

[Higher Education Institution]

2021

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
Reporting Period 2019-2020

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PART A: INTERNAL QA SYSTEM
Reporting Period 2019-2020

PREFACE

Note: QQI's provider portal, QHub, is currently under development and will be completed in November 2020. AQR 2021 will be submitted via QHub.

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 CINNTE 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 and 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 Supports	2.7	Supports for learners	1.6	Learning Resources and Student Support
6.0 - Information and Data Management	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 Education 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 Third Parties				
2.0 - Programme Development and Delivery	2.11	Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review	1.9	On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of 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 2019 - 31 August 2020**.

It is to be submitted by **Friday, 26 March 2021**.

The AQR has been approved by the **Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC)** and is submitted by **Bronwyn Molony, UCD Director of Quality**.

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 with over 33,973 students (including overseas operations) and 3,500 (FTEs) faculty and staff. UCD is Ireland's University of first choice, leading in first-preference application in Ireland year after year. Around 9,600 awards are conferred each year. Students from over 130 countries attend UCD, and the University enrolls nearly 4,000 students based at locations outside of Ireland. 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. Within Irish universities UCD accounts for 25.6% of international students, 29.2% of all graduate students and 21.8% of all doctoral enrolments.

For the past three years UCD has ranked number one in Ireland for Graduate Employability (QS Graduate Employability Rankings 2018, 2019 and 2020). UCD is ranked number one university in Ireland in the [US News & World Report's Best Global University Rankings](#) and is Sunday Times University of the Year 2020. UCD is globally recognised for its excellence in teaching and learning with 14 subjects ranked in the top 100 in the world ([QS World University Ranking by Subject 2019](#)).

The University's main Dublin campus at Belfield occupies an estate of more than 130 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](#) and [UCD Student Centre](#). 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. QS World University Rankings place the University in the top 200 higher education institutions in the world, moving up eight places to 185 in the 2020 Rankings.

The University launched its [UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future](#) in December 2019. The strategy builds on the objectives of the UCD Strategy 2015-20 and acknowledges the importance of the University's role in interacting with the world through its research, education and contribution at a national and international level. Four strategic themes have been identified that will continue to shape our research, enhance our teaching and learning, and how we function as both a community and as an institution. UCD's themes will be achieved through Creating a Sustainable Global Society; Transforming Through Digital Technology; Building a Healthy World; and Empowering Humanity and will be embedded in our core objectives and facilitated by six key enablers. These will be enabled and supported through our governance structures, policies and procedures, Quality Assurance

mechanisms, and our faculty, staff and students and reflect our core values of excellence, creativity, integrity, collegiality, engagement and diversity.

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. In line with the revised AQR report structure, UCD has made significant revisions to Part A: Internal QA System of the report to reflect current QA policies and procedures and ensure its alignment with regulatory requirements. This report is subject to review and approval by the University and [Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee \(ACQEC\)](#) as part of this process.

1.0 Internal QA Framework

1.1 Governance and Management of Quality

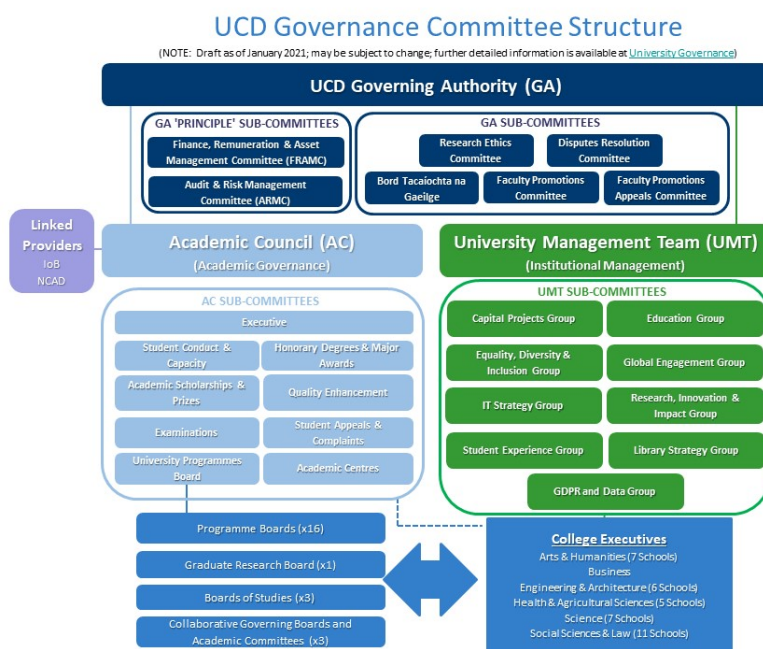
Overarching Governance and Management Structures for Quality Assurance

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 mission and 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 [UCD Governing Authority](#) as required under the Universities Act 1997, Section 35, UCD Charter and UCD Statutes. 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. Further information on the Governing Authority is available via the [Manual of the Structure, Code of Practice & Procedures of the Sixth Governing Authority](#).

[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 (HAE) policy and other institutional and national initiatives. Academic Council oversees an academic governance framework which is made up of a number of sub-committees, and has a key role in setting the annual work programme and reporting requirements for its sub-committees and includes responsibility for quality oversight within its functions. The terms of reference 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 [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:

- Capital Projects Group
- Education Group
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group
- Global Engagement Group
- IT Strategy Group
- Research, Innovation and Impact Group
- Student Experience Group
- Library Strategy Group
- GDPR and Data 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/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 and Deputy Registrar)
- Chief Financial Officer/Bursar
- Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact
- Vice-President for Global Engagement
- Vice-President for Campus Development
- Vice-President for Health Affairs
- Director of Human Resources

