



**RISING
TO THE
FUTURE**
UCD Strategy 2020-2024

UCD STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION AND STUDENT SUCCESS 2020-2024



INTRODUCTION

We currently face immense and shared societal challenges in a rapidly changing world. Creating a sustainable society, responding to the transformational impacts driven by digital technology, and building a healthy world will require critical and engaged citizens with the skills and confidence to see in each challenge new opportunities. A university exists to discover, steward, and share knowledge. Students are central to this endeavour and are an essential component of the University community. Providing an excellent education and student experience will empower our students to embrace, shape, and meet the challenges of a changing world.

The range of subject choice and expertise offered in UCD is unrivalled in Ireland. The ability of students to benefit from this strength is supported by a fully modularised and trimesterised curriculum and an education experience that is holistic, student-focused, and research-led. We are proud of UCD's distinct capabilities to provide both breadth and depth in the educational experience it offers to students, and we are creating new ways to take our students and faculty beyond subject boundaries, so learning is not simply acquired but lived as an active and engaged process.

For UCD to be responsive to the needs of all students, and to ensure that its markers of quality work to support, engage and empower them,

we must continue to commit to the principles of universal design and listen sensitively to the student voice. That voice is central to how we assess our performance and the decisions we make. We will continuously review and improve how students can engage with us to ensure that their voice is heard.

This Education and Student Success Strategy reaffirms why UCD should be the first choice for students wishing to study at an Irish university. It will push us to consolidate and strengthen the excellent education and experience that UCD offers to its students, and it sets out our ambitious priorities across four themes to structure how we will deliver through robust institution-wide, educationally enriching actions.

To implement this strategy, specific actions and initiatives that contribute to each area of action will be identified and tracked. We will bring students, faculty, and staff together in partnership to identify and select these actions and initiatives and to determine how their effectiveness should be assessed



Professor Mark Rogers
UCD Registrar and Deputy President

STRATEGY CONTEXT

Our aim is to provide an educational experience that is holistic, one that instills in students a desire and capacity to learn and create, to question and reason, to innovate and explore, and to contribute to society at all levels. We will achieve this through the promotion of a focused set of ambitious priorities.

UCD's vision is that our graduates will be imbued with a knowledge of the past, be capable of critically interrogating the present and of imagining and realising the future. Through a holistic student-focused and research-led educational experience which has both breadth and depth, they will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, experience, and attitudes they need to flourish in present and future Irish and global societies.

The education and success of our students are shaped by UCD's distinct traditions, relationships, and external influences. The major guiding influence is our values. We want the liberal education that we offer to reflect the principles of UCD's founder John Henry Newman, but in ways which are relevant to a globally connected world. These are represented by the following values:



Excellence

Newman argued that knowledge in its scientific form is not only "excellent in itself, but whatever such excellence may be, it is something more, it has a result beyond itself." By encouraging and supporting our students to flourish in their learning and engagement they add to their own ability to participate in and contribute to society.

Creativity

We are committed to encouraging enquiring and creative citizens and ensuring freedom of expression and dialogue, in a respectful and civil manner, across the spectrum of views held by our varied and diverse student communities.

Integrity

This is reflected in our adherence to the highest ethical standards, and in our commitment to transparency and accountability in everything we do related to student experience.

Collegiality

This finds expression in our commitment to work together and with our students to understand and develop their academic experience in line with their needs and ambitions, and to ensure they are appropriately supported as individuals.

Engagement

The UCD community is a partnership of students, graduates, faculty, and staff. UCD further partners with industry, public service, and community organisations. By engaging with this community and these partners, students are exposed to new perspectives and deepen their understanding and refine their ideas.

Diversity

UCD is a global university with a diverse community. We seek to reflect the diversity of our local national and global communities in our students and our faculty and staff. We will work to foster a respectful, cooperative, equitable learning environment for our diverse student communities.

STRATEGIC THEMES AND OBJECTIVES



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Creating a Sustainable Global Society

Transforming through Digital Technology

Building a Healthy World

Empowering Humanity



The University Strategy "Rising to the future" embeds the University mission within wider societal goals through strategic themes, core objectives and underpinning enablers.

Our approach to educational excellence and student success, aligns our objectives to ensure UCD graduates will have the attributes, skills, and disciplinary knowledge necessary to succeed as global citizens.

