor and Demonstrator Development at UCD including induction sessions, online tutor resource pack, and a 5 ECTS module on 'Introduction to University Teaching and Learning for Tutors, Demonstrators and Teaching Assistants'. Several schools deliver local Graduate Teaching Assistant modules to support the development of disciplinary teaching strategies.

UCD Research Skills & Career Development provides staff with access to training and development opportunities across four core competency areas. In addition to technical expertise, development in areas such as people, communications and project management skills is provided, as well as one-to-one coaching and/or mentoring, shadowing recognised 'experts' in a particular area, getting involved in or leading a new/different aspect of the research project, networking both internally and externally, and gathering regular feedback from peers, Principal Investigators and others.

Additional UCD Research Skills & Career Development support for researchers includes resources relating to:

- Career Consultations – Engaging Individuals
- Career Seminars – bringing together a collective wisdom

- Introducing Researchers to Employers
- Labour Market Information
- Interview Strategy – Taking Control of the Process
- Book a meeting
- PI/Mentor Development
- Access your Online Career Development Profile
- Training and Development Opportunities
- Events Calendar
- Career Profiles
- Postdoctoral Alumni – Working Across Sectors or Postdoctoral Alumni Roundtables

Staff Development – All Staff

A key mechanism through which UCD offers and promotes opportunities for the professional training and development of all members of staff is through [UCD HR People and Organisation Development](#). This area provides development opportunities for both new and existing staff and faculty in their day to day activities, improving skills and expanding areas of expertise. The training course schedule for all employees offers over fifty sessions aligned with UCD core competencies. In addition, information workshops to support organisational awareness competency, Employee Orientation events and bespoke training is also facilitated.

[UCD's Leadership and People Management Programme \(RISE\)](#) aims to enhance the quality of leadership and management within the University through the development of skills, knowledge, and behaviours while recognising the continued need for leadership agility. Over 400 leaders and managers have commenced RISE with 1,100 attendances across the programme suite since 2022.

Alongside RISE, Everything DiSC® workshops are being facilitated across the institution. These sessions are designed for colleagues to discover more effective ways of communicating and working together and are requested by Managers who have participated in RISE and want to bring this learning to their teams.

The University also continues to engage Advance HE in support of the Aurora Leadership Development Programme for women. It aims to encourage those in academic and professional roles to think of themselves as leaders, to develop skills and to help institutions like UCD optimise the leadership potential of women supported by individual mentors.

[Performance for Growth \(P4G\)](#) is the UCD performance and development framework that provides the opportunity for all UCD employees to engage with their line manager, Head of School or alternate reviewer, to review achievements and challenges from the previous year, agree performance objectives and develop a plan for the year ahead. Engagement with P4G has remained consistently high, with strong completion rates. This reflects the widespread commitment to meaningful conversations across the institution, recognising the valuable contributions of faculty and staff. This collaborative effort is essential for fostering a culture of continuous improvement and planning for the year ahead to ensure purposeful impact in support of UCD's strategic priorities.

6.0 Information and Data Management

Decision-making across the University is informed by data and UCD has developed a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) embedded against each of the themes in its strategic plan and are directed towards the set of designated objectives.

Benchmarking is embedded in various quality assurance and enhancement activities throughout the University. UCD is regularly benchmarked as an institution and subject area level through its participation and inclusion in the various ranking agencies, for example the [QS World University Ranking](#). UCD benchmarks and monitors the implementation of its Strategic Plan against an agreed set of KPIs ([UCD KPIs](#)). In addition, the University's [Periodic Quality Review](#) process – which involves external, independent evaluation of all Schools and Professional units – and the [Subject Extern Examiner system](#) supports the University in enhancing the quality of its provision and services.

In relation to the provision of support for management of resources, [UCD Institutional Research](#) provides data support for University planning and management activities directed toward fulfilling the goals and objectives of the University. Institutional research is a support function within UCD which aims to inform decision making and planning at senior management level. The Director of Institutional Research and Analytics reports to the Director of Strategic Planning and the unit's activities also inform the work of the UCD Quality Office. The Director of Institutional Research and Analytics, for example, provides statistical data and information for use in the Periodic Quality Review process which includes information on applications, student registrations, graduations, and retention rates along with school- level analysis from relevant student and staff surveys such as [StudentSurvey.ie](#). This suite of reports is shared with self-assessment teams via a secure Google Drive and gives each school under review a consistent and reliable source of information to inform their self-assessment process. A suite of reports is also made available to Heads of School via InfoHub, to assist planning and quality assurance processes; these management-level reports include but are not limited to:

- Student Recruitment Reporting - reports relating to CAO Applications to UCD including application and conversion trends, entry points and current year information
- Student FTEs - information on FTEs for taught and research students
- Retention, Progression and Completion Rates – for reporting on student retention and progression through programmes
- Underrepresented Students - information on students who enter through the various access pathways including students from low-income households, students reporting a disability, part-time students, mature students and those who entered with a QQI-FET award
- Graduate award and outcomes, and Career Registration
- Survey data, including [StudentSurvey.ie](#) and the [International Student Barometer](#)
- Research Information - information on school research projects, including financial status, staff and publications
- HR Staff Management Report - report providing details of staff associated with each unit

The [UCD Research Analytics and Impact Team](#) provides Heads of Schools, College Principals and their nominees with access to a [Research Activity Dashboard](#). This online report provides a view of research activity at College, School and Institute level, showing information and metrics on research funding, staff and publications. The report is available through InfoHub. This report provides a view of research activity at School level, showing information and metrics on research funding, staff and publications, using a combination of the university business systems and Bibliometrics data.

Research Funding

- Proposals and Awards: Volume, value, and % overhead for past 5 years
- Active Grants: Current volume, value, average duration
- Research Grants: Budget Vs actual expenditure

Research Publications

- Volume and Citation Impact for past 5 years

Research Staff

- Total Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff (including Academic staff FTE, and Research staff FTE)
- % Research Active Academic Staff

Innovation Metrics

- Consultancy contracts
- Inventions Disclosed
- Patents Filed and Granted
- Licences
- Spin-outs

The UCD Finance Office also provides resources and support for University, College, School and other unit planning and management processes, such as:

- Payroll Office
- Research Finance Office
- Staff Expenses
- Non-Staff & Student Expenses
- Accounts Payable
- Procurement & Purchasing Unit
- Finance Systems
- General Ledger
- Fixed Asset Register
- Strategic and Financial Planning, including annual 5-year Budget Preparation
- Quarterly Management Accounts
- Fee Income census
- Financial Review of new initiatives, including review of new programmes and commercial activities
- Financial Statements
- Policies & Procedures
- Taxation
- Forms
- Maintenance of Management Reporting Structures PostAuthorisation

For additional internal reporting and information management purposes accessed via UCD Connect, the InfoHub online reporting system delivers fast access to information in UCD's business systems e.g. student information, Human Resources reports and Finance reports. It provides high-level summaries. Furthermore, the Enterprise Applications Group (EAG) in UCD IT Services provides access to Tableau, which is a modern, cloud-based analytics and reporting tool which helps to empower business users to create reports and analyse data themselves. Across UCD, it gives managers and teams increased access to ad hoc reporting and analytics to support their decision-making. Key institutional data is considered as part of the Periodic Quality Review of

schools and professional units.

Governing Boards have primary responsibility for monitoring the progress of students on the programmes for which they are responsible, and have access to extensive reporting tools within the InfoHub Report Catalogue available through [UCD IT Services Analytics & Reporting](#). These provide important tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, as well as other important student-related metrics. These include:

- Current Applications School Summary
- Application Trends
- Conversion Trends
- Reasons for choosing UCD - University Summary
- Reasons for choosing programme - University Summary
- School Class Lists
- Major Class Lists
- Programme Class Lists
- My Grading Class Lists
- School Grading Summary
- Student Support Statistics by Area
- Student Engagement by School
- Student Registrations - University Summary
- Student Demographics - University Summary
- Curriculum Trends
- Graduate Research Students School Summary
- Registered Students by International Indicators
- Clubs & Societies Membership Statistics
- Postdoc Tracking System

UCD receives the outputs from the annual [StudentSurvey.ie](#), and these data are further analysed by UCD Institutional Research at institutional, College, School and programme level, ensuring there is direct feedback of students feeding into the quality assurance and enhancement of UCD's programmes and the student experience as a whole. This survey is under review in 2024 and was not run.

Student feedback on modules and teaching is gathered through surveys delivered at the end of the teaching trimester and hosted in a new UCD Student Feedback system. This feedback and Extern Examiners' reports are also reviewed annually by Governing Boards and the University.

Every year the [UCD Careers Network](#) conducts, on behalf of the University, a [Graduate Outcomes Survey](#). Issued to graduates of all full-time and part-time courses at NFQ levels 8, 9 and 10, this survey captures whether UCD graduates are in employment, in further study or training, seeking employment or doing something else, nine months after graduation. The data collected is submitted to the HEA for use in publications, and it is also available internally to staff. This can be found on the UCD Careers Network intranet, via their interactive dashboards on Tableau. This data also helps to inform the ongoing implementation of the [UCD Career Development & Employability Strategy 2015 – 2025](#).

Graduate Outcomes data can also be made available to UCD staff via reports should it be useful/relevant to their roles (for example College Principals, Deans, Heads of Schools, Heads of School Teaching and Learning, Vice Principals and Associate Deans of Teaching and Learning, Marketing/Recruitment Managers etc.).