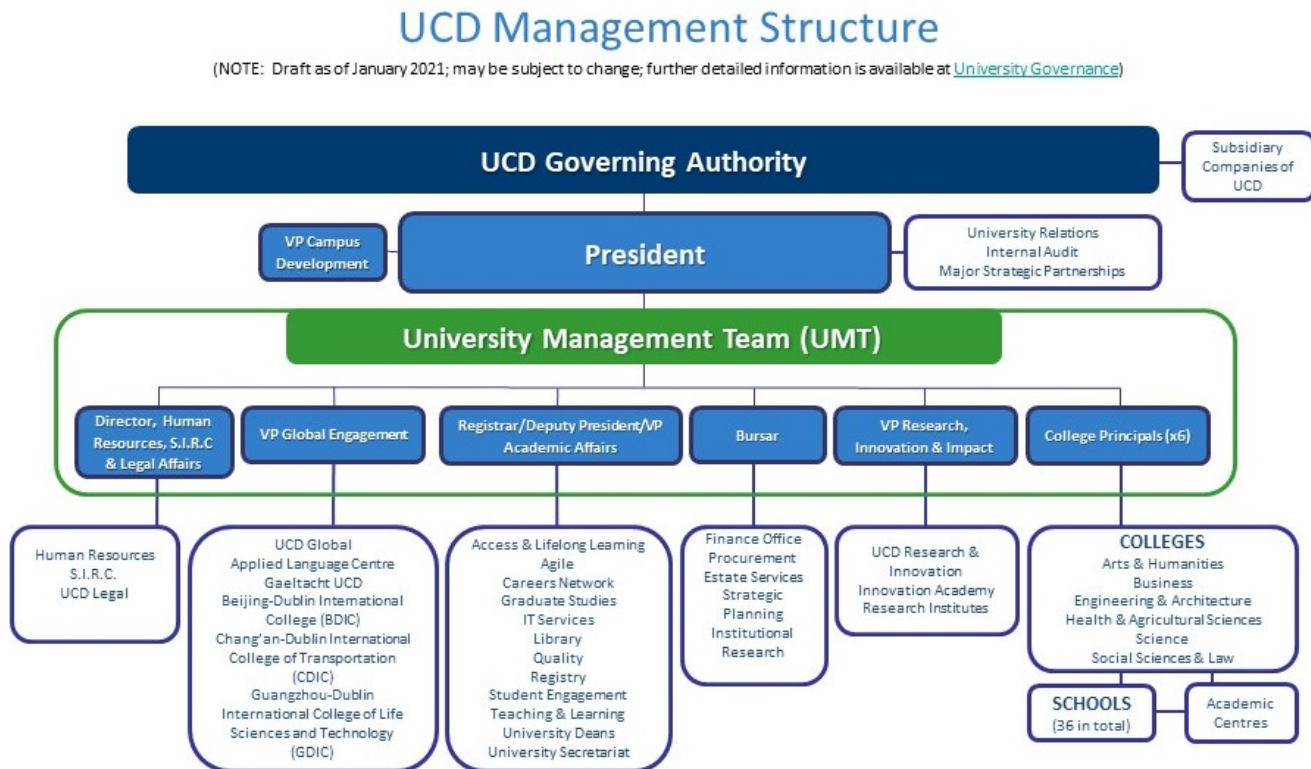
At College and School level there are a number of key roles through which oversight and management (including resourcing) of the quality of teaching, learning, research and the UCD student experience is exercised, including:

- College Principals
- Vice-Principals for Teaching and Learning
- Vice-Principals for Internationalisation
- Vice-Principals for Research and Innovation
- College Finance Managers
- Programme Deans/Associate Deans/Heads of Governing Boards
- Heads of School
- Subject Area Heads
- Module Co-ordinators

Reporting to the Registrar, Deputy-President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs, the UCD Director of Quality oversees a formal quality process and 7-year cycle of unit 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



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

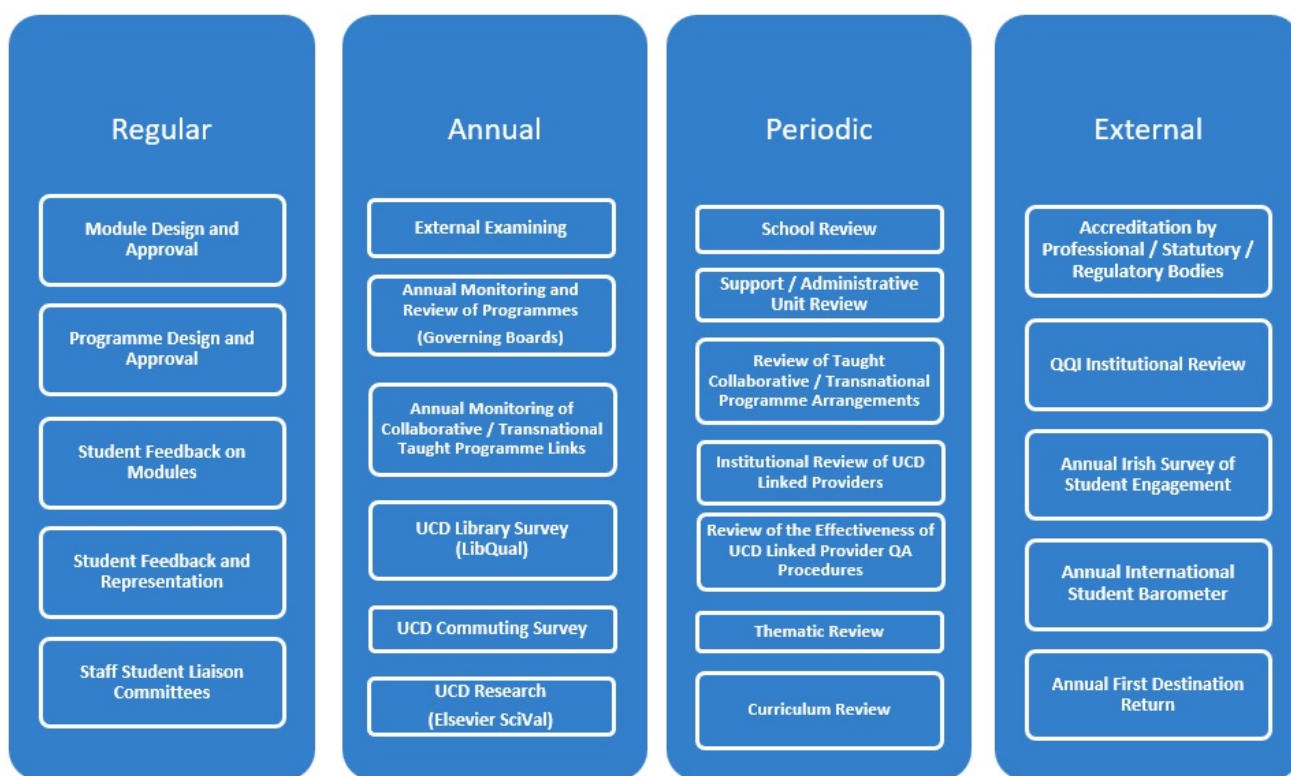
The UCD Governing Authority is comprised of a total membership of 40 members: 20 external members that include employers, Lord Mayor of Dublin, NUI representatives, Local Government representatives and nominees and alumni; 16 internal members and 4 student representatives. Further information is provided 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 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 2020-2024](#). This strategy follows-on from the significant progress made under the previous strategy, which is outlined at [UCD Strategy 2015-2020 - Summary of Achievements](#). The current strategy is forward looking, seeking to embrace and shape change, treating challenges as opportunities, and articulating how we prepare students for their future careers. Our policies and procedures support these 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 also extends to UCD's collaborative and transnational arrangements, its linked providers (referred to as Recognised Colleges within UCD) and its support units. 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, which helps support an environment where diversity is celebrated and everyone is fairly treated regardless of gender, age, race, disability, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, civil status, family status, or membership of the travelling community a positive teaching and learning experience for staff and students.

