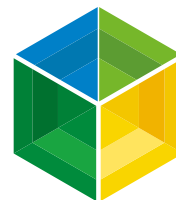# UCD STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION AND STUDENT SUCCESS

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2020-2024

UCD DUBLIN

RISING TO THE FUTURE
UCD Strategy 2020-2024

This implementation plan identifies the specific projects that will be undertaken during the lifetime of the UCD Strategy for Education and Success. These initiatives reflect the thematic areas identified in the strategy but do not reflect the breadth of activity that continues on an ongoing basis to support our students' education and success.

The identified projects resonate with the aims and objectives of the UCD Strategy Rise to the Future and the national and international trends in the higher education landscape and fall under the themes below:

Theme 1 – A student-centred educational experience

Theme 2 – Student engagement, diversity, and wellbeing

Theme 3 – Education that connects, inspires, and transforms

Theme 4 – Technology enhanced learning

Theme 1 - A student-centred educational experience

Theme	A Student-Centred Educational Experience
Project	Academic Advising
Lead	Dean of Undergraduate Studies

As part of our commitment to providing a holistic and student-centred educational experience to a growing population of domestic and international students we will develop a formalised approach to the provision of academic advice to our undergraduate and taught graduate students where they will have:
- Personal academic advice to students at different points in the student lifecycle.
- Academic advice to support individual students with decision-making and goal setting based on their academic performance, interests, and talents.
- Guidance and assistance in navigating programme structures, making choices relating to major/minor/specialism options.
- Academic advice and support for students considering withdrawal/transfer from their programme.
- Academic advice relating to professional practice, clinical placements, and internships.
- Support to assist students to become independent learners and to address any academic issues as they arise.

This is to ensure that all students are provided with high-quality academic support and advice through a proactive academic partnership with mutual expectations of faculty and students.

Action	Timeline
Establish a Working Group on Academic Advising. Chaired by Dean of Undergraduate Studies.	March 2021-May 2022
Allocate HEA Funding through a competitive process to pilot projects on Academic Advising across the institution.	June 2021
Conduct a university wide consultation with students and faculty in relation to Academic Advising.	Commencing Jan 2022
Conduct a feasibility study on employing Technology Enhanced Advising.	Commencing Nov 2022
Develop a proposal for ACEC to introduce Academic Advising across the institution.	May-June 2022
Develop initial professional development materials.	May-Sept 2022
Commence Institution Wide Academic Advising.	Sept 2022
Provide Professional Development Supports in Academic Advising.	Continuing post Sept 2022

Theme	A Student-Centred Educational Experience
Project	Student Feedback
Lead	Dean of Undergraduate Studies

In supporting students on their academic journey, it is important that student feedback is used to inform quality teaching and learning and promote self-reflection on learning by both students and faculty. It is also crucial in meeting the needs of students with increasingly diverse backgrounds, expectations, and levels of preparedness. The provision of a new feedback system with the appropriate functionality to enable the feedback loop to students to be closed and to allow schools to gain deeper insights into their students' perceptions of their learning, is very important in supporting student success. Having a student feedback system that is meaningful both to students and faculty is essential to ensuring that students understand the different forms that feedback takes and that they are well positioned to interrogate and use feedback effectively and productively to enhance their learning.

Action	Timeline
Establish a Working Group to review the current Student Feedback on Modules System chaired by Dean of Undergraduate Studies.	March 2018
University wide consultation with students, faculty, and staff. Report of findings.	June 2019
Designed two surveys one on modules at School level, the second a lecturers' teaching survey.	June 2019
Identify provider of new system and associated costs €1m over 5 years.	Aug 2019
Submit to UMT for approval. Approved.	Sept 2019
Submit to UMT IT Services Business Request.	18th Dec 2019
Submit to Budgetary Process, President, Bursar, Deputy President.	11th June 2020 - Paused due to financial decisions

Theme	A Student-Centred Educational Experience
Project	Assessment
Lead	Dean of Undergraduate Studies

The different ways in which we assess our students to support their learning is a key element of our educational practice. It is important that a broad range of assessment approaches are used. Employing a diversity of assessment approaches challenges and changes the ways that our students think and act, but more fundamentally, it provides them with a full and innovative array of assessment experiences that supports their learning, considering universal design principles and promotes their digital experiences. We want our students to experience assessment approaches that reflects up to date knowledge in the discipline/interdisciplinary context, in the wider educational/pedagogical sphere and adheres to the principles of universal design. We envisage that our students are assessed on learning outcomes and are not overwhelmed by excessive assessment. We will explore and progress moving formal end of trimester examinations from the RDS back on campus subject to developments within our sports and amenities planning projects.

