UCD Registry
Clárlann UCD

UCD Registration 2022/23

Review Report

RIOG December 2022

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Review of Registration 2022/23

1 INTRODUCTION

The Review of Registration is an annual process in which groups from around the University carry out a self-analysis process under the auspices of the Registration Implementation Oversight Group (RIOG). This group has been in place since the preparations for the 2007 start of year registration season, operating under the sponsorship of the Registrar.

Feedback from the student start of term surveys is also incorporated.

This document brings together the successes, challenges and recommendations identified in the individual strands of the Review of Registration 2022. The specific areas covered by the review are:

- **Curriculum Management**
- **Timetabling**
- **Module Capacity Planning and Management**
- **IT Related Systems and Developments**
- **Registration (online, manual, central)**
- **Supports for Staff/Faculty**
- **Supports for Students**

Section 2 of this document gives a summary of Registration 2022/23 while section 3 provides a more specific commentary on each area.

Section 4 contains a summary of the main recommendations/suggestions that arose from the feedback provided.

Section 5 lists the membership of the RIOG.

Section 6 shows infographics of the key findings from the student start of term surveys.

Section 7 gives an overview of key student supports provided by the UCD Student Desk while section 8 gives an overview of UniShare tasks logged by the UCD College Offices.

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall, Registration 2022 went well even with the delayed registration and orientation period for incoming Stage 1 Undergraduates.

Staff/faculty feedback indicates that a high level of collaboration and communication within and between areas facilitated a smooth registration season.

Student feedback, through the Undergraduate Start of Term Survey and the Graduate Taught/Graduate Research Start of Term Survey, indicates an overall satisfaction with the registration/start of term experience. In both surveys, an average of 81% found it excellent or good. Exploring the campus and meeting new people was a highlight for many incoming students. Responses indicate that specific tours of individual buildings, pointing out facilities such as teaching rooms and study areas, would be beneficial. Section 6 gives an overview of the results and further information is available on the UCD Start of Term Survey[1] web page.

The following sub sections provide a brief commentary on what worked well for 2022/23 and what needs improvement for 2023/24. Sections 3 and 4 provide more information on specific areas.

While not all the feedback received is mentioned in this document, it is being reviewed by the relevant support areas and will be acted on accordingly.

[1] www.ucd.ie/students/services/startoftermsurvey/

2.1 WHAT WORKED WELL

Collaboration/Support

- Staff highlighted the excellent cooperation within and between the various support areas.
- The Orientation and Welcome Back events were well received by Undergraduate students.
- The Peer Mentor tours allowed incoming students to explore the campus and meet new people.

Technology and Systems

- Staff reported that systems remained stable throughout the period.
- Enhanced InfoHub reports made data checking more streamlined for staff.

Communications/Knowledge Sharing

- Incoming Undergraduates enjoyed the Welcome Ceremonies and Programme Orientation events.
- The Research & PhD Supports provide useful and clear information for Graduate Research students.
- The Remote Working Group and USM Currents are valued support and communication resources for staff/faculty.

2.2 WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED UPON

Timelines and Decision Making

- Staff noted that the delayed CAO offers had a knock-on effect on planning and resources for registration and the start of term.
- Incoming Stage 1 orientation happening while other students had already started term posed challenges around logistics and support.

Communication/Knowledge Sharing

- Students find that a lot of information is provided in a short space of time resulting in details of key events or deadlines being missed.
- Students would like improved campus maps and signage such as signposting for bus stops.
- Both staff and students highlighted a need for stronger communications and information about and for students who get later round offers.

Technology and Systems

- The lecture timetable display on SISWeb is confusing for many students.
- Students would like information on how to find and navigate Brightspace made available before orientation starts.
- An update of the interface and functionality of the UCD Mobile App would be beneficial.

2.3 CONCLUSION AND FURTHER ACTIONS

The key issues and recommendations identified in this report, detailed in the sections below, can be addressed at a local level by the relevant support areas and the appropriate action decided by the area(s) responsible. All actions arising will be included in the planning for registration 2023/24.

3 SUMMARY BY AREA

3.1 CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT

The curriculum management process went smoothly this year and staff appreciated the expert guidance provided by the Curriculum Team, especially having a dedicated and knowledgeable liaison person for each College/School. Staff also find that the drop-in Curriculum Zoom clinics work well.

Communications and guidelines from the Curriculum Team regarding timelines and Curriculum Management System (CMS) processes were timely and useful.

The new pilot to introduce maximum limits on rules on the CMS proved very beneficial, especially in policing minimum degree level requirements.