The [UCD Quality Framework](#) is supported by a combination of University-wide policies and procedures ([University Secretariat - Document Library](#)) and a 7-year schedule of periodic review of academic and support units, linked providers and transnational programmes, supported by the [UCD Quality Office](#), which reports to the UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs. UCD's approach to quality assurance and enhancement is underpinned by, inter alia, the 1997 Universities Act, 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 activity.

Figure 3 - UCD Quality Framework

UCD Quality Review 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 [Office of 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
- Strategic management of major research programmes and institutes

- Research support services
- Industry partnerships
- International programmes
- Infrastructural development
- Commercialisation of research through UCD Innovation

The new [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

To achieve this overarching objective, the [Office of the UCD Vice President for Research Innovation and Impact](#) will emphasise excellence and impact in all aspects of our research and innovation, delivering both at a scale that allows us to make a difference in areas of national and global significance. This will be achieved through investing in our people and providing a culture and environment in which they are supported to deliver on their potential and ambitions. This is captured in the draft UCD strategy for research and innovation which is expected to be published in March 2021 and will cover the period 2021-2024.

The following Research Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used at University, College, and School levels for monitoring progress against the new [UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future](#):

- Publication Volume: The number of journal publications for UCD per calendar year from the Scopus/SciVal database;
- Research Awards: Externally Funded Research Awards Value - 3 Year Average Awards Value - 3 Year Average;
- Field-Weighted Citation Impact;
- Number of co-authored Papers with International collaborators.

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

- Horizon scanning, Opportunity matching, Pipeline development
- Proposal development
- Budget optimisation
- Proposal submission
- Register Your Award
- Promoting Your Research
- Commercialise Your Research
- Research Analytics & Reporting
- Impact

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:

- 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.

The internal periodic review process for schools, managed by the UCD Quality Office, assists the University to assure itself of the quality of the research activity that is incorporated in its unit 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. 'Research' 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.

The UCD Quality Office has developed a Research Assessment process to assist schools 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 available to schools as a resource.

The [UCD Research Analytics and Impact Team](#) also provides Heads of Schools and their nominees with access to a [Research Statement Report](#), which provides a view of research activity at University, College, School and Institute level, showing information and metrics on research funding, staff and publications, using a combination of the university business systems and Bibliometrics data. The report is available from the Research tab in InfoHub (the University's internal reporting system which is available through UCD Connect - UCD username and password required) and provides information such as:

- Research Funding - proposals and awards (volume, value and % overhead for the past five years), active grants (current volume, value, average duration);
- Research Publications - RMS profiles (volume for the past five years), Thomson Reuters' InCites (volume, impact, % cited, % with collaborators for the past five years);
- Research Metrics - Total Full Time Equivalent (FTE), Academic FTE, % Research Active Academics, Financial Trajectory Indicator (average award value less average expenditure over three years).

UCD Research and Innovation is also subject to periodic unit quality review, with the most recent review taking place in April 2016. The [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

The composition of the Governing Authority provides for substantial input and oversight of the governance and management of quality within the University. 50% of the current [Governing Authority](#) committee members are external representatives of learners and a broad range of external stakeholders.

The [UCD Student Charter](#) summarises the aspiration and expectations of all member of the UCD community, the roles and responsibilities, It outlines what students can expect from the University and what the University expects from its students. The University works in partnership with the [Students' Union](#) to ensure that students are represented at all levels of the University and support procedures and protocols that allow students to make positive suggestions for improvements to ensure effective governance and management of academic, administrative and social activity. 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 Officers](#). This includes the University's most senior academic and institutional governing bodies: Academic Council, Governing Authority and many of the University Management Team subcommittees. 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 by their classmates to represent different courses, schools, and stages across the UCD student journey. There are around 270 Class Rep seats available, and any UCD student can run to represent their class. Class Reps attend student council meetings, represent their classmates by acting as a conduit between schools/programmes and their class on issues/concerns/providing feedback/programme or module information.

The Widening Participation (WP) Committee (<https://www.ucd.ie/universityforall/wpcommittee/>) provides the formal mechanism to oversee, monitor and promote the University's achievement of a diverse and inclusive student community - 'A University for All'. Sponsored by the Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President, and supported and led by the WP Committee and UCD Access and Lifelong Learning and embedded in the University Strategy (core objective 2 and 4), this initiative brings together the University community to work together to achieve a common goal of becoming a fully inclusive and diverse institution through a main-streaming approach that recognises, promotes and values diversity, fosters a spirit of inclusion, acknowledges the talent, experience and contributions of all students, and seeks to remove barriers to access, participation and success. The WP Committee is composed of 31 members that represent the University's various programme boards, policy and support units, and students.

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 the [Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy](#). The Student Activities Committee, which reports to the Student Experience Group (SEG), is an '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.