Action	Timeline
Promote and enhance diversity of assessment opportunities.	March 2020 commenced and continuing
Pilot E-Proctoring and E-Assessment approaches.	March 2021 commenced and continuing
Develop the operational aspects of face to face, digital and online assessment to facilitate a broad suite of assessment approaches.	September 2021 – initial discussions
Develop UCD contextual definitions of digital and online assessment.	July 2021 commenced and continuing
Develop Protocols in relation to digital and online assessment formats for faculty and students.	July 2021 commenced and continuing
Update the UCD Assessment Code of Practice.	August 2021 commenced and continuing
Identify/recruit/secondment of a senior project manager to support the work of action on Assessment, 2-year post.	Jan 2022-Dec 2023

Theme	A Student-Centred Educational Experience
Project	Academic Advising and Professional Development for Research Degrees
Lead	Dean of Graduate Studies

We are committed to ensuring that UCD promotes and supports the principles set out in the National Framework for Doctoral Education. We will ensure that PhD students are supported and prepared to successfully transfer from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of their PhD. UCD will educate and develop our graduate research students through embedding the RPDP throughout all stages and years of a research degree. The RPDP will support graduate research students to develop their research and contribution to knowledge, disciplinary skills, and professional development to better prepare them to transition into the world of work whether within academia or other career pathways.

Action	Timeline
Fully develop and embed the structural elements of the UCD PhD through: - Develop culture of engagement with supports/structures related to the PhD at UCD - Promote timely Transfer Assessment in the Doctoral programme - Develop research student skills portfolio - Embed RPDP in monitoring and professional development culture - Support uptake and demonstration of skills engagement through RPDP. - Support research supervisors in role regarding mentoring, career development of research students and use of RPDP - Build awareness and highlight relevance of skills training opportunities for research students	Commenced and ongoing
Establish orientation as a mandatory component of the research degree.	Commenced and ongoing
Establish Student Teaching & Learning Support Working Group, which is tasked with developing a set of recommendations on 1) a uniform, transparent university approach to the management of the PGR contribution to teaching activities 2) a payment structure and 3) the projected financial costings.	Commenced Dec 2022

Theme	A Student-Centred Educational Experience
Project	Quality Learning Experience for Postgraduate Research Students
Lead	Dean of Graduate Studies

Embed an integrated quality assurance culture into the postgraduate research student experience where student, supervisor and support staff are fully informed of, and engage with, quality enhancement procedures.

Action	Timeline
Studentsurvey.ie data are a rich resource to support quality enhancements at school, college and university level through the following activities: - Produce detailed reports for all Schools and Colleges with ≥ 10 respondents in the Student Survey.ie database. Collate actions plans to enhance student experience based on student data. - Use Student Survey to produce a "You Said-We Did" report after each PGR Student survey.ie - Use surveys, focus groups, feedback forms, interviews etc. when necessary - Review and evaluate student progression and completion data.	Commenced and ongoing
GRB to liaise closely with the College Quality Enhancement Fora toward shared goal of a quality experience for research students - Report on College Fora activity to be produced annually	Commenced and ongoing
Develop an inclusive culture for all stakeholders in graduate research at UCD with a view to informing, advising, training, support in line with UCD Research Culture Initiative - Information sessions designed and delivered for stakeholders including graduate research administrators and faculty, on roles and responsibilities of RSP, STA Panel, GRB, Examination panels	Commenced and ongoing

Theme 2 – Student engagement, diversity, and wellbeing

Theme	Student Engagement, Diversity and Wellbeing
Project	Promoting and Measuring Student Success
Lead	Dean of Students

The University undergraduate and graduate student community is increasingly diverse. This reflects the aims of several initiatives including but not limited to widening participation, global engagement, University of Sanctuary, Ad Astra Academy, Human Capital Initiatives, July stimulus, Springboard, UCD access and online learning. With this diversity comes a responsibility to ensure that all students feel included, to promote equality of opportunity and that potential to succeed is realised for all.