Career Registration Data is collected annually from all students at the point of registration. Students answer three questions on: 1) Career Readiness; 2) Extent of work-related experience; and 3) Employment sectors of interest. Data is collected to inform the development of career and employability interventions and students receive an email in response to question 1 on career readiness with suggested next steps. Career Registration data is now embedded into the academic planning cycle and reports into the UMT Education Group. Career Registration data is also now available via the UCD Careers Network intranet. Career Registration data is used by the Careers Network to inform an evidence and data informed approach to delivering, reviewing and planning activities around career development and employability.

QS World University Ranking - UCD was ranked as number one in Ireland, and 77 in the world, for the Employment Outcomes Indicator by QS in the latest World University Rankings. QS discontinued this ranking and the constituent factors that made up the ranking have been rolled into the overall institutional world ranking. The Careers Network continues to collect data which contributes to other ranking mechanisms.

UCD IT Services also provides resources for Research IT - this range of services is designed to support and facilitate researchers in their use of IT as an enabler for their research activities. The range of services provided is tailored to support the needs of the research community and includes access to a High Performance Computing (HPC) environment ideal for researchers who need access to substantial computing resources, allowing them to greatly reduce the time required to perform large scale calculations. The UCD Sonic HPC cluster is a group of high powered servers networked together to tackle large computational tasks. The Sonic HPC nodes are networked together using InfiniBand and connected to a parallel storage system that allows files to be read from, and written to, at much greater speed than standalone storage. A software scheduler (SLURM) runs on top of all this hardware to ensure fairness among the users. The Sonic HPC cluster is a shared campus resource open to all researchers. Brightspace training modules make access to the Sonic cluster easier by allowing researchers to take a series of short training videos which will aid them in using the UCD Sonic HPC.

IT Services operates the Cyber Security programme of work that ensures the University's information and data are protected from malicious cyber-attacks. This programme controls access, monitors resilience and takes actions to prevent data breaches as required. This is a cyclical programme of work that increasingly makes UCD's operating environment more secure every year.

IT Services also supports Curriculum Management & Reporting which incorporates the systems that support UCD Registry and Schools and Colleges in their endeavour to maintain UCD's curriculum. These include Curriculum Archive, Curriculum Browser, Curriculum Management System, Module Access Management, the Programme Register, Student Feedback Survey Management and Timetable Management.

IT Services continues to work closely with the University's Senior Management Team to maximise the provision of relevant, timely data and information, thereby facilitating the rapid progression and successful impact of UCD's digital transformation programmes.

To safeguard individuals and to ensure the integrity and reliability of information services, UCD has a number of 'Use Policies'. These are designed to ensure that the University can offer the widest possible range of services to its community, while at the same time ensuring that such services are used in a compliant manner. The policies are not intended to limit use of the University's information services. The relevant issues are addressed in the UCD Information Technology Services Acceptable Use Policy. This policy provides all users with clear guidance on the acceptable, safe, and respectful use of the University's IT resources. A Device Protection Policy provides guidelines on the users' responsibility on ensuring that any device used to access University's IT resources is appropriately secured and protected. Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is also mandatory on all UCD staff accounts.

UCD Library has published the [UCD Library – General Information Resources Policy](#). The aim of this policy is to direct and guide the provision of effective, high-quality collections and appropriate electronic access to information resources for the University College Dublin academic community. The policy is developed in the context of the University's mission and goals, as published in strategic planning and policy documents at University, College and School levels.

The University has a number of policies and procedures relating to information and data management, including:

- [UCD Data Privacy Statement](#)
- [UCD Data Protection Policy](#)
- [UCD Cookie Policy](#)
- [UCD Data Request Policy](#)
- [UCD Data Subject Access Request Form](#)

[UCD Office of the DPO](#) – the functions of this office include assisting and advising the University on matters concerning the application and implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, and the European Communities (Electronic Communications Networks and Services) (Privacy and Electronic Communications) Regulations 2011. In addition, this office serves as a contact point for requests from individuals regarding the processing of their personal data and the exercising of their rights. It is also the interface between the Data Protection Commission (DPC) and UCD.

UCD Data Protection Road Map – A supporting framework is in place to ensure that everyone in the UCD community is aware of their rights and obligations under these legislations with mandatory training on data protection and security for all staff. UCD has appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO), established an Office of the DPO and developed a university-wide internal network of 'GDPR Champions' to promote data privacy throughout the entire academic and administrative structure.

[UCD Records Management and Freedom of Information](#) – the functions of this unit are to ensure organisational compliance with the University's statutory obligations pursuant to the Freedom of Information and Access to Information on the Environment regulations. Its role is also to advise the University in the management of university organisational records, including the formulation of corporate standards and practices in records management in keeping with best practice. Provision of information, assistance, and training to staff is also a responsibility of the unit.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

Information is delivered through various channels, including advertising, recruitment and career fairs, publications, the University's website and social media channels. The [UCD Marketing and Communications Office](#) manages, *inter alia*, the external communications functions of the University through its engagement with stakeholder groups. The office manages the University's brand positioning, marketing to prospective students, media relations, and the management of the University's online channels.

Education and Training Programmes

For prospective students, there is a wide variety of guidance, information and other supporting documents relating to the student lifecycle, included on the [Study At UCD](#) website and in hard copy. For undergraduate applicants from Ireland and the EU, the '[MyUCD](#)' portal provides extensive information on a range of topics, such as:

- [Courses](#)
- [Applying to UCD](#) (includes admissions criteria, policies and procedures)
- [Visiting UCD](#)
- [UCD Prospectus](#)
- [Open Evenings & Career Fairs](#)
- [My UCD on Facebook](#)
- [Virtual Tour](#)
- [Scholarships](#)
- [UCD Schools Liaison & Outreach Programme](#)
- [Parents webpage](#)
- [Guidance Counsellor Resource Pages](#)
- [UCD Horizons](#) (the modular and credit-based structure for taught degrees at UCD)
- [CAO – Think Bigger UCD](#)
- [Campus Life](#)
- [Summer School](#)
- [UCD Open Day](#)
- [Peer to Peer Chat platform](#)

This information is collated and managed by the UCD Registry units of Student Recruitment and Admissions. These units work with Schools, in co-ordination with the UCD Registry Curriculum Team to ensure all programme and module information is correct and up-to-date, including information about collaborative and transnational programmes.

Information for prospective and incoming non-EU international students is provided by [UCD Global](#), including information on:

- Why UCD?
- What Can I Study?
- Coming to Ireland Student Life
- Meet UCD

For graduate taught degree admissions, and other non-CAO applicants, from Ireland and the EU, UCD operates an online [UCD Applications](#) system with information for these prospective students detailed on the [UCD Graduate Admissions](#) website. There is also information about programmes available via online and distance learning through the [UCD Online Learning](#) website. Non-EU international applicants at graduate taught apply through a dedicated website supported by UCD Global for [study at UCD for international students](#). Information about on-

campus accommodation is also available on the UCD Residences website.

Once admitted to UCD, there is extensive information available to students to assist them in their transition to university life and their programme. This is available through the [New Students](#) website and it includes a broad range of advice and guidance, as well as detailed information about the [Orientation](#) events and schedule which is compulsory for all new students. Detailed and specialised information is provided to undergraduate students, graduate students, and international students.

For current students, there is a dedicated [UCD Current Students](#) website. This includes information on registration, term dates, fees, exams and student services with a view to providing a 'one-stop-shop', holistic and student-centred set of resources. Included in this is the following:

- [Course Search](#)
- [Exams](#)
- [Fees](#)
- [New Students](#) (includes orientation information, key dates, the Welcome to UCD guide and video, new students' checklist, UCD Career Guide, Library information for new students)
- [Registration](#)
- [Student Desk](#)
- Student Services Directory
- [UCD Term Dates](#)

The [Student Desk](#), College Offices, Programme Offices and School Offices provide public information and support for students and an integrated service for all admissions, registration, fee and assessment issues.

Additional policies and procedures and other guidelines which support the student learning journey include:

- [Academic Regulations](#)
- [Taught Programme Transfer and Re-Admission Policy](#)
- [Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning](#)
- [Policy on Progression in Doctoral Programmes](#)

Research and Related Services

Section 1.1 provides information on the University's research activities; and section 4 provides information on UCD's research programmes.

Quality Assurance Policies and Procedures

The University has in place a [Quality Framework](#) that enables it to assure the quality of its teaching and learning, research and other activities. Quality is embedded across the University, and this is reflected in its governance structures and oversight, policies and procedures. The aim of the [UCD Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Policy](#) is to enhance the effectiveness of its core activities of learning, teaching and research and their effective management. It addresses all areas of university activity taking cognizance of their contribution to, and alignment with the University strategic goals. The policy is aligned with the *European Standards and Guidelines* (2015) and related documents, and its implementation ensures the University's compliance with the *Universities Act, 1997*, *Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act* (2012), and the *QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines* (2016). A key feature of the quality process is a commitment to involving staff, students and other stakeholders in the process.

The various quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms used by the University include an organisational and academic governance structure that provides oversight on the University's Quality Framework. This includes:

- Regular peer review of academic and professional units
- Peer review of the University's Linked Providers
- Programme approval and curriculum review processes
- Approval, monitoring and review of collaborative taught programme provision
- Module evaluation
- Extern Examiner reports
- Procedures for faculty and staff appointments
- Oversight of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Policies and procedures to support quality processes
- An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Embedded student representation on university committees
- Systematic student representation in the quality processes
- Student participation in the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC)

The UCD Quality Office is responsible for managing the Periodic Quality Review process and contributing to university academic governance and the development of policies and procedures. Further information and guidance on the review process, its guidelines, procedures and review schedule is published on the [UCD Quality Office website](#). A wide range of internal supports such as those from Human Resources, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Library, Teaching and Learning, Research, and Institutional Research are also available to support schools and units undergoing review and these are published at [UCD Supports & Resources for Quality Review](#).