Student feedback is an important mechanism for the University to understand how students feel about their experience at UCD. It helps the University to identify opportunities to improve and enhance what it does and plays an important role in quality assurance processes. There are a variety of ways students can provide feedback to the University, including through formal survey mechanisms or through liaising with student representatives, such as Class Reps, participation in staff-student committees, so that they can represent their views or concerns at relevant school or programme meetings and other staff /student fora.

Module Feedback: 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 [Survey Process document](#) provides an overview of how UCD's Student Feedback on Modules system works. Other annual surveys include:

- [The Start of Term Survey](#)
- [StudentSurvey.ie](#) (national)

- [Annual Commuter Survey](#)

In relation to additional external stakeholder input in the governance and management of quality, a number of 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. For example, the [UCD College of Business](#) where the [UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School](#) has two Advisory Boards, the Irish Advisory Board and the North American Advisory Board. These boards provide a useful conduit to the international business community. The Boards meet twice yearly and also have an integrated meeting annually. Board members have played an integral role in supporting successful funding campaigns, including the *Extending our Edges of Excellence* campaign. This campaign has served as the catalyst for transformative change by allowing the College to make investments in physical and human capital that would otherwise not have been possible. Since 2013, the campaign has raised €30 million in philanthropic support, including one of the largest single gifts in UCD's history. The campaign has served to focus the College's relationship with industry in areas where Ireland has strength including digital business, financial services and food. The campaign has enabled the UCD College of Business to establish key academic Chairs, funded by industry, filled by internationally minded faculty in the broad areas of business analytics, aviation finance and operational risk management.

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 meets its statutory obligation to have policy and procedure in relation to the provision of information about its arrangements with PSRBs.

The University recognises the many benefits associated with the professional accreditation of its programmes/schools/institutes by PSRBs, including:

- Enhancement of the student learning experience by linking theory and practice, where knowledge-generation within the University directly interacts with professional practice in the 'real world';
- Review of professional programmes by PSRBs that ensures that the programme outcomes are met, that the learning activity is current and reflective of changes and innovations within a given sector and/or academic or professional area;
- Creation of pathways for graduates seeking to access the labour market for a particular profession, and promotion of professional status and/or membership to facilitate the growth and development of such graduates;
- Provision of exemptions from professional examinations required for professional licensing or practice;
- Promotion of the currency of the University's programmes and other activities in such a way as to make them easily recognised and understood by a global audience;
- Provision of external, international and peer benchmarks against which the activity within the University can be regularly compared, with a view to promoting international best practice.

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 unit reviews.

Links to Relevant Governance Policies and Procedures/Regulations

- [Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Policy](#)
- [Periodic Quality Review Process](#)
- [UCD Academic Regulations](#)
- [UCD Academic Regulations Version History](#)
- [Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework \(PDARF\)](#)
- [Admissions Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Adult Education Policy](#)
- [Assessment Code of Practice](#)
- [Assessment Appeals Policy](#)
- [Code of Responsible Conduct of Research](#)
- [Continuation and Readmission Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Continuing Professional Development: Governance Framework and Procedure](#)
- [Dignity and Respect Policy](#)
- [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy](#)
- [Gender Identity & Expression Policy](#)
- [Grievance Procedure Policy](#)
- [Internships/Work Practice Experience: Guidelines and Good Practice](#)
- [Leadership Development Policy](#)
- [Performance for Growth Policy](#)
- [Policy Management Framework](#)
- [Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body \(PSRB\) accreditation](#)
- [Remote Working during Coronavirus COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
- [Special Extern Examiners \(Research Degrees\)](#)
- [Subject Extern Examiners \(Subject Areas\)](#)
- [Statement on Academic Freedom](#)
- [UCD Gender Balance on Committees Policy](#)
- [UCD Governing Authority Code of Conduct](#)
- [UCD Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [UCD Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy](#)

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 relevant 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 UMT, UMT Global, UPB, [Academic Council](#) and its relevant sub-committees.

The University has a Framework in place for its programmes [Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework \(PDARF\)](#) which provides guidance on establishing new programmes, changes to programmes. Further information is provided under Section 2.0 Programme Development and Delivery. A dedicated set of resources are in place that are specific to collaborative provision. These includes guidance on various topics from initiating a new programme, development of the programme, its implementation, monitoring and review phases. UCD's framework for collaborative provision is benchmarked against international best practice and comparator institutions, and also complies with relevant policies and guidelines, such as the [Irish Higher Education Quality Network \(IHEQN\) Guidelines for the Approval, Monitoring and Review of Collaborative and Transnational Provision \(2013\)](#).

Transnational Delivery of Programmes

The Vice-President for Global Engagement is responsible for the development and implementation of UCD's Global Engagement Strategy. The previous strategy - [UCD Global Engagement Strategy \(2016-2020\)](#) - included further expansion and enhancement of UCD's portfolio of international partners and associated collaborative and transnational programmes, and the new strategy for 2021-24 is currently being developed under the guidance of the Vice-President for Global Engagement and the [University Management Team - Global Engagement Group \(UMT-GEG\)](#), It is due to be submitted for consideration to the [UCD Governing Authority](#) in March 2021.

The [UCD Office of Global Engagement](#) comprises of UCD Global, UCD Applied Language Centre, 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 UCD Global Partnerships Team is responsible for:

- Providing guidance to other teams looking to develop an academic partnership with another institution.
- Ensuring successful and effective management of high-level incoming delegations to UCD from our global partners and global public bodies and ensuring successful outbound missions for the UCD President and Vice-President for Global Engagement.
- Management of global partnership submissions to the college Global Engagement Group (UMT GEG) chaired by the Vice-President for Global Engagement.
- Management of the recording of all UCD's Global Engagement initiatives via our online partnership database ([Rowan](#)).
- Maintaining a formal Register of Agreements for all global university partnerships.
- Supporting Global Engagement strategic projects related to the UCD Global Engagement Strategy.

- Developing and championing policy frameworks in support of global relations, and collating and analysing information on the University's international partnerships and its global reach.
- Coordinating visits to the University by a wide range of formal delegations, and making arrangements for high-level overseas missions by senior UCD staff.