There are many streams of data available to the University community already that are capable of being analysed for the purpose of gauging engagement or success, but these data tend not to be ubiquitously available, are not fully refined to the needs of the specific reader and are often observed rather than actively used for the purpose of driving change.

In line with the National Teaching and Learning Forum's tool kit on Student Success, this project will identify the student engagement success measures in both the learning and extracurricular environment that can be used by:
- Individual students to reflect on their own progress
- Individual staff and academics to measure the success of specific interventions
- Academic and support units to understand their current ability to support students from all backgrounds and to monitor the impact of interventions and enhancements on a cyclical basis
- UCD leadership to demonstrate the ability of the institution in promoting student engagement and success including in reporting on success indices to government in line with the National Student Success guidance.

In all cases, the intent is to provide the individual or team with data to empower decision making, to enhance the human-to-human interaction particularly in mentee to mentor relationships and to make purposeful the data that are already collected. Data gaps may also be identified, in which case the project team will be well placed to make recommendations on how further data should be collected and with what purpose.

Action	Timeline
Create a steering group, Chaired by the Dean of Students, incorporating both internal and external student success partners as per the Guiding Framework for Embedding Student Success, published by the National Forum. Must be a staff/student partnership.	Jan-Feb 2022
Identify/recruit/secondment a senior project manager to support the work of the steering group and liaising closely with the Institutional Research team – 2-year post.	Jan– March 2022
Review existing mechanisms for supporting student success and the data associated with same with reference to HEA and National Forum initiatives.	Feb-April 2022
Compile a whole-institute report on basis of internal student success partner reports and institutional level data, identifying high level enhancement targets.	May-June 2022
Develop an implementation plan to achieve high level student success enhancement targets and present to UMT SEG and EG	July-Oct 2022
University wide consultation on implementation plan and UMT approval.	Oct-Nov 2022
Roll out plan, student success partners interpret for local actions, and steering group meets to maintain momentum and monitor against agreed targets.	Jan-Dec 2024

Theme	Student Engagement, Diversity and Wellbeing
Project	Student Mental Health and Wellbeing
Lead	Dean of Students

The Student Health Service provides on-campus medical, psychological and psychiatric care to registered students of the University. Additional support is provided to students by a range of services including student advisers, chaplaincy, and disability support. In addition, UCD has recently recognised the presence of a trusted person network within the institution; a group of individuals that may be academics, staff or students who may or may not be in student support roles but to whom students gravitate for advice and signposting. We also have digital resources such as Silvercloud for self-help and Niteline for telephone support between 9pm and 2.30am.

Whilst we have many resources which are somewhat connected, there is an acknowledgement that at moments of difficulty or crisis, some students may not be aware of how to access such supports and colleagues may not have sufficient awareness of how best to support students of concern in accessing such supports. The Student Mental Health Policy goes some way to filling that gap, but it is now 8 years since it was first published and is therefore in need of review.

Following the 2020 publication by the HEA of the National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework, UCD is committed to reviewing our current approach against the framework with a view to identifying gaps. Whilst much of the work will be completed within existing resources, the HEA have increased funding for student wellbeing, once in 2020/2021 and again this year 2021/2022; the funding is linked in part to supporting institutions in implementing the Framework.

Action	Timeline
Implement the National Student Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Framework incorporating a review of policy through the formation of a Steering Group reporting to UMTSEG with the purpose of developing an approved and resourced implementation plan with clear success indices that brings UCD to full alignment with the framework.	Oct 2021 commenced and continuing
Monitor and track use of Niteline, Silvercloud and other existing remote / digital supports for students.	Sept 2020 commenced and continuing
Aligned to the sectoral project, implement the use of outcomes measures through the current counselling digital records management software.	June 2019 to Sep 2022
Develop resources to support students and staff to recognise and signpost how to access supports	Jan-June 2023
Implement and track the Trusted Person Project.	Sept 2020 commenced to June 2024
Implement and track the Findability Project.	Sept 2020 commenced to June 2024
Fully implement and evaluate the UCD Consent Framework	Sept 2020 commenced and continuing
Report on the Student Maternity/Paternity Supports gap analysis working group.	April 2021 commenced to Feb 2022
Include of student wellbeing and mental health supports in Supervisor development Workshops.	Commenced and ongoing
Include of student wellbeing and mental health supports in PhD Student Development Workshops.	Commenced and ongoing