Evaluation and Findings from Quality Assurance Evaluations

Evaluation of findings or recommendations are implemented at the level of the school/unit within agreed timelines. A sub-committee of ACQEC considers all Review Group Reports prior to their consideration by ACQEC, UMT and Governing Authority. A process for monitoring the implementation of recommendations is in place and embedded into the University's annual planning cycle. Each unit is required to complete a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to address the recommendations and must be approved by the relevant College Principal/Vice-President. Each QIP is considered by the University Management Team. Review Group Reports for Periodic Quality Review, as well as the Quality Improvement Plans, are published on the [Reports and Publications](#) of the UCD Quality Office website.

Units must also provide a one-year Progress Report on the QIP implementation which is considered by the UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs. As well as incorporating implementation of the QIP into their annual and five-year plan, units are requested to provide an updated report as part of their next quality review.

A number of additional reports are produced annually for ACQEC.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation and monitoring of the University's activity is a key component of the Periodic Quality Review Process. Quality Enhancement/Quality Assurance at UCD is not a static but a dynamic process that enables a school/unit under review to reflect on its activity. Guidelines and procedures are in place to conduct reviews and are approved by ACQEC. Oversight on implementation and monitoring is at the levels of the unit, its relevant College, and the University through ACQEC, UMT and Governing Authority.

The University's strategic and holistic approach to Periodic Quality Review acknowledges the various aspects of a school/unit's operations and their mutual dependency. Separate guidelines have been developed for academic schools, professional units, Linked Providers, and transnational programme provision and these are available on the UCD Quality Office website. These guidelines cover areas such as:

- Strategy
- Organisation, management and staffing of the school/unit
- Management of resources and facilities
- Functions, activities and processes
- Quality of programmes and student learning experience
- Quality of postgraduate research education and research activity
- Management of quality and enhancement
- Support services
- External relations

Quality review involves consideration of a wide range of data information using the University's InfoHub data system, feedback from students, staff and other stakeholders, reports such as external examiners, accreditation reports, etc. It ensures that members of the school/unit come together to reflect upon what they are trying to achieve in all aspects of their work, and how these different areas of activity impact upon one another. All members of the school/unit, both faculty and staff, participate in the review and have an opportunity to contribute to the Self-Assessment Report and site visit. The primary focus of the review is on quality enhancement.

Periodic Quality Review of Schools, Professional Units, Transnational Collaborative Provision and Linked Providers

Periodic Quality Review is a cyclical process which is carried out in academic schools, professional units, transnational programme provision and Linked Providers. Periodically, thematic reviews will also be undertaken at a cross institutional level such as curriculum review, student services and research institutes. The overall aim of the review process is on-going enhancement of all relevant activities. The key stages are:

- Drafting of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR).
- Site Visit - consideration of the SAR by a Review Group and meetings with stakeholders.
- Review Group prepares a Report incorporating recommendations for quality improvement.
- Preparation of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) by the area under review for on-going improvement.
- Follow-up by the University - to consider progress against the QIP.

Review Group Reports for Periodic Quality Review are typically finalised 6 weeks after the Review Group site visit,

and are published on the [Reports and Publications](#) section of the UCD Quality Office website following consideration by ACQEC, UMT and the UCD Governing Authority. The report provides the findings of the Review Group and outlines their commendations and recommendations. Following the review, the area under review prepares a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to address the Review Group recommendations. The QIPs are considered by UMT and published on the UCD Quality Office website. The Review Group recommendations are also reported in the University's annual planning process. Progress on the implementation of the QIP is provided one year after the agreement of the QIP.

Criteria used for Recruitment of External Independent International Experts

External Reviewers/Evaluators

The University has approved the criteria for the appointment of external reviewers for quality review and these are published in the [Handbook for Internal Periodic Quality Review \(Academic School\)](#), the [UCD Quality Review Guidelines \(Support\)](#) and the [Collaborative Partnerships Guidelines for Periodic Review](#).

Extern Examiners

For **Subject Extern Examiners**, the University has published ([Subject Extern Examination Policy](#)) the criteria for appointment of Subject Extern Examiners, which includes:

- They should have the appropriate academic expertise, experience and, where necessary, professional qualifications relating to the subjects to which they are appointed.
- They should have up-to-date knowledge of international best practice in the design, development, and assessment of relevant curricula.
- They should be adequately experienced to adjudicate on comparability of academic standards with peer Universities.
- They may not be a staff member or be involved in teaching or assessment in any capacity at the University. Care should be taken to ensure that no other possible conflict of interest may arise. Any potential conflicts of interest should be made known to the ACCE upon nomination or as may arise during the term of appointment.
- They should not be appointed from the same institution as their predecessor. Exceptions may, on occasion, be permitted in cases where no other option exists.
- Former members of UCD staff may not be appointed as Subject Extern Examiners for a period of at least five years after they have left the University. Once a Subject Extern Examiner has completed their duties, a three-year time interval is required before a Subject Extern Examiner can be reappointed as an Extern Examiner in the University in any capacity.

For **Special Extern Examiners**, who are involved in the examination of research degrees, the criteria is defined in the [Academic Regulations](#) as follows: *"The special extern examiner is a person who has been approved by the Academic Council or its relevant committee on the nomination of the Head of School to participate in the examination of a research degree as a recognised expert in the area of research of the relevant thesis."*

Furthermore, the [UCD Policy for Theses in Research Degree Programmes](#) provides an outline of the responsibilities of the Special Extern Examiner.

Engagement with External Quality Assurance

As a Designated Awarding Body, UCD is required under the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act, 2012* to

undergo external review of the effectiveness of its institution-wide quality assurance procedures for the purposes of establishing, ascertaining, maintaining, and enhancing the quality of its provision of education, training, research and related services. These reviews are co-ordinated by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) on a cyclical basis (2017-2023). UCD last underwent review in 2019 with the [Review Team Report](#) published in 2020. The University prepared its institutional Quality Improvement Plan which was submitted to QQI in June 2020. A one-year progress report was submitted to QQI in June 2021. Following the conclusion of the formal institutional quality process ACQEC provides ongoing monitoring of the QIP implementation supported by the UCD Quality Office. An annual update on progress is provided to UMT and GA.

The University engages with QQI on an ongoing basis through the Annual Quality Report, Quality Dialogue Meetings, Irish Universities Association (IUA) committees, projects, and through contributions to the development or review of policies. It also engages with the professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies that accredit professional programmes.

9.0 Details of Arrangements with Third Parties

9.1 Arrangements with PRSBs, Awarding Bodies, QA Bodies

Type of arrangement	Total Number
PRSBs	75
Awarding bodies	0
QA bodies	1

1.	Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PSRB
	Name of body:	National Social Work Registration Board (CORU)
	Programme titles and links to publications	Professional Masters in Social Work (Prof. MSW) Masters in Science Social Work (MSc Social Work) https://www.coru.ie/about-us/registration-boards/social-care-workers-registration-board/
	Date of accreditation or last review	2023
	Date of next review	2029

2.	Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PSRB
	Name of body:	American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)
	Programme titles and links to publications	School of Veterinary Medicine - Undergraduate; MVB Veterinary Medicine (5 yr); Graduate Entry Veterinary Medicine (4 yr); https://www.avma.org/
	Date of accreditation or last review	2020
	Date of next review	2027

3.	Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PSRB
	Name of body:	Engineers Ireland
	Programme titles and links to publications	https://www.engineersireland.ie/listings/resource/1205

COLLEGE NAME	DESCRIPTION	INITIALS	DISCIPLINE	STANDARD	NOTE	ACCORD	EURACE	GRAD YEAR FROM	GRAD YEAR TO
University College Dublin (UCD)									
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering	BE	Agricultural Food Engineering	CEng		Washington		1982	2004
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering	BE	Biosystems Engineering	CEng		Washington		1982	2004
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering	BE	Chemical Engineering	CEng		Washington		1982	2004
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering	BE	Civil Engineering	CEng		Washington		1982	2004
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering	BE	Electrical Engineering	CEng		Washington		1982	2004
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering	BE	Electronic Engineering	CEng		Washington		1982	2004
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering	BE	Mechanical Engineering	CEng		Washington		1982	2004
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Agricultural Food Engineering	CEng		Washington	Y	2005	2010
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Biomedical Engineering	CEng with FL	FL	Washington	Y	2018	2028
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Biosystems Engineering	CEng		Washington	Y	2005	2010
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Chemical Engineering	CEng		Washington	Y	2005	2010
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Civil Engineering	CEng		Washington	Y	2005	2012
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Civil Engineering	CEng with FL	FL	Washington	Y	2013	2028
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Electrical Engineering	CEng		Washington	Y	2005	2012
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Electrical Engineering	CEng with FL	FL	Washington	Y	2013	2028
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Electronic Engineering	CEng		Washington	Y	2005	2012
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Electronic Engineering	CEng with FL	FL	Washington	Y	2013	2028
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Mechanical Engineering	CEng		Washington	Y	2005	2012
University College Dublin	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)	BE(Hons)	Mechanical Engineering	CEng with FL	FL	Washington	Y	2013	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Biosystems & Food Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2022	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Biomedical Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2011	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2019	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Civil and Environmental Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2012	2015
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Civil Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2012	2015
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2016	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Electrical Power Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2012	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Electronic and Computer Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2012	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Energy Systems Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2011	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Engineering with Business	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2011	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Materials Science & Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2011	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Mechanical Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2011	2028
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Optical Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2019	2023
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Structural Engineering	CEng	M	Washington	Y	2012	2015
University College Dublin	Master of Engineering	ME	Structural Engineering with Architecture	CEng	M	Washington	Y	1982	2028