The [UMT Global Engagement Group \(UMT-GEG\)](#) is responsible for scrutinising 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 which is recorded in the [Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework \(PDARF\)](#) proposal. 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](#) and are subject to annual programme review [Annual Monitoring of UCD Taught Collaborative/Transnational Educational Provision](#), overseen by the [Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee \(ACQEC\)](#) and published by the UCD Quality Office. These reports identify positive practice as well as proposed enhancements for the next year and set out what progress has been made regarding any proposed enhancements identified in the previous year. 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 are undertaken within a seven-year cycle and provide 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 scaffolding approach is undertaken as the internal UCD periodic review process of Schools and 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, and a progress report that monitors progress implementation of the QIP.

Linked Providers

The University has published [Procedures for the Approval of UCD Linked Provider Quality Assurance Procedures](#) and [Guidelines for Linked Provider Institutional Review](#), which are intended to assist with the management and 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: [National College of Art and Design \(NCAD\)](#) and the [Institute of Banking \(IOB\)](#). UCD has formal agreements with each Linked Provider, that are separately reviewed prior to the renewal of the partnership, typically every five 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 also reviewed the effectiveness of their quality procedures.

2.0 Programme Development and Delivery

2.1 Programme Development and Approval

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 educational strategy and academic initiatives, academic regulatory oversight on academic policies, regulations, student code and maintaining the integrity of the curriculum including programme development and approval. It also oversees the academic governance framework which is made up of a number of subcommittees, 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, which is a statement that sets out the purpose and structure of each programme, which is approved by the relevant Governing Board in accordance with the policies and procedures established by Academic Council or its relevant committee. In accordance with the University's policies and 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 Programme Director's responsibilities include:

- Day to day management of the programme;
- Consulting with faculty and staff involved in the delivery of the programme;
- Monitoring the assessment and feedback strategies of the programme;
- Monitoring student satisfaction and engagement with the programme and constituent modules;
- Identifying students whose academic welfare is of concern and reporting concerns to the Governing Board; and
- Making recommendations in relation to quality assurance and programme enhancement to the Governing Board.

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 Undergraduate and Graduate Taught Programme Boards, the Graduate Research Board, Joint Academic Programme Boards and Boards of Studies established by the University. Furthermore, the responsibilities of UPB are to:

- 1) Oversee the development, approval, review, and delivery of programmes by governing boards to assure compliance with Academic Regulations and the effectiveness and quality of programmes.
- 2) Establish frameworks for the development, approval, and review of programmes that delegates to Governing Boards or reserves to UPB decision-making as appropriate.
- 3) Ensure procedures are in place to monitor trends and audit decision-making with respect to -
 - Admission
 - Progression
 - Continuation
 - Completion
 - Recognition of prior or concurrent learning
 - Internationalisation of programmes
 - Internships and employability initiatives
 - Other aspects of programme design or governance identified by UPB or Academic Council
- 4) Develop policies, procedures, guidelines, and initiatives as appropriate to promote effectiveness, excellence, and fairness in the delivery and governance of programmes.
- 5) Adjudicate on applications for derogation from the Academic Regulations submitted by schools or governing boards.
- 6) Review the Academic Regulations at suitable intervals and where amendment is deemed advisable, propose amendments to Academic Council.
- 7) Recommend policies, and approve and oversee procedures and frameworks as appropriate, for the development, approval, review, and delivery of the following educational activities, to assure the effectiveness and quality of such offerings:
 - Internship and employability initiatives
 - Study abroad opportunities
 - CPD offerings by schools
- 8) In consultation with the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee, approve and oversee policies, procedures, and frameworks as appropriate for the governance and continuous monitoring and auditing of programme quality.
- 9) Request, receive, and review reports pertinent to monitoring and auditing the quality of programmes.
- 10) Highlight existing and emerging good practice examples and promote dissemination of such practices.
- 11) Consider such matters as Academic Council may refer.

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. The key functions of UMT-EG are:

- To assist in the development of the Education Theme of the UCD Strategy, develop an implementation plan for this theme, and monitor review and evaluate the progress of the UCD Strategy in achieving the University's educational objectives.
- To report to UMT, on an annual basis, progress updates against the University's Education Strategy Implementation Plan
- To advise UMT on oversight and review of existing, and proposals for new, educational activity within UCD, as it relates to:
 - Supporting the education providers through training and development
 - Enhancement through learning from student feedback
 - Infrastructure and resources for teaching and learning

- To promote the development and exchange of good practice, and establish mechanisms for recognition of teaching excellence, across UCD's Colleges, Schools and Units including Recognised Colleges and
- To consider and respond to issues referred to the Group by the University Management Team relating to the University's educational activities.

The new Education and Student Success Strategy for 2021-24 is being developed under the leadership of the Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President. A series of workshops with internal and external stakeholders are ongoing and will contribute to the development of the Strategy. It encompasses four themes that will provide a student-centered educational experience, Technology enhanced learning; Student Engagement, Diversity and Well-being; and Pedagogy for inclusivity for Student Success. The Education Strategy will be considered by Governing Authority in March 2021.

The procedures and requirements relating to programme design are contained in the [UCD 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 of its programmes. The Academic Regulations are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose and reflect programme developments and innovations. All of the degree award programmes offered by UCD are mapped to the [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#) through articulation of learning outcomes and their alignment with the relevant NFQ level.

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. PDARF is reviewed on an annual basis - with enhancements based on ongoing operational practice, and benchmarking against international and comparator institutions. The strategic case for a new programme of study must be signed by the Head of School, College Finance Manager and College Principal and then approved by the relevant College Executive and the University Management Team (UMT). The academic aspects of a new programme must be signed by the Head of School and Chair of the Governing Board and then approved by the relevant Governing Board and/or the University Programmes Board (UPB) depending on the [type](#) of the programme proposal. Programmes are not considered approved and may not be advertised until both UMT and Governing Board or UPB approval, depending on the [type](#) of the programme proposal, has been granted. In addition to governance boards having responsibility for quality, certain faculty roles have a quality dimension in relation to educational programmes, including: Registrar, College Principals, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Dean of Graduate Studies, VP Teaching and Learning, School Heads of Teaching and Learning, Programme Deans and Module Co-ordinators. Many of UCD's academic programmes are also externally accredited by [Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies \(PSRBs\)](#) and the University has published a [Policy for Internal Reporting on PSRB Accreditation of UCD Programmes and Units](#) as well as the [PSRB List](#) of such bodies which accredit UCD programmes or units.

