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UCD Ad Astra Doctoral Scholarship

Terms and Conditions 2026

1. The overall aim of the Ad Astra Doctoral Scholarship is to attract applicants of the highest academic standards to participate in the UCD SPIRe PhD programme, and provide them with the training, experience and mentorship necessary to their professional development.
2. There are two Ad Astra Scholarships on offer. The Scholarship will comprise a fee remission at up to the scheduled non-EU rate of the programme to which they are registered plus a tax-free annual stipend of €25,000 payable in twelve equal monthly instalments. In addition, the scholarship comes with a yearly research budget of €4,000, which can be used for e.g. conducting surveys, running experiments, or attending conferences.
3. EU and non-EU students are equally eligible for studentships under this award.
4. All students are liable for the Student Centre Levy.
5. Scholarships are open to any new PhD students to the PhD in Politics and International Relations or PhD in Quantitative and Computational Social Science. Continuing students, or students transferring only part of their PhD studies to UCD, cannot apply.
6. Scholarships will be awarded for up to four years, with annual reviews of progress. Continuation of the scholarship is contingent on satisfactory progress, to be determined by the Selection Board and on passing the Stage Transfer Assessment as part of the structured PhD programme. The scholarship will terminate on any student's withdrawal from their programme.
7. Students accepted under this scheme must meet the university standard entry requirements.
8. The award is made on the basis of full-time engagement by the PhD student. Students should not take on other duties or work that will negatively impact their ability to commit to their research programme, other than demonstratorships or teaching assistantships which form part of their professional development.
9. By the end of Stage 1 of the PhD programme, the PhD student must have completed research integrity training. The PhD student should also complete appropriate transferrable skills modules and record these in their RPDP (e.g. research skills and academic writing).



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10. All PhD Scholarship students are welcomed as part of the UCD SPIRe research community and, as such, are expected to participate fully in the scholarly life of the School, inclusive of research seminars, conferences and other scholarly events.
11. All scholarship students will be required to maintain a log of their professional development and submit a reflective professional learning journal, in combination with a general progress report on their research, at the conclusion of each academic year.
12. Applications will be accepted from suitably qualified applicants regardless of nationality or residence. Applicants, however, must make their own visa/consular arrangements to ensure that they are eligible to reside in Ireland for the duration of their studies. Applicants are **STRONGLY** advised to make any visa application as early as possible as this process may be time consuming and failure to obtain a visa in time for the commencement of the academic year will likely necessitate cancellation of the scholarship award. Applicants must also evidence capacity to conduct research and to teach at graduate level through the medium of English.
13. In order to be considered, applicants must note in the cover letter, as part of the SPIRe application process, that they wish to apply for the Ad Astra Scholarship.
14. Scholarships will be awarded only to those who are full-time students and who will engage full-time in research during the period of the scholarship.
15. It is the responsibility of the Scholarship holder to inform the University of any change to the circumstances on which the award of the Scholarship was based. The Scholar must also take responsibility for updating their personal records including any change of address, telephone, or e-mail on the UCD Student Web system within two weeks of such a change.
16. Once the scholarship award is issued, the successful applicant must indicate acceptance in writing within two weeks of the notification being distributed. It is the applicant's responsibility to formally accept the scholarship offer – a non-response will be considered as declining the offer. Offers will be conditional on verification of original transcripts.
17. The successful applicant must be present at UCD by the start of the semester.
18. Should the scholar be unable for any reason (including medical reasons) to pursue his/her studies in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Scholarship, he/she must inform the School (via his/her supervisor and the PhD Director) within two weeks of such a situation coming to his/her attention. However, given the basis on which scholarships are awarded, UCD reserves the right to withdraw, suspend, reallocate or seek reimbursement of all or part of the scholarship.
19. The Scholarship is held subject to these Terms and Conditions. If any of the above are breached by a Scholarship holder, UCD SPIRe reserves the right to suspend or terminate the Scholarship



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and/or will require the Scholar to reimburse UCD SPIRe for such payments as have already been made.

20. The successful applicant may be required to sign a form of consent under the Data Protection Act 1998 in relation to data records concerning registration status and academic record as well as the handling of student and other data.
21. The Scholarship holder must be available to assist in the promotion of graduate studies at UCD recruitment events and within associated activities at School, College and University levels.
22. All publicity, including public lectures, publications, print materials and press releases, television and radio advertisements, websites, film, video and audio recordings associated with or arising from the research undertaken by a Scholar while in receipt of a Scholarship must contain acknowledgment of funding received from the 'UCD Ad Astra Doctoral Scholarship'.
23. UCD School of Politics and International Relations reserves the right to revise the Terms and Conditions of this scheme at any time.