Date of accreditation or last review

See table above

Date of next review

See table above

4. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)

PSRB

Name of body:

Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI)

Programme titles and links to publications

All programmes delivered in the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems were awarded NMBI accreditation for five years from July 2023. The approval and site inspection can be found here: <https://www.nmbi.ie/Education/Site-Inspection-Reports>

Date of accreditation or last review

July 2023

Date of next review

July 2028

5. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)

PSRB

Name of body:

Irish Medical Council

Programme titles and links to publications

Undergraduate Entry to Medicine (UEM);
Graduate Entry to Medicine (GEM);
<https://www.medicalcouncil.ie/>

Date of accreditation or last review

2020

Date of next review

2025

9.2 Collaborative Provision

Definitions:

QQI's Policy for Collaborative Programmes, Transnational Programmes, and Joint Awards, 2012 defines collaborative provision as a process that occurs where two or more providers are involved by formal agreement in the provision of a programme of higher education and training.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'joint award' as a single award made jointly by two or more awarding bodies.

The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 (as amended) defines 'Linked Provider' as a provider that is not a Designated Awarding Body but enters into an arrangement with a Designated Awarding Body under which arrangement the provider provides a programme of education and training that satisfies all or part of the prerequisites for an award of the Designated Awarding Body.

Type of arrangement	Total number
Joint research degrees	12
Joint/double/multiple awards	9
Collaborative programmes	35
Franchise programmes	0
Linked Providers (DABs only)	2
NOTE: UCD is engaged in a broad and diverse range of collaborative arrangements, not all of which fall within the five categories above.	

1. Linked Provider	Linked Provider
Name of body (/bodies):	Institute of Banking (IoB)
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of all IoB programmes are available at https://iob.ie/programmes .
Date of last review	May 2019
Date of next review	2025-2026

2. Linked Provider	Linked Provider
Name of body (/bodies):	National College of Art and Design (NCAD)
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of all NCAD programmes are available at https://www.ncad.ie/students/programme-information/ .
Date of last review	October 2021
Date of next review	2027-2028

3. Collaborative Programme	Collaborative Programme
Name of body (/bodies):	RCSI and UCD Medical College (RUMC)
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of all RUMC programmes are available at https://www.rcsiucd.edu.my/programmes/ .

Date of last review	December 2023
Date of next review	2029-2030

4. Collaborative Programme	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	Beijing-Dublin International College (BDIC)
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of all BDIC programmes are available at https://www.ucd.ie/bdic/ .
Date of last review	June 2020
Date of next review	2025-2026

5. Collaborative Programme	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	Chang'an-Dublin International College of Transportation (CDIC)
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of all CDIC programmes are available at https://www.ucd.ie/cdic/ .
Date of last review	None to date - CDIC opened in September 2020
Date of next review	TBC

6. Collaborative Programme	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	Guangzhou-Dublin International College of Life Sciences & Technology (GDIC)
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of all CDIC programmes are available at https://www.ucd.ie/gdic/ .
Date of last review	None to date - GDIC opened in September 2020
Date of next review	TBC

7. Collaborative Programme	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	University of Ulster
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of programmes are available at https://www.ucd.ie and https://www.ulster.ac.uk .
Date of last review	April 2023
Date of next review	2027-2028

8. Collaborative Programme	Joint/double/multiple award
Name of body (/bodies):	Trinity College Dublin
Programme titles and links to publications	Specific details of programmes are available at MSc Comparative Social Change
Date of last review	N/A
Date of next review	N/A

9.3 Articulation Agreements

Definition:

Per the IHEQN Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision, an **articulation agreement** may be defined as a process whereby all students who satisfy academic criteria on one programme are automatically entitled (on academic grounds) to be admitted with advanced standing to a subsequent stage of a programme of a degree awarding body. These arrangements are subject to a formal agreement between the parties.

Articulation agreements - Total number	8
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1. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Xiamen University (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	1+3 (Business)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	18 July 2022
Date of next review	17 July 2027
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

2. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Xiamen University (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	Business
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	18 July 2022
Date of next review	17 July 2027
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

3. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	South China Agricultural University (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	2+2 (Business)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	17 April 2023
Date of next review	17 April 2028

Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.
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4. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	South China Agricultural University (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	2+2 (Health & Agricultural Sciences)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	12 October 2022
Date of next review	11 October 2027
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

5. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Beijing University of Technology (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	1+2+1 (Interfaculty)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	22 September 2022
Date of next review	21 September 2027
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

6. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Beijing Foreign Studies University (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	1+3 (Business)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	25 April 2023
Date of next review	25 April 2028
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

7. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Abu Dhabi University (United Arab Emirates)
Programme titles and links to publications	Business

Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	15 November 2021
Date of next review	14 November 2026
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

8. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, China
Programme titles and links to publications	2+2/2+1 to BSS2 Economics and Finance
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	25 June 2024
Date of next review	25 June 2027
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

University College Dublin (UCD) 2025		

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2023-2024

PART B: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM

Guidelines on Completing Part B

As outlined in the general guidelines for this template (p.5), **Part B** of the AQR documents and captures QA activities, developments and enhancements undertaken by institutions **during the reporting period** and their **impact**.

Insofar as is possible, institutions should demonstrate in Part B how plans set out in the previous AQR submission were progressed during the reporting period – these may be plans linked to strategic objectives, to reengagement advices, or to institutional review recommendations.

Part B of the AQR is an opportunity for self-reflection and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of QA activities over the reporting period. Institutions are encouraged to reflect both on what worked well and what did not work well, and to consider impact measures, using both quantitative and qualitative evidence (metrics, benchmarks, and feedback/judgement) and how they led to specific QA improvements and enhancement.

Part B provides evidence of quality improvement and enhancement and impact² of QA activities within the totality of an institution's QA system.

Section 1 pertains to internal quality assurance implementation and developments since the previous reporting period.

Section 2 deals with institutional analysis of IQA enhancements and impacts including activities undertaken in respect of academic integrity, and the enhancements and impacts resulting from same.

Section 3 relates to IQA developments and plans for the next reporting period.

Section 4 provides an opportunity for institutions to illustrate IQA in action through case studies in relevant thematic areas.

Institutions are invited, if they wish to do so, to use case studies to demonstrate quality in action and to highlight areas of practice for dissemination at any point in this part of the report.

Case Studies

QQI recommends that written case studies should:

- Be between half a page and two pages in length;
- Relate to a specific time- and subject-bound issue;
- Include an introduction that sets out a brief overview of contextual matters;
- Include any relevant supporting data and data analysis;
- Include links to any sources cited;
- Include a clear concluding paragraph with overview of key outcomes/learning.

Although case studies will generally be in written form, institutions may also provide links to audio-visual/multimedia case studies. QQI does not prescribe a format for case studies.

² The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education have considered impact and measures leading to development and improvement specifically in terms of teaching and learning. See: <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/NF-2020-Insights-from-Practice-About-Impact-in-Teaching-and-Learning-web-ready.pdf>. This is a very useful reference, though impact in the context of this report should be considered.

1.0 Quality Implementation and Developments

1.1 Strategic QA Updates

Institutional Strategic Objectives

The University operates an integrated system for quality assurance and enhancement which contributes to the achievement of its strategy.

The new President of UCD, Professor Orla Feely, commenced her term of office on 2 May 2023 and delivered her Inaugural Lecture on 25 September 2023 in which she set out the plan to develop a new strategy to 2030 through a series of consultation events with a wide range of stakeholders. The new strategy, which will follow on from the previous UCD Strategy 2020-2024, 'Rising to the Future', will be launched in November 2024.

Ongoing monitoring by the University on implementation of the new strategic plan will be undertaken through UMT, GA, and the Extended Leadership Group supported by the new Vice-President for Strategy and External Engagement and the UCD Institutional Research unit.

Key University Appointments

On 1 September 2023, Professor Federica Pazzaglia was appointed as the new Director of UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and Associate Dean of UCD College of Business.

On 21 September 2023, Professor Colin Scott was appointed to the position of UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, with effect from 1 December 2023.

From 1 December 2023, Professor Barbara Dooley returned to the role of Dean of Graduate Studies, having previously acted as Acting UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

In November 2023, Professor Kate Robson Brown was appointed as Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact. In the role, Professor Robson Brown will enhance UCD's delivery of research and innovation that advances knowledge, supports the development of outstanding researchers within a positive research culture, and has a clear, positive impact on society and the economy in Ireland and in the wider world.

Also in November 2023, Triona McCormack was named as the first Vice-President for Strategy and External Engagement. In the role, Triona will provide leadership and connectivity in the development and implementation of the University's strategic plan and its external engagement activities. She will work closely with the University's academic and administrative leadership to shape the University's future direction, build its reputation, and foster and strengthen its engagement with national and international partners and stakeholders.

The seventh Governing Authority of UCD commenced its term of office on 7 November 2023 and is comprised of an external Chair (1), External Members (6) and Ministerial Nominees (3); as well as the Chief Officer/President (1), Academic Staff (3), Professional, Technical and Research Staff (2) and Student Members (3).