One suggestion is for more error flags or reports in InfoHub to highlight inconsistencies rather than just missing data. Another suggestion is for links to explanatory text to be included in the Module Descriptor Templates in InfoHub, particularly around assessment strategies.

3.2 TIMETABLING

Overall, the timetabling process went smoothly with good cooperation between Room Allocations, UCD Registry and Schools. The Room Allocations team provided friendly support and prompt and efficient follow up in the run up to the start of term. There was also a prompt response from Schools to address any timetable issues identified during registration.

The timeline for extract submission coincided with the Grade Approvals Process, which made it difficult to meet deadlines.

The need for more teaching and learning spaces was noted by staff. For some programmes, the travel time between locations made making the start of lectures in time challenging for both lecturers and students.

Staff suggested that sharing an overview of the timetabling process with College/School staff not directly involved in process would give them a greater understanding of how it works.

3.3 MODULE CAPACITY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Module capacity issues were swiftly resolved by the Systems and Data Services team in UCD Registry. Staff particularly appreciated the early alerts regarding students in need of attention. The template for requesting module capacity changes worked well.

Staff highlighted how crucial it is for Module Descriptors to be updated year on year to avoid issues but noted that these checks do not always happen. Communications are sent to Module Coordinators with details of information sessions/guides which highlights the importance of completing and reviewing module descriptors.

3.4 IT RELATED SYSTEMS AND DEVELOPMENTS

IT systems, including Banner and SISWeb, remained stable throughout the registration and start of term period. Staff noted that IT Services were very responsive and helpful.

Staff being able to check their systems access/roles in their InfoHub Profiles ensured that they could organise to have access rights renewed in advance of peak times.

The availability of IT systems that can be accessed when working remotely is immensely helpful and continues to improve. Some staff reported some issues with the VPN closing after a short period of inactivity and also interfering with Zoom calls.

Enhanced InfoHub reports facilitated checks such as CRN information and reporting by module assessment strategies.

The new Avaya phone system is a great support for hybrid working and has been an essential improvement for communicating with students and external stakeholders. However, some staff are experiencing issues with logging in and out, especially if switching between the handset and the app.

Staff would like Targeted Communications System to allow for multiple target groups to be selected when sending an email. This would remove the need to send the same email several times.

The UCD Mobile App was widely used and during the busiest orientation period it had 103K Screen views, 53K Sessions and 8.3K Unique visitors. Student feedback indicates that the

interface and functionality of the app could be improved. Similarly, the SISWeb user interface and user experience would benefit from a refresh.

Feedback from both student surveys indicates that more information and support around using Brightspace is needed, especially in advance of orientation and registration.

3.5 REGISTRATION

The overall registration process worked well, and staff feedback highlighted the excellent support and prompt response times from Student Records and other UCD Registry teams.

Schools received fewer queries from students, indicating that things ran relatively smoothly. Any queries received were easily resolved.

Responses to the student surveys showed that accessing online registration and confirming registration was straightforward. Students would like more guidance around module selection, both in relation to academic advice and online module registration.

The centralised process of lab/tutorial fitting continues to work very well and communications between the Systems and Data Services team, College and School offices are very effective.

This year, Smurfit students were able to start their module registration on the same day which removed a perception of disadvantage when registering for option modules.

Based on feedback from last year, Repeat/Resit/WN registration was aligned with general module registration. This reduced the number of queries coming into the College and School offices and improved the student experience.

Staff noted that having the Stage Assignment function in InfoHub rather than Banner runs the risk of that step being overlooked during busy times. It is not currently possible to incorporate the stage assignment step into Banner or UView but the My Registered Modules Missing a Stage report in InfoHub can be used to identify where a staff member needs to assign a stage for a module registration they have entered in Banner.

There was a suggestion about improving how the Next Stage tab in Online Registration displays the modules available that will be considered for Registration 2023.

3.6 SUPPORT FOR STAFF/FACULTY

The registration season is a busy time of year and most UCD units understand this and offer as much information and assistance as possible to assist other units through the process.

The strong collaboration between UCD Registry teams and the Colleges and Schools during the period was highlighted in the staff feedback. Room Allocations also provided strong support during the timetabling period.

The busy start of term period saw some delays in responses, possibly due to resources being stretched to meet competing priorities.

The assistance provided by the Orientation Project Manager, especially with the President's Welcomes and venues for academic advisory sessions, was excellent and staff greatly appreciated the efforts made to ensure they were able to run their events.

The delay in the Leaving Certificate results and subsequent CAO offers resulted in queries from parents and applicants who were anxious about getting a place in certain programmes. College/School office staff would appreciate more guidance around the CAO process in order to better support queries about points and offer rounds. Staff also expressed concern about how best to manage the student and staff experience should the delayed issuing of Leaving Certificate results and CAO offers become the norm.