Theme	Student Engagement, Diversity and Wellbeing
Project	Build an Inclusive Community for our Research Students that Celebrates/Values Diversity
Lead	Dean of Graduate Studies

We aim to recognise, promote, and value diversity; foster the spirit of inclusion; appreciate the breadth of talent, experience, and contribution of all; and strive to remove barriers to access, participation, and success. Timely supports, services and facilities, data driven approach toward wider access, retention, and progression of all students.

Action	Timeline
Identify a dedicated space provided for PGR for skills training activities, and a social space for informal meetings.	Commence 2022
Conflict Resolution Project – Trusted Person Project towards early intervention. Develop user friendly guide from current Conflict Resolution policy. Identify pool of Trusted Persons to provide early resolution to conflict between student and supervisor(s). Monitor and evaluate.	Jan 2022 to Dec 2024
Every committee/panel convened by GS members has a student rep. Postgraduate Student Council to be established.	Commenced and ongoing Jan 2022

**Theme 3 – Education that connects, inspires, and transforms**

Theme	Education that connects, inspires and transforms
Project	Professional Development & Recognition of Innovation
Lead	Dean of Undergraduate Studies

We are committed to the highest standards of teaching and learning by ensuring that faculty attain a teaching qualification, that diversity, equality, inclusion and interculturalism are recognised in their broadest sense in curricular design and content for both physical and online teaching and assessment environments. We want to create distinctive and effective learning environments that will facilitate the success of all our students from undergraduate to doctoral level. We will support faculty in developing vibrant communities of practice with our partners in public service, community organisations and industry to support teaching and learning. We will also leverage the opportunities offered by online learning and the VLE to support and enhance faculty's professional development in their teaching and doctoral supervision.

Action	Timeline
All newly appointed faculty attain a teaching qualification.	Sept 2022 to commence
Further enhance communities of practice in intercultural learning.	Oct 2021
Teaching and Learning Annual Symposia.	Annually 4 will take place over the life of the Education Strategy
UCD Teaching and Learning Awards.	3 cycles over the life of the Education Strategy
UCD Fellowships in Teaching and Academic Development.	2 cycles over life of the strategy inclusive of cycle completed on September 31 2021
Schedule of Workshops to be developed between UCD Teaching and Learning, IT Services and UCD Estates.	Oct 2021 – Commenced planning
HEA Funded Initiatives to promote teaching and learning innovation across the institution.	Multiannual as allocated by the HEA
Doctoral Supervision Training.	Commenced and ongoing
Further develop the Research Supervisor Development Programme collaborating across the sector through the IUA.	Commenced and ongoing
Scope, develop and implement the UCD Research Supervisor Register via the RSSD working group.	Commenced and ongoing
Develop CPD supports for research supervisors in line with best practices internationally and National Framework for Doctoral Education (NFDE).	Commenced and ongoing
Doctoral Supervision Annual Symposia.	Annually 4 will take place over the life of the Education Strategy
Dean's Award for Excellence in Doctoral Supervision.	Annually over the life of the Education Strategy