On 1 February 2024, Professor Niamh Moore-Cherry was appointed as College Principal for the College of Social Sciences and Law.

On 1 February 2024, Professor Aoife Ahern, College Principal for the UCD College of Engineering and Architecture, was appointed as Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

Campus Development

There are a number of campus development projects currently underway, including:

- The Centre for Future Learning
- Science Phase 3
- Sports and Student Amenity Precinct
- Newman and James Joyce Library Projects
- UCD Residence Masterplan
- Lyons Farm

Further information on all capital development projects is available at [UCD Campus Development](#).

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

UCD Institutional Review

Implementation of the recommendations from the 2019 Institutional Review of UCD has continued with ongoing monitoring and reporting of progress by ACQEC, with annual reports to UMT and GA.

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Governing Authority	21 September 2023, 26 October 2023, 14 December 2023, 1 February 2024, 21 March 2024, 9 May 2024, 27 June 2024
Academic Council	23 November 2023, 25 April 2024
Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee	2 October 2023, 27 November 2023, 7 February 2024, 24 April 2024
University Programmes Board	12 October 2023, 22 November 2023, 15 February 2024, 4 April 2024, 8 May 2024
University Management Team	29 August 2023, 12 September 2023, 26 September 2023, 10 October 2023, 24 October 2023, 7 November 2023, 21 November 2023, 5 December 2023, 19 December 2023, 17 January 2024, 30 January 2024, 13 February 2024, 27 February 2024, 12 March 2024, 26 March 2024, 9 April 2024, 23 April 2024, 18 June 2024

The full schedule of University governance meetings is available at [Governance and Management Committees](#).

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

In the reporting period (1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024) the following leadership and management developments occurred:

- The seventh Governing Authority of UCD commenced its term of office on 7 November 2023
- A new Director of UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and Associate Dean of UCD College of Business was appointed
- A new UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs was appointed
- A new Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact was appointed
- A new Vice-President for Strategy and External Engagement was appointed
- A new Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion was appointed
- A new College Principal was appointed in the UCD College of Social Sciences and Law
- New Heads of School took up their roles in the following Schools:
 - UCD School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy

- UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science
- UCD School of Education
- UCD School of English, Drama and Film
- UCD School of History
- UCD School of Information and Communication Studies
- UCD School of Mathematics and Statistics
- UCD School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering
- UCD School of Music
- UCD School of Philosophy
- UCD School of Veterinary Medicine

1.4 Internal Monitoring and Review

1.4.1 Overview of Periodic Reviews

Unit of review	Date of completion/reason for conducting review (if not planned) or non-completion (if planned but not conducted)	Links to relevant publications
UCD School of Information & Communications Studies	2-6 October 2023	UCD Quality Office – Reports & Publications
UCD Global	9-13 October 2023	As above
UCD-Teagasc Programmes Review	27-28 November 2023	As above
RCSI & UCD Malaysia Campus (RUMC)	4-7 December 2023	As above
UCD Sutherland School of Law	8-11 April 2024	As above
UCD Research, Innovation & Impact	29 April-2 May 2024	As above

1.4.2 Expert Review Teams/Panels³ involved in IQA

(i) Expert Review Team/Panel Size and Related Processes

Guide

Details in respect of review/evaluation processes that concluded during the reporting period should be set out below.

Please use whole numbers rather than percentages.

	Total	Academic Schools/ Department	Professional Services/ Support Unit	Approval/Review of Linked Provider	Programme Approval	Programme Review	Other
Number of review/ evaluation processes	10	2	2		4	2	
<i>of those:</i>							
On-site processes	6						
Desk reviews	4 ¹						
Virtual processes	0						
Average panel size for each process type*		4	4		N/A	5	
¹ Considered by Academic Council and its sub-committees and/or University Management Team – Global Engagement Group (UMT-GEG) * Excluding secretary if not a full panel member							

³ QQI acknowledges that the terminology used to describe the groups of individuals that conduct peer review/evaluation varies from institution to institution.

(ii) Composition of Expert Review Teams/Panels involved in IQA

	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
Type of Expert/ Role on Panel		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different
Chair	6	3	3		5			1			1
Secretary* NOTE: UCD does not utilise a Secretary role, but does use a Deputy Chair, information for which is included in the numbers here	5	1	4		5						
Academic/Discipline Specific	13	7	6		1		7	2	3	13	
Student Representative	1										
QA	1										
Teaching & Learning	1										
External Industry / Third Mission	0										
NOTE: The above data does not include reviews postponed to the next reporting period.											

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

Governance and Management of Quality

World University Rankings

UCD remains one of the world's top universities, with four top-50 and 16 top-100 subjects ranked in the 2024 edition of the QS World University Subject Rankings.

The four subjects at UCD ranked amongst the best in the world are Library & Information Management (27), English Language & Literature (40), Veterinary Science (42), and Petroleum Engineering (43).

The number of UCD subjects in the top 100 increased to 16, up from 13 in 2023, and the University remains Ireland's most represented in the Rankings, which now includes 43 UCD subjects, seven of which improved their position over last year, and 23 remained unchanged.

UCD is ranked in all five broad subject areas, with the QS classification of Arts & Humanities remaining its strongest entry.

Top 50 subject rankings for UCD:

- Library & Information Management
- English Language & Literature
- Veterinary Science
- Petroleum Engineering

Top 51 - 100 subject rankings for UCD:

- Agriculture & Forestry
- Law
- Anatomy & Physiology
- Archaeology
- Geography
- History
- Nursing
- Performing Arts
- Philosophy
- Politics & International studies
- Social Policy & Administration
- Sports Related Subjects

For Ireland, UCD is the leading institution when it comes to Employer Reputation, with Nursing achieving the country's highest score (84.1) in this metric.

The University's best performances in each of the other areas were as follows:

- In Academic Reputation, the best performing subject was in English Language & Literature, it scored 80.4.
- In Citations per Paper, Veterinary Science was the subject in which UCD earned its highest score (94.3).

- In H-Index, Agriculture & Forestry received a score of 86.1.
- And while the IRN index is not used in all subjects, its best performance for UCD was in Computer Science & Information Systems with a score of 82.9.

World University Rankings

UCD has been named in the top 50 in the 2024 QS World University Rankings for Sustainability, achieving the highest result in Ireland and ranking 24th in Europe. The QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2024 Report compares 1,397 of the world's universities against a range of metrics, to see which institutions are doing the most to tackle the world's greatest environmental, social and governance (ESG) challenges. UCD's achievement follows on from the establishment of a new role of Vice-President for Sustainability, with responsibility for positioning sustainability at the heart of the University's education, research, governance, operations, and engagement activities.

Key Leadership Changes

There were significant changes in leadership in the University within the reporting period, including the appointment of a new Governing Authority, a new Director of UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and Associate Dean of UCD College of Business, new UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, new Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact, new Vice-President for Strategy and External Engagement, new Vice-President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, one new College Principal and 10 new Heads of School.

Programmes of Education and Training

During the reporting period, four new programmes were approved by the [University Programmes Board \(UPB\)](#) including two Bachelor's Degree award programmes, one Masters of Science programme and one Professional Masters programme.

Internal Periodic Quality Review Process

New Handbooks for Internal Periodic Quality Review for [Academic Schools](#) and [Professional Support Units](#) were published following a comprehensive review. A joint UCD/RCSI institutional transnational quality review took place at the RCSI & UCD Malaysia Campus (RUMC) in Penang, Malaysia. This included the joint review and development of a new [Handbook for the Cyclical Review of the Effectiveness of a Linked Provider's QA Procedures](#).

Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

The University's recruitment and selection procedures are subject to the provisions of the Official Languages Act (Amendment), 2021. In July 2024, UCD Resourcing and UCD Gaeltacht commenced a pilot as approved by UMT to meet the advertising and Irish language targets set out under the Act. These targets include a mandatory 20% of advertising of roles in Irish. As part of the pilot it is mandatory for all externally advertised administrative, technical, IT, Library and support roles to be advertised in Irish/English for the remainder of 2024. It is also mandatory for all advertised appointments at UMT level or that are direct reports to a UMT member (including Academic and Research posts) to be advertised in Irish/English. This will be a temporary pilot to be reviewed in Q1 of 2025. UCD Resourcing and UCD Gaeltacht are actively supporting Schools and Units during this transition period to ensure their compliance under the Act.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

UDL Module Redesign Project

From January 2024, the University for All project team and the Faculty Partnership Programme began leading a Universal Design for Learning module redesign project. All faculty were invited to participate. The project is aimed at colleagues looking for new ways to reinvigorate their modules and teaching or are looking to tackle some of the issues presented by AI and authentic assessments. This project seeks to be high impact and a demonstration project for additional colleagues in UCD and beyond to follow.

Key aspects of the project include the following:

1. UCD Faculty Partners are recruiting colleagues who will commit to redeveloping a module to be featured in the UDL Module Redesign Project.
2. Participants can select a module they teach either in Spring trimester 2024 or Autumn trimester 2024 which will be the subject of the redesign.
3. The modules will need to run twice before this project is completed.
4. Explicit feedback questions will be asked of students in one of the last classes offered as part of the selected module.
5. This will be done in person to maximise student participation and will be carried out by someone other than the module coordinator, ideally a Faculty Partner.
6. Participants will redevelop their module based on this feedback before the next iteration and students will be asked the same set of questions to evaluate the impact of the redesign.
7. Participants will then write up the process of redesign to be featured as a case study. The format of this is yet to be decided but guidelines will be provided.
8. Participants should have previously completed the Digital Badge for Universal Design in Teaching & Learning or be committed to doing it during the course of the project.