Ensuring our students are well prepared for further academic study, for contributing to society and for career success in a global context, and for a lifetime of continuing personal development.

Recognising, promoting, and valuing diversity; fostering the spirit of inclusion; appreciating the breadth of talent, experience, and contribution of all; and striving to remove barriers to access, participation, and success.

Supporting our faculty and staff who support them, to develop teaching, learning and assessment approaches that are research-informed, inclusive, intercultural in the broadest sense and that will promote student success.

Embedding technology-enhanced learning in ways that are educationally appropriate, programme-focused, accessible, innovative, and impactful across all modes of teaching and learning.

A STUDENT-CENTRED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

To ensure our students are well prepared for further academic study, for contributing to society and for career success in a global context, and for a lifetime of continuing personal development, UCD will:

- strengthen partnerships with students to develop inclusive, respectful, relevant, and diverse learning experiences.
- ensure students are appropriately supported as individuals in their learning through the development of academic advising and mentoring.
- support Schools and Governing Boards to self-evaluate and reflect on the quality of their modules and programmes and to develop student-centric learning experiences.
- support students in identifying and tracking their progress against the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to complete their programme and be world and work ready.
- map the career expectations of our students as they enter and progress through their programmes and develop work placements, internships, and co-curricular activities to help them achieve their ambitions.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT, DIVERSITY AND WELLBEING

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, UCD will:

- provide students with access to the supports, networks, and opportunities they need, at the point they are needed, in the most accessible form, to be empowered to develop the attributes required to make the most of their university experience across all our campuses.
- further integrate student supports and services to ensure a consistent level of high-quality student support regardless of subject or discipline, location, or mode of study, or whether students are being taught or undertaking research.
- enhance the quality and capacity of student supports, services and facilities as our student population grows and diversifies, to underpin the UCD student experience and enhance the health and wellbeing of our community.
- continue to develop robust, data driven and appropriate approaches to facilitate wider access, retention, and progression of all our student cohorts.

EDUCATION THAT CONNECTS, INSPIRES AND TRANSFORMS

To support our faculty and staff who support them to develop teaching, learning and assessment approaches that are research-informed, inclusive, intercultural in the broadest sense and that will promote student success, UCD will:

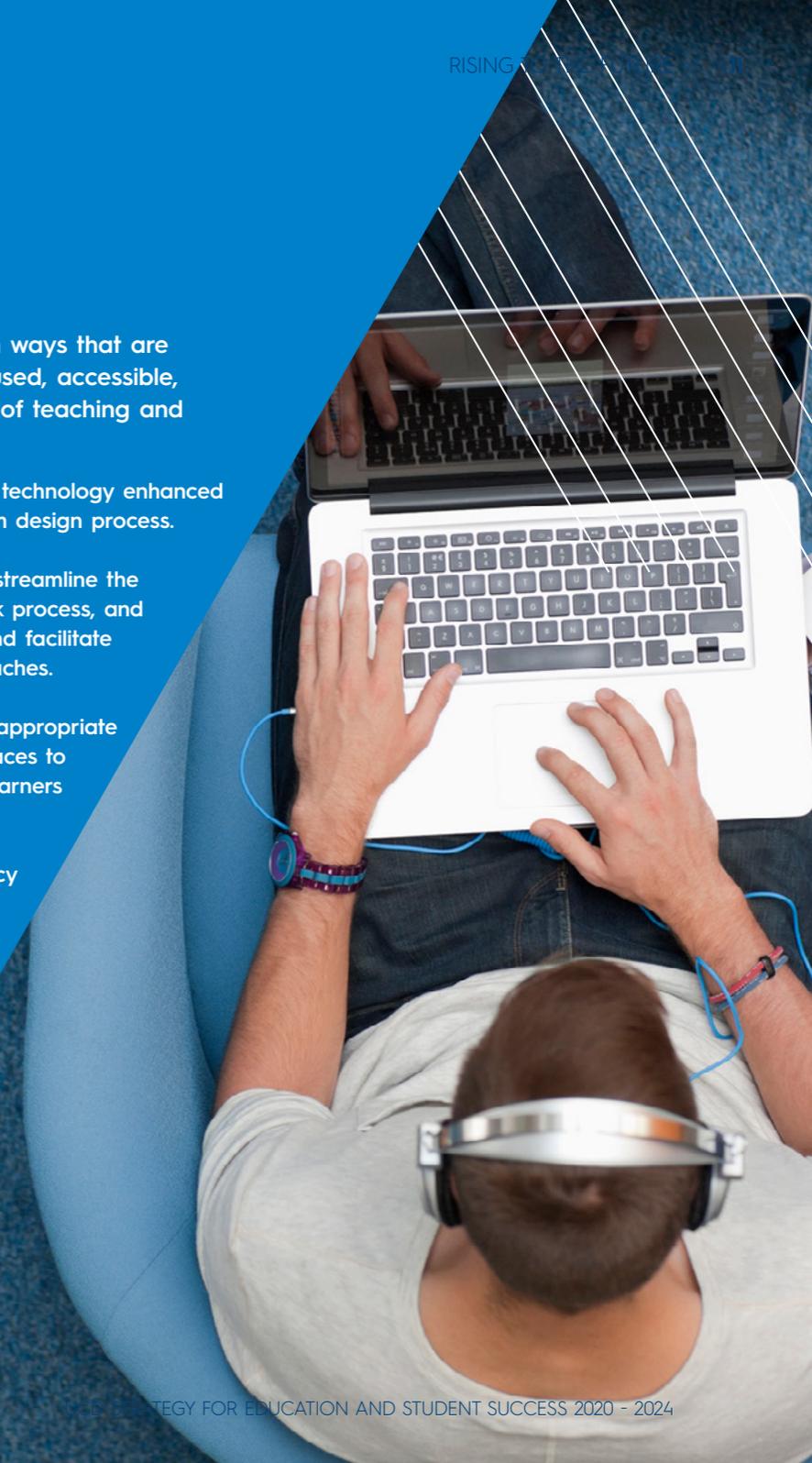
- support the formation of great educators and promote a culture of professionalism in teaching and research supervision.
- foster a vital and research-led educational environment and recognise excellence in teaching and research supervision.
- equip all our educators with the tools and resources required to embed Universal Design for Learning on an institution-wide basis.
- offer faculty and staff opportunities to reflect upon and continually update their digital skills and empower individuals to share their skills and expertise with colleagues and to lead change.
- support faculty across our broad range of disciplines to connect their expertise to the training and development needs of our partners in industry, public service and community organisations and co-create vibrant communities of practice.



TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING

To embed technology enhanced learning in ways that are educationally appropriate, programme-focused, accessible, innovative, and impactful across all modes of teaching and learning, UCD will:

- support a pedagogy-first approach to ensure technology enhanced learning is integrated as part of the curriculum design process.
- focus on digital assessment and feedback to streamline the assessment, submission, grading and feedback process, and to support assessment design and diversity and facilitate greater adoption of online assessment approaches.
- continually review, upgrade, and integrate as appropriate physical and virtual teaching and learning spaces to ensure the environment meets the needs of learners and teachers.
- support students to develop their digital literacy skills and competencies and empower them to adopt new approaches.



CONCLUSION

Our strategy to 2024 does not mark a new beginning, rather we are building on the objectives and activities successfully achieved and implemented under *'Education Strategy 2015-2020 - Our Students' Education Experience'*. Under *Education and Student Success 2020-2024'*, we will embed and build on those achievements to ensure they deliver the University's objective to provide an inclusive educational experience that defines international best practice and prepares our graduates to thrive in present and future societies. There is a worldwide need for educated and engaged citizens who have the confidence and knowledge to tackle grand global challenges. By drawing on the enablers of 'Rising to the Future' and by prioritising specific areas of action, we will provide our graduates with the capacity to question, to solve problems and to innovate and collaborate, thereby ensuring they are prepared to work globally and contribute to society.

The focusing lens of UCD's values will provide the context for working in partnership with students, faculty and our external partners. Creating an inclusive environment that allows each student to fulfil their potential in a positive way, is ultimately achieved through collaboration. Our implementation plan will bring all the involved stakeholders together to measure the success of our actions.

In the coming years, change and adaptability will be an ever-present fact as the world adapts to evolving challenges. Over the period of this strategy UCD will rise to those challenges and be part of the solution by educating and supporting the intellectual needs, ambitions, and aspirations of our students.



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