The [Curriculum Team](#) in Administrative Services (a unit of UCD Registry) provides support and advice to staff and faculty across 37 schools/units on curriculum management and [programme approval](#). The team is responsible for the management of the Curriculum Management System that is used by staff and faculty to record and manage curricular information at module, major and programme level. In addition to this the team manages the Course Search that publishes curriculum information to students. The team is also responsible for the creation of programme and majors on foot of formal approval; the assignment of module codes on behalf of schools; the set-up of new registration terms and programme structures. The remit of the team includes support for the implementation of academic regulations and for the University's Programme Development, Approval and Review Framework (PDARF) process. The Curriculum Team responsibilities are carried out through ongoing liaison with staff and faculty in Schools and Colleges.

Extensive support for programme and module design and enhancement is available through [UCD Teaching and Learning](#), including 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, 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:

- Programme Design and Assessment
- Module Design and Enhancement
- Assessment
- Technology Enhanced Learning
- Curriculum Review and Enhancement Project Guide

The following flowchart (Figure 4) sets out the approval steps for new programme proposals and changes to programmes.

Figure 4 - PDARF Flowchart

PDARF Form – Completion Process	Signed by	Approval	University Level Approval (where applicable)	Actioned by
PDARF 1 Partnership Proposal	HoS/College Finance Manager/ College Principal	College Executive	GEG approval: internationalagreements@ucd.ie and UMT approval: umt@ucd.ie	UCD International/ University Secretariat
PDARF 2 New Programme Proposal (Also submit PDARF 1 if includes external partnership)	HoS/College Finance Manager/ College Principal	College Executive	UMT approval: umt@ucd.ie	University Secretariat
PDARF 3 New Programme Academic Structure Proposal (PDARF 2 must be approved before PDARF 3 submission)	Head of School/ Chair of Governing Board	Governing Board	Dependent on type of new programme	Curriculum Team, UCD Registry
PDARF 4 Collaborative Programme Supplement (PDARF 1 & 3 may need to be submitted)	Head of School/ Chair of Governing Board	Governing Board	UPB approval: programmes@ucd.ie	Curriculum Team, UCD Registry
PDARF 6 Structural Elective or Specialisation Proposal/ Change	Head of School/ Chair of Governing Board	Governing Board		Curriculum Team, UCD Registry
PDARF 7 Programme Change Proposal (PDARF 14 may need to be submitted with PDARF 7)	Head of School/ Chair of Governing Board	Governing Board	Dependent on type of new programme change	Curriculum Team, UCD Registry
PDARF 8 Pathway Programme Proposal	Head of School/ Chair of Governing Board	Governing Board	UPB approval: programmes@ucd.ie	Curriculum Team, UCD Registry
PDARF 14 Derogations	No signatures	Governing Board	UPB approval:	Curriculum Team,

Professional or experiential learning has been an integral component of a number of programmes at UCD. In relation to apprenticeship/work-based learning programmes, UCD has established procedures to ensure appropriate quality assurance of such arrangements, including the [Policy on Internships/Work Practice Experience: Guidelines and Good Practice](#). This policy outlines a set of guidelines to support current activities and facilitate the development of future internship activities at University College Dublin where learning takes place outside the University in an experiential setting. This activity can refer to professional clinical practice placements, work experience/internships based in companies/industry and other professional fieldwork experiences. The policy is concerned with arrangements made for such internship learning that constitutes a planned and intended part of an academic programme, is assessed by that programme and for which credit is awarded. The policy ensures parity of practice across the University. Oversight of all programmes, including those with apprenticeship/work-based learning components, is the responsibility of the relevant [Governing Board](#).

2.2 Admission, Progression, Recognition & Certification

Recruitment, Pre-Entry and Admission

UCD admits students to accredited 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. The Admissions Policy does not apply to UCD's Linked Providers.

UCD 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. Admissions audits application decisions based on established and published entry criteria and manages the verification of incoming students' academic records. UCD Registry 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](#) and [UCD Global](#) websites. Prospectuses for undergraduate and graduate programmes are also published.

Codependent related policies and procedures are in place to align with the Admissions policy and include UCD 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, Transfer Policy, UCD's Child Protection Policy and Guidelines.

For undergraduate admissions, the [MyUCD portal](#) provides extensive information on the admissions process, CAO application, summer schools, open evenings and career fairs, UCD Open Day, the UCD prospectus, UCD Horizons (the modular and credit-based structure for taught degrees at UCD), and Campus life.

Information is provided for a wide variety of types of applicant that includes Irish Leaving Certificate Applicants, FET applicants, Mature Applicants, EU Applicants, Non-EU Applicants, Transfer Applicants, A-Level/GCSE Applicants, and Graduate Entry applicants.

Alternate pathways are also available to students of all ages and backgrounds to pursue their studies at UCD including students with disabilities, mature students, part-time learners, and students from communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage. Seven entry pathways are available:

- [University Access Courses](#)
- [DARE \(Disability Access Route to Education\)](#)
- [HEAR \(Higher Education Access Route\)](#)
- [Lifelong Learning](#)
- [Open Learning](#)
- [Mature Years](#)
- [QQI-FET](#)

As part of the University's commitment to widen student participation, promote a 'University for All', ensuring equitable access to education, and to create a diverse and inclusive community on campus, UCD has put in place a range of [financial supports and scholarships](#). More recently, the University has extended its "Cothrom na Féinne" Scholarship Programme to Asylum Seekers, Refugees, those with Subsidiary Protection or Leave to Remain, and received University of Sanctuary designation in 2018. This pilot scholarship scheme offers support for tuition fees and financial assistance for eligible applicants wishing to study at UCD.

Under delegated authority, UCD Global manages non-EU admissions to UCD's undergraduate programmes and selected graduate programmes. For international students, there is also a dedicated website supported by UCD Global for [study at UCD for international students](#) that provides information on pre-entry and the UCD student experience.

EU applicants for graduate taught programmes and graduate research programmes are processed by the relevant school under delegated authority.