Feedback gathered will be used as the basis for the redesign of the modules. This feedback will be provided to module coordinators in advance of a meeting with the Faculty Partners to discuss this and explore ideas for redesigns which will address any identified areas for improvement. Module coordinators may wish to incorporate broader student feedback into their redesigns and their own observations and learning. Module coordinators will be tasked with coming up with specific ideas for changes to the next iteration of their modules. Example redesigns using this process are documented in the [Inclusive Teaching & Learning](#) case studies.

Supports and Resources for Learners

Hosted by the UCD Library, Access and Lifelong Learning and UCD Teaching & Learning, the cross-unit Digital Literacy Community of Practice delivered a workshop on 23 October 2023 which aimed to facilitate a conversation in UCD about ethical ways of using AI for teaching, learning and research using three lenses:

- 1) An educational lens (impact of AI on teaching and learning practice);
- 2) An accessibility lens (effect of AI on accessibility of learning materials, assessment and the overall educational experience); and
- 3) An information management lens (evaluating the trustworthiness of AI-generated information).

The workshop also aimed to provide teaching staff with a useful template to facilitate this type of conversation with their students.

The UCD Library's Academic & Research Services also launched a new series of short videos to support researchers. These videos provide valuable insights on topics such as bibliometrics, open access publishing, and

key considerations when choosing a journal for publication. One such video outlines the three routes to making research open access. These are the Green, Gold and Diamond access routes, and more information is available at <https://libguides.ucd.ie/openaccess>. Bibliometrics is the quantitative analysis of citations for published material and more information on this is available via the UCD Library bibliometrics guide at <https://libguides.ucd.ie/bibliometrics>. And there is another video to highlight some questions to ask when deciding which academic journals to submit papers to – more information on this is available via the UCD Library Journal Publishing guide at <https://libguides.ucd.ie/publishing/journals>.

Information and Data Management (including analysis and impact of information gathered via StudentSurvey.ie)

In May 2024, UCD IT Services announced the introduction of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Retention Policy. Developed in collaboration with staff input across the University and recently approved by the University Management Team (UMT), this policy represents a step forward in ensuring the integrity, security, and efficiency of our online educational platform.

The [VLE Retention Policy](#) is designed to govern the management and preservation of digital content and user data within our Virtual Learning Environment. It includes guidelines and procedures for the retention of course materials, communication records, user data, and administrative documents, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements and best practices in data governance.

Key Objectives and Benefits:

- **Data Security and Compliance:** Prioritising adherence to data protection laws and privacy regulations to safeguard sensitive information.
- **Resource Optimisation:** Establishing guidelines for efficient storage space utilisation and computing resource management.
- **Learning Continuity:** Preserving access to course materials and communication records to support uninterrupted learning experiences.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Promoting transparency in data handling practices and definition of roles and responsibilities.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Allowing for flexibility to accommodate evolving technological advancements and pedagogical approaches.
- **Ethical Data Use:** Upholding ethical standards in the collection, use, and retention of user data.

Public Information and Communication

In May 2024, UCD launched Workvivo, an employee engagement platform that connects the people in UCD to the organisation, its goals and each other. It is a single, branded gateway that connects users to ‘all things UCD’ and is available on computer and mobile devices.

A theme continuously raised by staff within UCD has been the need for a more targeted communications system that delivers information in a concise and engaging manner. In addition, feedback reflects that an effective way to build and sustain online communities is increasingly important in a hybrid and flexible working environment.

The University has set-out to provide an accessible, connected workspace for colleagues to communicate, collaborate and engage across College, School, support unit, project and employee-led initiatives. UCD Workvivo provides an internal platform that allows staff to receive and post information directly to their colleagues in their area while joining collaborative spaces on topics that interest them and engage with the wider UCD community. The aim is to provide

an easy-to-use, engaging platform available both on desktop and mobile, that will allow staff to stay up to date, stay in touch and acknowledge colleagues' success. Over time the targeted communications system will be used less for emails and information highlighted in the staff e-zine will move to UCD Workvivo, where it will be easily found and archived.

UCD Public Engagement

Through the guidance of the UCD EDI Anti-Racism and Cultural Awareness sub-group, UCD President Professor Orla Feely formally signed the HEA Anti-Racism Principles on 18 September 2023. The HEA launched the Anti-Racism Principles for Irish Higher Education Institutions which aim to harness the power that Irish Higher education institutions (HEIs) have as leaders of positive change in society to challenge racism and race inequality. Irish HEIs have seen a growth in the ethnic diversity of their staff and students, reflective of the diversity in Ireland's population and these Anti-Racism Principles seek to embed a culture of race equality across higher education. These Principles have been developed through careful consultation with higher education stakeholders and the expert advice of the Athena Swan Ireland Intersectionality Working Group.

Furthermore, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) and support the development of UCD's Anti-Racism Action Plan in line with the HEA Anti-Racism Principles, UCD community members were invited to the UCD EDI Annual Conference 2024: Tackling Racism and embracing Cultural Diversity and Intersectionality. The event consisted of internal & external speakers, workshops, awareness raising and lightening presentations.

Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

The University continues to engage with 75 Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies that professionally accredit UCD programmes, schools, and institutes. A directory of such bodies and the programmes/schools/institutes that they accredit is published at [UCD Quality Office – Professional Accreditation](#). The University continues to work with these bodies and considers their reports in the context of the Periodic Quality Review process.

Self-Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Institutional Review

UCD continues to make progress in relation to the recommendations which arose from the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) CINTE quality review of UCD which took place in October 2019. Ongoing, annual reporting is provided to the Governing Authority against the [UCD Institutional Quality Improvement Plan \(IQIP\) \(July 2020\)](#). See also Section 3.1, QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives, for further details on progress on the IQIP.

School Review

In the reporting period 1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024, the following School reviews took place:

- UCD School of Information & Communications Studies (2-6 October 2023)
- UCD Sutherland School of Law (8-11 April 2024)

The approach to the quality review of schools covers areas such as Organisation, Management and Staffing of the School; Quality of Programmes and Student Learning Experience; Quality of Postgraduate Research Education and Research Activity; Management of Quality and Enhancement; Support Services; and External Relations.

Professional Unit Review

In the reporting period 1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024, the following Professional Unit reviews took place:

- UCD Global (9-13 October 2023)
- UCD Research, Innovation & Impact (29 April-2 May 2024)

The approach to the quality review of professional units covers areas such as Planning in Support of the UCD Strategy, Organisation and Staffing, Communication and Engagement, and Management of Quality and Enhancement.

Collaborative/Transnational Programme Review

In the reporting period 1 September 2023 – 31 August 2024, the following Collaborative/Transnational Programme reviews took place:

- UCD-Teagasc Programmes Review (27-28 November 2023)
- RCSI & UCD Malaysia Campus (RUMC) (4-7 December 2023)

Extern Examiners & Assessment

The fundamental role of the extern examiner is to assure academic standards and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The extern examiner confirms that the academic standards of courses, modules and the awards to which they lead are consistent with the academic outcomes specified by the University and are comparable to those achieved in the subject area in equivalent universities internationally.

In relation to Subject Extern Examiners, Schools send them information on the subject(s) and associated modules under examination, including any relevant materials such as Module Descriptors and the Programme Outcomes of Programmes in which subjects or modules are involved. All Subject Extern Examiners are required to submit an annual report online using the InfoHub Extern Examiner system. The content of each report is reviewed by the Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs of the University and feeds into future planning, quality reviews and curriculum planning.

Special Extern Examiners are appointed by the University to examine a thesis for a PhD, Research Masters, MD, or other Doctoral degree. A Special Extern Examiner participates in an examination committee for a research degree with an Internal Examiner and a Chair from UCD, examines a research thesis, and plays a leading role in a viva voce examination (for all PhD degrees and Doctoral Degrees except MD).

Programme Boards

UCD Programmes are governed and managed by Programme Deans, Programme Boards and Programme Offices. Programme Deans, who Chair the relevant Programme Board, oversee the operation of Programme Offices, which play a crucial role in the co-ordination of academic and support staff in relation to the management of UCD programmes. Programme Boards are responsible for overseeing and enhancing academic quality and the student learning experience for the programmes they are responsible for, as outlined in their Terms of Reference. Programme Offices are dedicated to supporting students throughout their programme of study, and UCD Student Advisers are also attached to every programme area. Programme Boards also undertake ongoing annual review of modules based on student feedback and feedback from Subject Extern Examiners

At University-level, Programme Boards report to the University Programmes Board (UPB) and the Programme Deans liaise with the Registrar, Deputy-President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

Third-Mission Activities, Societal and Community Engagement

In September 2024, UCD officially became a signatory of the [CANIE Accord](#), marking an important milestone in the University's commitment to sustainability. UCD is the first Irish Higher Education Institution (HEI) to sign the Accord, which underscores its leadership in addressing the global climate crisis within the international education sector. The CANIE Accord is a global initiative aimed at mobilizing the international education community to take meaningful climate action. By signing this Accord, institutions commit to integrating climate action into their strategic plans and operations, promoting sustainability and environmental responsibility at every level. This presents several benefits for UCD:

- **Global Recognition:** Our commitment to sustainability will strengthen our reputation as a forward-thinking, socially responsible institution.
- **QS World Rankings on Sustainability:** The CANIE Accord is now officially recognized by the QS World Rankings on Sustainability, meaning that our involvement aligns with global benchmarks in sustainability.