Staff reported that the scheduling and communication for UCard distribution worked well this year. The UCard Bureau organised collection points on Blackrock campus and in the Engineering Building which was greatly appreciated.

The Banner and other How-To Guides and shortcut PDFs for staff are considered very useful as is the Registry website. The weekly USM Remote Working Group meetings and Google Currents are a useful informal method for sharing information and tips to aid administrative staff in supporting students and staff.

3.7 SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Undergraduate Orientation was successful with approximately 93% of Stage 1 Undergraduate survey respondents attending one or more event. While there were some virtual orientation activities, the focus was on providing a quality, in-person event to mark the full return to campus.

Survey feedback from Stage 1 Undergraduates shows that the UCD Welcome Ceremony and the Programme Orientation events introducing specific courses were particular highlights. The reassurance provided by the Students' Union, faculty and staff was appreciated. Students also valued the mindfulness talks and other mental health supports.

The social aspect of orientation is crucial and Peer Mentor groups provided students with the chance to meet new people in smaller settings. Attending orientation events and signing up to societies allowed people with shared interests to connect. Exploring the campus and getting a feel for the how the University works was also a key experience for students. Survey responses indicate that specific tours of individual buildings, pointing out facilities such as teaching rooms and study areas, would be beneficial.

Due to the delayed CAO offers and acceptances, orientation events had to be run in conjunction with term starting for other students. This presented many logistical and resourcing challenges. Rooms that would normally be available for orientation events were being used for teaching which curtailed many activities. Peer Mentors had to organise their availability around their learning commitments which led a less structured approach than previous years.

Staff expressed some concerns about students who accept later round offers and join after the start of term as they face a greater struggle to settle in and catch-up on material they have missed. Later round students are advised to consider deferring their place but for those who do opt to accept, more supports and orientation would be appreciated.

Communication and knowledge sharing are fundamental elements of student support. During the period of 29 August to 10 October 2022, the Student Desk logged 4087 in-person visits, 5060 phone calls and 7012 emails. Between 15 August and 7 October 2022, the College and School Offices logged 16,825 interactions in UniShare with queries about clinical placements and manual registration top of the list.

The New Students website had 14,797 users with 35,764 page views over the Orientation and Registration periods.

There is an ongoing issue with students being overwhelmed by the number of emails sent by UCD. This results in key messages around orientation, registration and the start of term being missed or simply ignored. The use of other channels for certain information should be explored. Some students also indicated that they were unsure how to prevent copies of emails going to their personal email address. Instructions for setting UCD Email Preferences are included in start of term emails from UCD Registry but more regular reminders will be provided via other channels.

The Graduate Taught/Research student survey showed that communication about the GradsConnect event was effective and that the content was relevant. It also indicated that the Graduate Research students found the Research & PhD Supports accessible and useful.

4 OVERVIEW OF IDEAS/RECOMMENDATIONS AND ANY ACTIONS REQUIRED

This section contains a summary of the key recommendations made by the various individual strand reviews as well as any relevant actions arising.

Area	Action by	Recommendation/Suggestion
Curriculum Management	Curriculum Team – UCD Registry//EAG - IT Services	More error flags or reports in InfoHub to highlight inconsistencies rather than just missing data will be considered.
		Consider how to expand existing information text on the Module Descriptor.
Registration	Systems & Data Services – UCD Registry/EAG - IT Services	System enhancement to add structural information to the 'next stage' modules tab under consideration for Registration 2023.
Support for Students	Support and Training – UCD Registry	Use student ezine to regularly remind students how to set their UCD email preferences. Continue to include this information in the start of term emails.
	Orientation Advisory Group/Programme Area	Increased supports/orientation for students who accept later round CAO offers.

5 REGISTRATION IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT GROUP MEMBERSHIP FOR 2022/23

Kevin Griffin, Director of UCD Registry (Chair)

Ruth Harrison, Director: Fees and Data Management, UCD Registry

Kate Griffin, Director: Customer and Curriculum Operations, UCD Registry

Caroline Barrett, Systems and Data Services: Fees and Data Management, UCD Registry

Lizanne Hutton, Curriculum Team: Customer and Curriculum Operations, UCD Registry

Caroline McTeigue, Support & Training: Customer and Curriculum Operations, UCD Registry