For graduate admissions, there is extensive information for prospective students on the [UCD Graduate Studies](#) website. This includes:

- Graduate Options
- Graduate Taught Programmes
- Graduate Research Programmes
- Graduate Prospectus
- Reasons to Choose UCD for Graduate Study
- Graduate Programme search tool
- Application FAQ
- Campus Life (including a Virtual Campus Tour, Open Days & Events, International Students, Accommodation)
- Global Connections
- Student Testimonials
- Future Careers

Prospective students are also encouraged to peruse [Researcher Profiles at UCD](#) as a tool to help identify a potential Principal Supervisor.

For graduate admissions UCD operates an online [UCD Graduate Admissions](#) application system. There is also information about programmes available via online and distance learning through the [UCD Online Learning](#) website.

Progression

Following admission to UCD, there is extensive information and supports 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, 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](#)
- [Assessment in UCD](#)
- [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](#)

[Peer Mentors at UCD](#) help make coming to UCD a more welcoming, less daunting experience. As well as arranging meetings and social events for their mentees, mentors will also be available to assist with any queries or concerns which their mentees may have. In turn, mentors will be supported by their Student Adviser or Student Progression Manager.

Additional policies and procedures and other guidelines which support student access, transfer and progression include:

- [UCD Academic Regulations](#)
- [Alternative Entry Routes](#)
- [Access Progression Routes](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Undergraduate Programme Transfer Policy](#)
- [Transfer and Re-Admission](#)
- [Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning](#)
- [Policy on Progression in Doctoral Programmes](#)

The [UCD Widening Participation \(UWP\) Committee](#) provides the formal mechanism to oversee, monitor and promote the University's achievement of a diverse and inclusive scholarly student community, characterised as 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 Academic Programme Boards, Policy and Support Services, in addition to Student Access Leaders and the UCD Student 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. The Committee also publishes annual reports, the most recent of which is available at [UCD Widening Participation Committee - Annual Report 2018-19](#).

The [UCD University for All](#) initiative is a whole-institutional approach to inclusion in UCD. This initiative brings together the entire university community to work together to achieve the goal of becoming a fully inclusive, diverse institution. The [UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future](#) states that through the "mainstreaming approach - [UCD] recognises, promotes and values 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 University for All initiative is sponsored by the Registrar & Deputy President, governed by the University Widening Participation Committee, and led by UCD Access & Lifelong Learning.

Recognition

UCD's academic awards are linked to the [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#), which in turn is matched to the [European Qualifications Framework \(EQF\)](#). 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 [UCD Academic Regulations](#) (and Figure 5 below).

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

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

In the case of most of the University's major degree programmes; Honours Bachelor Degree, Masters Degree and Doctoral Degree, the associated levels are applicable regardless of date of award. During the process of mapping

UCD awards to the NFQ, Higher Diploma programmes were reviewed and a number were re-designated as Graduate Diplomas (NFQ level 9). Within the context of the NFQ, awards that the University no longer offer are referred to as 'historical awards'. Awards that were offered by the University prior to the establishment of the NFQ are referred to as legacy awards.

UCD encourages lifelong learning and provides the opportunity for prior learning to be recognised. Students can apply to have prior learning recognised for the purposes of admission into a UCD programme of study, or credit applied towards a UCD programme of study (for example to replace elective credits in a Stage), or transfer into or between UCD programmes. The [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#), and all supporting documentation, applies to all UCD programmes at undergraduate and graduate levels. UCD defines Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as "the process by which prior learning is given a value. It is a means by which prior learning is formally identified, assessed and acknowledged". RPL encompasses all forms of prior learning, including learning acquired by following a course of study (i.e., formal learning), learning acquired outside of the formal education system which may not lead to certification (i.e., non-formal learning) and learning acquired through experience. Prospective and current students are encouraged to check with the relevant Programme/School Office that RPL applications to have prior learning recognised to count towards the credit requirements of a given programme are accepted by the Board governing that programme.

Certification

[UCD Academic Regulations](#) outline the awards made by the University. Programme award levels are informed by the Irish National Framework of Qualifications, the European Qualifications framework, the European Higher Education Area 'Bologna Framework', Quality and Qualifications Ireland, and the requirements of professional, statutory or regulatory bodies associated with a specific programme of study, including those which grant a license to practice.

The University confers major awards, minor awards, special purpose awards and supplemental awards. All learning achievements are measured and described in terms of acquiring knowledge, skills and competencies. Each award requires an accumulation of credits as per Figure 5 above. 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 [UCD Student Desk](#) also provides an integrated service for online provision of all official documents required by students, including:

- Academic Statement
- Certificate of Attendance
- Graduate Research Transcript
- Statement of Results
- Transcript
- Diploma Supplement

2.3 Procedures for Making Awards

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

The quality of the learning experience at UCD is monitored on an on-going basis, primarily by the Governing Boards. The Governing Board prepares annual academic operational programme plans in consultation with the Head of School, College Principal and College Executive. Agreed plans will be subject to review/approval at the University level for their alignment to the programme and University strategic plans. The Governing Board will also be 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.

For each programme within its remit, the Governing Board shall:

- Promote excellence in education by articulating the aims and outcomes of each programme and agree a strategy and academic plan for the programme;
- Approve proposals regarding the structure and content of the programme and any special regulations relating to the programme, seeking University-level endorsement as appropriate and reporting annually to Academic Council or its relevant committee on such approvals;
- Ensure that the modules contributing to the programme support the academic coherence of the programme and the quality of the graduate output;
- Oversee and enhance the academic quality of the programme and the student learning experience;
- Establish, where appropriate and subject to the University's regulations and policies, programme-wide norms and guidelines regarding teaching and learning approaches, student workloads and assessment and grading practice;
- Admit students to the programme in accordance with the University's regulations and policies;
- Adjudicate on student applications for leave of absence from and transfer between programmes, in accordance with the University's regulations and policies;
- Make decisions in line with the University's approved policies and procedures in relation to Continuation and Readmission, Fitness to Continue in Study and Student Fitness to Practice.
- Receive, consider, and act upon or respond to, recommendations from the Teaching and Learning Committee of the College;
- Establish in accordance with University policy, mechanisms to assure and enhance the quality of educational and related activities and participate fully in the quality assurance/quality enhancement processes of the university;
- Ensure implementation of University strategy, policies and procedures in teaching, learning, assessment and widening participation;
- Monitor progression and completion rates of students; and