To complete its application, UCD agreed to the purpose and principles of the CANIE Accord (Article 3) and committed to implementing at least five climate actions spanning three or more areas (Articles 4-8). These commitments will be essential in guiding the University's efforts to support sustainability and climate resilience across its international operations. This is a significant step towards building a more climate-conscious international education sector, and it will provide UCD with the tools and partnerships needed to make a lasting impact.

In October 2023, UCD held an inaugural Global Experience Summit, with the theme of 'A Global Experience for All: Abroad, On-Campus, Online.' The aim of the summit was to explore the diverse range of global engagement opportunities for students and staff, while also discussing the role of higher education in developing active global citizens.

In the area of Research and Impact, UCD ranked as the 5th University in Europe for Producing VC-backed Start-Up Founders by PitchBook in its 2023 ranking of European universities based on start-up founders who completed their undergraduate education at the University and who have gone on to raise VC-funding. Pitchbook is a financial data and software company with offices in London, New York, San Francisco and Seattle. PitchBook's annual university rankings compare universities by tallying up the number of alumni entrepreneurs (at undergraduate, postgraduate and MBA levels) who have raised venture capital in the last decade. According to the 2023 Pitchbook Report, 189 UCD undergraduate entrepreneurs established 174 companies which raised \$2.6 billion in funding in the last 10-years. UCD ranked in 89th on the list of global universities and was the only Irish university in the Top 100 list.

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

The Academic Council approved the new [Academic Integrity Policy](#) in May 2024.

Academic integrity requires every member of the academic community at UCD to act ethically, honestly and fairly. A lack of academic integrity in any sphere of university activity undermines the credibility and value of all that UCD does and of the awards that it makes to students. Every member of the UCD community shares responsibility for upholding the academic integrity values that underpin our scholarly practice in teaching, research, and student learning; activities that underpin the foundations of our intellectual community at UCD.

This policy has been developed through consultation with faculty, students and the wider community of stakeholders in the University. It reflects current research and best practice nationally and internationally in academic integrity in higher education. In particular, this policy is informed by relevant national legislation and is consistent with the principles and guidelines produced by the [National Academic Integrity Network \(NAIN\)](#), including the [National Principle and Common Lexicon of Terms](#) for academic integrity (NAIN, 2021); the [National Academic Integrity Guidelines](#) (NAIN, 2021) and the [National Framework for Academic Misconduct Investigation and Case Management](#) (NAIN, 2023).

This policy reflects the University's commitment to supporting and promoting academic integrity through:

- a) The development of a collective culture of responsibility around academic integrity fostered by all faculty, staff and students;
- b) A clear framework of education, prevention, detection, sanctioning and record keeping so that UCD can both mitigate and respond appropriately to academic misconduct.

This policy applies to all individuals engaged in academic work at UCD.

Additional resources provided by the University in relation to academic integrity include the following:

- [Academic Integrity - Referencing, Citation & Avoiding Plagiarism](#) (UCD Library)
- [Academic Integrity Course](#) (available through Brightspace) (UCD Library)
- [Technology Enhanced Learning](#) (UCD Teaching and Learning)
- [UCD's AI-powered digital services](#) (UCD IT Services)
- [AI and Machine Learning](#) (UCD Research and Innovation)

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for

Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

Progress on implementation of the UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future has continued, as has preparation for the launch of a new University Strategy to 2030. The University underwent Institutional Review in 2019-2020 and prepared an Institutional Quality Improvement Plan (IQIP) in response to the Institutional Review Panel Report which was approved by Governing Authority in June 2020. Annual reports on progress made in implementing the recommendations are submitted to the Governing Authority.

The following outlines the progress made within the current reporting period in relation to the prioritised recommendations of the Review Team. Oversight on implementation is the responsibility of a Steering Committee chaired by the UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

2024 Update on Institutional Action Plan

UCD Operational Plan for the Top Five Recommendations		
Recommendation 2 [4.33]		
The review team recommends that UCD reflect on the reasonableness of expectations placed on faculty in key leadership roles such as heads of school. UCD must ensure that schools and professional service units are adequately resourced to ensure that faculty can deliver a high-quality learning and research experience. [Recommendation 4.33]		
Actions	Timeline	Update- April 2024
a. Review Head of School role and responsibilities. UCD Agile will work with Heads of School Group.	2020 to 2024 Proposed start date: mid/late 2021	Ongoing- due for completion in 2024. The University's Head of School Role Review Group was launched in the Autumn of 2023, Chaired by the Outgoing Registrar. Under the new Register, the Group is reviewing the Head of School role and related structures on an iterative and phased basis, i.e., each phase will inform the next phase predicated on evidence-based data analysis and global research. It is expected the Review will conclude in the Summer of 2024. Depending on the scale of changes proposed, there may need to be a thoughtful implementation phase after the indicative timescale. However, work is underway with a view to concluding the Project in the Summer of 2024.

Recommendation 4 [4.58]

The review team recommends that the university capitalise on the extent of quantitative data and external benchmarking available to derive greater analytical value from this data to inform decision-making. [Recommendation 4.58]

Actions	Timeline	Update – April 2024
Information-users at UCD are better informed of the information available and how it can be accessed, extracted, and presented to support decision making f. Design and implement agreed supports/resources arising from the recommendations of the Working Group.	f. Initial target date of 2022	Ongoing. UCD is currently rolling out a software package called Tableau to enhance UCD's data analytics capability. Phase 1 is now complete and a further suite of management dashboards will be rolled out in the coming year. Additionally, the Registrar is chairing a cross-community group to develop a long-term data analytics strategy. It is planned that the strategy will be complete by end-Summer 2024. A full implementation plan will follow the publishing of the strategy

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned Site Visit	Date of last review
UCD School of Architecture, Planning & Environmental Policy (postponed from 2023-24)	7-10 October 2024	2015-2016
UCD School of Languages, Cultures & Linguistics	21-25 October 2024	2017-2018
UCD School of Computer Science (postponed from 2023-24)	4-7 November 2024	2015-2016
UCD School of Classics (postponed from 2023-24)	11-14 November 2024	2016-2017
UCD School of Earth Sciences	3-6 March 2025	2017-2018
UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work & Social Justice	24-27 March 2025	2017-2018
UCD School of Economics	24-27 March 2025	2017-2018
UCD School of Physics (postponed from 2023-24)	31 March-3 April 2025	2016-2017
UCD University Secretariat	7-10 April 2025	N/A
UCD School of Art History & Cultural Policy (postponed from 2023-24)	7-10 April 2025	2016-2017
UCD Careers Network	14-17 April 2025	2016-2017
UCD School of Biosystems & Food Engineering (postponed from 2023-24)	22-25 April 2025	2016-2017
UCD Student Advisors & Student Engagement	22-25 April 2025	N/A
UCD Estate Services	9-12 June 2025	2016-2017

3.2.2 Reviews planned beyond Next Reporting Period

See [Quality Review Schedule](#) on the UCD Quality Office website.

4.0 Additional Themes and Case Studies

CASE STUDY 1

Title: RESET – Resilience through Empowerment, Self-awareness, Empathy and Time

Theme: Student Support – Meeting the needs of the modern student

Keywords: Normalizing Vulnerability, Maximizing Potential

Short Abstract:

In June 2021 a new *wellbeing and community projects* role was created in the UCD Student Advisors team. Its objective was to improve student engagement and wellbeing and provide skills to adapt and thrive in this cognitively overloaded, attentionally deficient, technology addicted modern society. Requests for mental health and wellness support continually increased yet attendance for wellness activities remained low in 2021. This seemed due to voluntary attendance and low levels of student motivation and engagement. It became apparent that, remedying the common challenges faced by the entire student body and not just the 10% who engage with student support services, would require a more comprehensive approach.

Exploring mechanisms to integrate RESET within the existing university structures such as orientation, modules and programmes seemed like the next logical step.

In 2022 RESET workshops were offered to staff. When programme managers and module co-ordinators recognised the potential of empowering students with greater understanding of the tools they already possess to improve their academic and personal lives by increasing confidence, concentration and time management processes they became very interested in exploring how to integrate this into their modules and orientation sessions. Staff from over 15 schools and programmes and 30 different modules began collaborating with the UCD Student Advisors to establish how the material could be customised and offered for each of their disciplines and underpin their learning objectives.

Project Summary:

The RESET workshops are designed to:

- Break down perceived barriers
- Normalise universal vulnerabilities
- Provide a language to express feelings and emotions
- Identify common challenges
- Provide tools and techniques to improve the relevant skill sets and coping mechanisms to adapt to the increasing demands of this modern lifestyle
- Empower students to take greater ownership of their wellbeing
- Embrace a growth mindset where every experience can be a learning opportunity and obstacles become challenges to overcome

- Focus on potential and not just problems
- Move from a “Me” to a “We” culture

Each workshop is customised to meet the challenges faced by different student cohorts using language and tools familiar to the students so the sessions were more likely to resonate with them as they provided a level of psychological safety and the content was directly relevant to their disciplines.

Working with the lecturers allowed each session to be designed and customised to underpin the learning objectives of the specific module or programme. For example, in Architecture after surveying the lecturers, student advisor, industry and students, some key challenges were identified. The conclusion was that students lacked autonomy, creativity under pressure and confidence during presentations.