Theme 4 - Technology enhanced learning
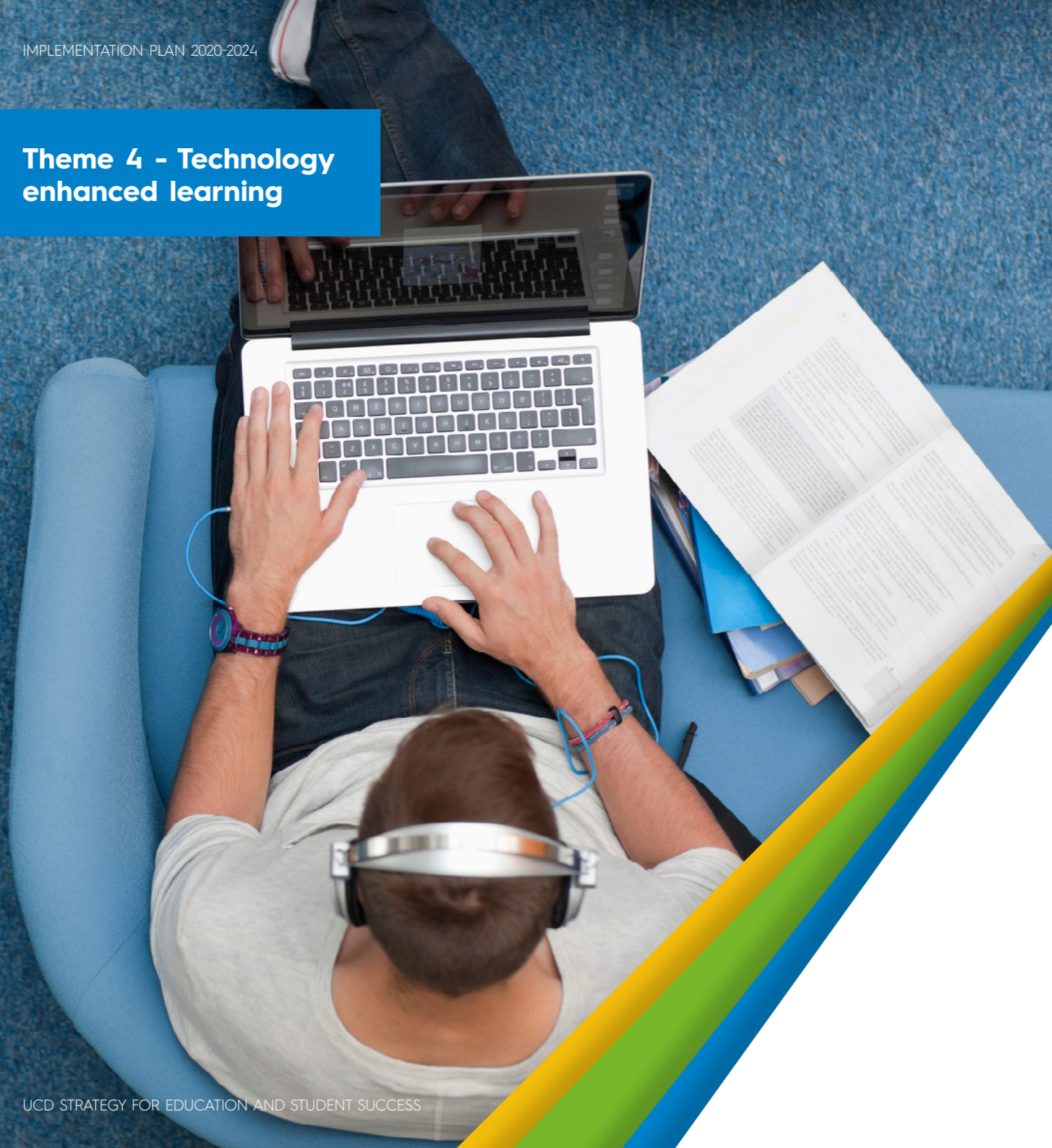
Theme	Technology Enhanced Learning
Project	Embed Technology Enhanced Learning
Lead	Dean of Undergraduate Studies

We will ensure that our students, faculty, and staff are exposed to a range of technology enhanced learning opportunities which will span a spectrum of learning delivery modes from supporting traditional face to face and web enhanced through to learning which is delivered as part of a blended or fully online approach. Students, faculty and staff will have opportunities to develop their digital skills through their learning experiences, the learning outcomes identified within their programmes and adhere to the principles of universal design and acquire the necessary skills to become digitally proficient in a rapidly changing educational context.

Action	Timeline
UCD Library Digital Literacy.	Ongoing
Develop pedagogical frameworks to drive Brightspace functionality.	June 2021 - commenced
Address minimum standards of consistency for students in the VLE.	Dec 2021- commencing
Universal Design in the VLE.	Sept 2021 - commenced
Teaching Fellows Metacognition Project – development of a Community of Practice.	Oct 2021- commenced
Ensure teaching spaces and environment meet the needs of learners and teachers.	Commenced and ongoing
Leverage functionality of UCD VLE Brightspace for PGRs.	Commenced and ongoing

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