Emma Caron, Communications Officer, UCD Registry

Dr Gillian Pye, Associate Dean (Undergraduate), Arts and Humanities

Annette Forde, Director, College of Science Office

Janet Carton/Emer Cunningham, UCD Graduate Studies

Karen Jackman/Stacy Grouden, UCD School of English, Drama and Film

Helen McCarthy, UCD School of Biology & Environmental Science

Bronwyn O'Callaghan, Business Systems Project Manager, UCD IT Services

Caroline Hackman, Head of IT Customer Services

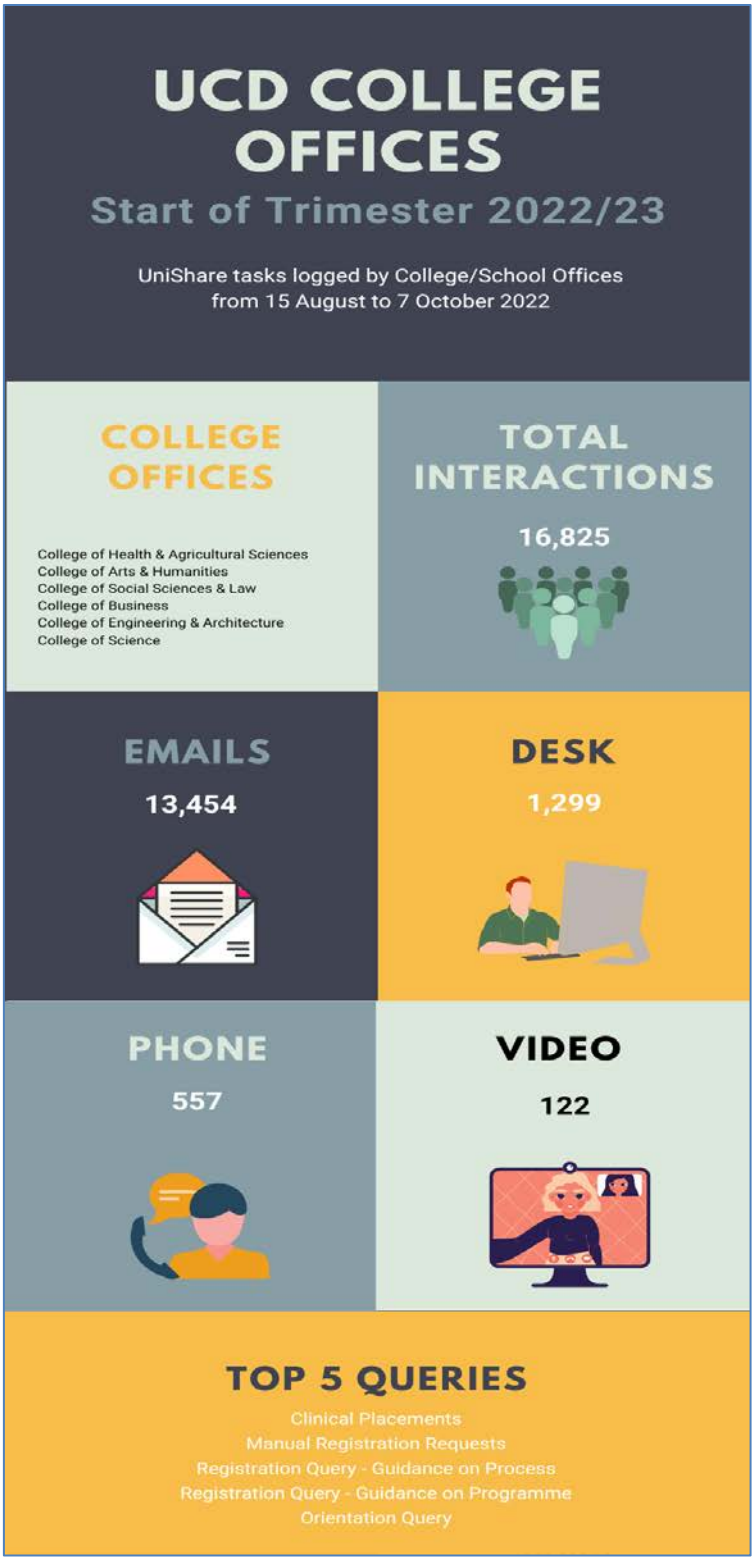
Daniel Earls, UCD Commercial, Residential, and Hospitality Services

Martha Ní Riada, Education Officer 2022/23, Students' Union

Marc Matouc, Graduate Officer 2022/23, Students' Union

6 START OF TERM 2022 SURVEYS - KEY RESULTS

www.ucd.ie/students/services/startoftermsurvey/

7 UCD STUDENT DESK - START OF TRIMESTER 22/23 UNISHARE STATISTICS

8 UCD COLLEGE OFFICES – START OF TRIMESTER 22/23 UNISHARE STATISTICS