In the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, students on the Global Leadership Programme were found to have a sense of isolation, lack of belonging, and a sense of expectation from families and friends, manifesting in imposter syndrome. In the Schools of Medicine and Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems it became apparent through feedback from both staff and students that there was an understanding of stress management mechanisms, but there was not always an awareness of the practical application of these processes that could be utilised by themselves or their patients. Students were encouraged to apply the scientific method to themselves using the following hypothesis: *“would I be a more effective student and person if I use the skills provided during the RESET session”* The students were also asked to design an experiment to utilise the skills, collect data, analyse the data, and form a conclusion.

The RESET workshops are now being considered by programme/module coordinators as integral to the module or programme rather than being seen as something that was nice to have but outside of the learning environment. As the students are now being scheduled to attend these classes this means the numbers of students attending RESET sessions continues to increase. The students have consistently acknowledged the benefits to their academic experience and their personal lives. As feedback for these sessions continues to be extremely positive and as word of mouth spreads the demand for including the RESET concept into modules increases.

Impact/Outcomes:

The number of attendees at these sessions was over 9,000 in the last two and a half years.

RESET, also referred to as Adaptability and skills to thrive sessions, were delivered at orientation for the Schools of Medicine, and the Colleges of Social Sciences and Law and Arts and Humanities. 255 students responded to a survey and when asked “How useful they found the sessions” – 98% scored the session 7 or higher out of 10 and 67% scored the sessions 10 out of 10. Key words referenced in the feedback were “inspired”, “motivated”, and “sense of belonging”.

Other common types of feedback were as follows:

“Hi, I was speaking to a friend at the weekend. Her daughter attended an orientation event in UCD last week. She is planning to study psychology and was feeling very nervous and apprehensive, and they were worried she'd drop out before she even started. Then she attended a talk that you gave to the incoming students and came out of it really impressed and inspired by you and is now really looking forward to starting her studies. She told her parents that your talk was the one that made the difference.”

A member of the Secretary General of the Department of Education's family attended an orientation session for Medicine. The Secretary General was so taken by the impact it had, they directed their team to ask the UCD Student Advisors to make three presentations to the top 300 staff in the Department. The main UCD Student Advisor responsible for the programme was also asked to be a featured speaker at the Oide conference.

Example of video feedback from the Global Leadership programme in the Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business: [Video feedback](#)

CASE STUDY 2

Title: UCD Sustainable Research Initiative (SRI)

Theme: Sustainability

Keywords: Sustainability, Recycling, Circular Economy

Short Abstract:

Environmental sustainability and climate action are key topics that are being addressed by UCD as an Institute of Higher Education. The UCD Sustainable Research Initiative (SRI) is a group of UCD staff and students, who feel that it is increasingly urgent to embed sustainability in their work, whether the focus is research, teaching, clinical practice, field work, administration, operations, or any other area. For this reason, they developed the SRI initially as a pilot project in the College of Health and Agricultural Sciences.

The SRI has active participation from members across many disciplines in the University, and it is currently formally affiliated with the [UCD Sustainability Unit](#), which was established in 2023 and currently comprises a Vice-President for Sustainability, a Sustainability Manager and a Sustainability Communications Officer.

Project Summary:

One of the major areas that the SRI has addressed is “sustainability in wet labs”. Scientific laboratories consume up to 10x the amount of energy and significantly more single-use disposable plastic than comparable office spaces. SRI members have participated in the My Green Lab (mygreenlab.org) certification process, which involves auditing and improving laboratory performance in 14 different areas, including energy use and waste management.

During the SRI monthly meetings, it hears from members on their My Green Lab certification journeys. Member presentations and engagement are valuable, as SRI members learn from each other and discuss best practices in sustainable laboratory management at UCD.

Impact/Outcomes:

Significant outcomes from the SRI’s work include new initiatives on campus, including a polystyrene recycling scheme with UCD Estates and Rehab, in which polystyrene used for packaging is collected and repurposed into building materials. SRI is also piloting the recycling of nitrile gloves with Kimberly Clark and Terracycle.

SRI hosts themed events, including during Green Week 2024, where its members presented a collaborative workshop with Precious Plastics (<https://www.preciousplasticdublin.org/>) and the

Innovation Academy, promoting awareness of plastic recycling. A highlight of this event was a demonstration on the Citizen Science Project, measuring plastic waste on Ireland's beaches.

Other events have featured presentations on sustainability at UCD Lyon's Farm, reducing carbon footprint while doing patient interviews in a translational medicine research project, and the issues facing recycling practices in UCD's Residences. The SRI has also heard from the new Green Labs officer at Trinity College Dublin, and SRI actively participates in the Irish Green Labs Network, led by the University of Galway.

For further information is available from greenlabs@ucd.ie.

CASE STUDY 3

Title: Using an AI video creation tool to support the Grade Approval Process in UCD

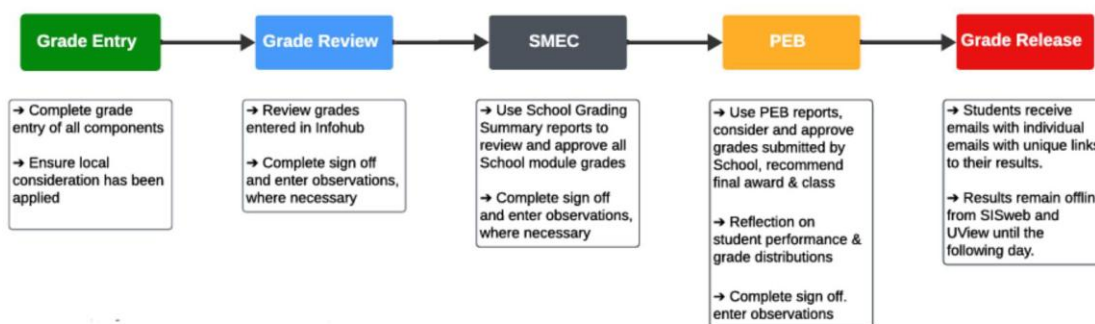
Theme: Transforming the user experience using digital tools

Keywords: AI, Digital Transformation, User Experience, Customer Voice, Accessibility, Universal Design, Assessment, Grading, Stakeholder Engagement

Short Abstract:

The University uses a three-stage Grade Approval Process to ensure the accuracy and integrity of grades released to students following each trimester. This process also includes the approval of Stage and Award GPAs. Each Stage in the process is supported by Assessment, UCD Registry.

Grade Approvals Process



In July 2024, the Grading Support Team, Assessment, UCD Registry conducted a comprehensive review of the Grading Support website in alignment with the newly introduced Registry Communications Guidelines. The review revealed the need for a significant website overhaul, including its supporting documentation and resources, to enhance accessibility and improve the overall user experience.

Project Summary:

A key focus of this review was the Grading Support videos, which were central support resource for the Grade Approvals Process introduced in the University in 2020. Since implementing this process, our understanding of stakeholders' needs and the user experience of the Grade Approval Process has evolved considerably. Over the past five years, we have gathered extensive qualitative data from UCD staff from emails, clinic logs, and stakeholder feedback. The data highlighted common issues, frequently asked questions, and knowledge gaps experienced by stakeholders. This data, combined with our commitment to improving accessibility, guided the redevelopment of the videos.

One method used to address these needs was Synthesia. This AI-powered video creation platform enables users to produce professional-quality videos using customisable templates and avatars without needing a camera or microphone. Synthesia supports multiple languages and accessibility features, making it an effective tool for creating engaging, inclusive content and enabling the efficient creation of accessible content that adheres to principles such as Plain English.

Challenges faced with Synthesia:

- **Learning Curve:** As with any new platform, there was a period of trial and error in understanding how best to use Synthesia.
- **Ensuring Accuracy and Engagement:** Getting the balance of engaging and accessible content was a challenge.
- **Training AI:** Despite being easy to use, Synthesia requires time and resources to train Avatars.

Impact/Outcomes:

The platform's effectiveness allowed the Grading Support team to redesign eight videos and produces even more, released in December 2024 ahead of the Autumn Grade Approvals Process. Since their launch, stakeholders from across the University, including colleagues who attended the workshop on the updates to the Grading Support website and resources, have provided positive feedback.

Benefits of using Synthesia:

- **Text-to-speech capabilities:** Synthesia allows for high-quality sounding voice overs in multiple languages and accents.
- **Closed Captions:** Videos can easily include close caption with the option to turn off captions should the user prefer.
- **Consistency and Scalability:** Create multiple videos with consistent, transparent, professional content catering to diverse audiences and purposes.
- **Simplified Content:** Synthesia features enable the integration of customised visual cues and animations, improving the presentation of complex information in a clear and accessible manner.
- **Intuitive System:** Once familiar with Synthesia, this intuitive platform makes creating AI videos simple and accessible, even without prior video editing experience.
- **Cost Effective:** This is a very cost-effective way of producing videos in house when compared to hiring a videographer.
- **Easy to Edit:** no cost involved in making simple edits once the videos are published.

Future Plans:

The videos form part of our multi-channel communications for staff involved in the Grade Approval Process – WorkVivo and Targeted Communications – before and during each Grade Approval

Process. We plan to add videos as we learn more about what our stakeholders need. We also intend to use Synthesia for communication systems and process changes.

Synthesia has been rolled out for use across Registry to improve how we present information to stakeholders by providing them with information in multiple formats. This adheres to the Universal Design principle of multiple means of representation.

We are currently piloting one instructional video for students, made using Synthesia. Qualitative data will be gathered, via student focus groups on this video to compare to our instructional videos using students as the talking heads.