The Governing Board shall support the development of strategic and operational plans for education within the College. These plans shall be prepared within the overall planning framework for the University, Colleges and 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 principal duties of the Head of Subject are:

- Provide academic leadership for the development of the Subject within and outside the University.
- Provide leadership with School management in the development and delivery of the Subject's curriculum, teaching and assessment methods.
- Oversee the content, outcomes and quality of modules offered in the Subject.
- Support the Head of School and School Head of Teaching & Learning (where relevant) in developing, maintaining and managing the highest standards in the delivery of teaching and learning at graduate and undergraduate level in the School.
- Support the Head of School and Programme Deans in the provision of the modules necessary to ensure the quality of the programmes that include the subject.
- Subject to delegation of authority by the Head of School, assist the Head of the School (or nominee) in the allocation of the teaching activities of School, assigning teaching and related duties to members of staff.
- Stimulate and support the development of research and scholarship within the Subject.
- Support the Head of School (or nominee) in mentoring and developing the staff associated with the Subject.
- Support the development of a stimulating, creative and collegial working environment within the School.
- Undertake such other duties as may be assigned by the Head of School (or nominee).

The policies and procedures relating to programme design are contained in the [UCD Academic Regulations](#), which are a set of high level, overarching rules 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 of its programmes. The Academic Regulations are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose and reflect programme developments and innovations. All of the degree award programmes offered by UCD are mapped to the [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#) through articulation of learning outcomes and their alignment with the relevant NFQ level.

Extensive support for programme and module design and enhancement is available through [UCD Teaching and Learning](#), including 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, 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:

- Programme Design and Assessment
- Module Design and Enhancement
- Assessment
- Technology Enhanced Learning
- Curriculum Review and Enhancement Project Guide

Furthermore, an online curriculum mapping tool has been developed in UCD's InfoHub system. This provides a repository for **Programme Vision and Values** statement and **Programme Outcomes**. The tool has also facilitated curriculum mapping of all taught programmes, providing visual maps to aid programme teams in evaluating their programmes on a periodic basis.

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 within the University as part of the [Periodic Quality Review Process](#) also include dedicated sections on Teaching, Learning and Assessment and Curriculum Development and Review, which ensures that School approaches to ensuring that learners acquire the relevant standard of knowledge, skill and competence are reviewed and evaluated externally.

2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment

[UCD Teaching and Learning](#) aims to foster positive and effective student learning experiences by developing and supporting excellence in teaching and academic development through:

- Promoting research-informed approaches to teaching, learning and assessment with proven effectiveness and efficiency;
- Supporting the ongoing enhancement of taught programmes and the quality of the student educational experience;
- Providing a suite of professional development offerings for those who teach and/or support student learning;
- Utilising institutional data to inform quality enhancement in education;
- Contributing at university level to the development of sound educational policies;
- Empowering and rewarding outstanding teaching and educational leadership.

UCD Teaching and Learning is part of the [Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs](#). Its role is to provide leadership and support within the UCD community in relation to the enhancement of teaching and learning. The [T&L team](#) adopts an evidence-based approach to all aspects of its work. [UCD Teaching and Learning](#) is also subject to periodic quality review, with the most recent reviewing taking place in October 2020. The [Review Group Report](#) and the associated [Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\)](#) from the previous review in 2013 are published on the UCD Quality Office website under [Reports and Publications](#).

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), School Heads of Teaching and Fellows. UCD Teaching and Learning provides an extensive number of online [resources](#) and also facilitates the sharing of knowledge and expertise across the institution through a virtual [T & L Community](#). The UCD Teaching and Learning Community (accessed via Google+) is for sharing and discussing any information relating to Teaching and Learning. Members of this community can post information, resources, reports and notification across a range of topics. It complements face-to-face events, workshops and lunch-time fora organised by UCD Teaching and Learning.

UCD Teaching and Learning also issues a regular [Teaching and Learning Newsletter](#) to all 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 showcasing examples of teaching practice from across the University. In addition, UCD Teaching and Learning hosts an annual Teaching and Learning Symposium which is well attended by colleagues from across the University.

[UCD Access and Lifelong Learning](#) also helps to accommodate different learning contexts and fostering a University environment that is attractive to 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.

In relation to Student Feedback on Modules, 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. See Figure 6 below for information on the Student Feedback on Modules Survey Process.

Figure 6 - Student Feedback on Modules Survey Process

#	Steps in the Process	Action	Stage in Semester
1	Survey Setup	<p>Module coordinator selects questions for inclusion in their online module feedback survey via InfoHub. The module survey has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 core questions asked of all modules • Up to 6 additional questions may be added by the module coordinator <p>For queries on the setup or administration of the InfoHub survey contact modulefeedback@ucd.ie</p>	Week 8/9
2	Student Survey Open	<p>Students are invited to complete their survey at www.ucd.ie/survey. A survey launch email and reminder emails are issued centrally and individual module coordinators are encouraged to remind students to engage in the feedback process.</p> <p>Module Coordinator and Head of School monitor survey response rates via InfoHub. Targeted local efforts to maximise student engagement may result as necessary.</p>	Four weeks commencing in week 11
3	Results Available	<p>Results are available via InfoHub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module Coordinator views detailed results for their own modules, including completion rates, a mean (Likert) score for questions and all qualitative responses. • Head of School views completion rates and mean (Likert) score for questions 1-5 for each module in their school. Qualitative responses are not included in the Head of School Report. An overall mean (Likert) score for core questions 1 to 5 for all modules surveyed in their school will also be include in the Head of School report. 	Results will be available after Gradebook closes
4	Interpreting & Responding to Feedback	<p>Module Coordinator and Head of School use feedback to enhance and further develop modules. School and subject level discussions around themes emerging from feedback take place. Teaching resources such as Student Feedback: Responding Constructively may support this process. Faculty are also encouraged to contact UCD Teaching and Learning for support with any aspect of their teaching practice. For queries on the administration of the InfoHub survey contact modulefeedback@ucd.ie</p>	Ongoing

The principles that underpin assessment in UCD are:

- **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 \(ACCE\)](#), has published a [UCD Assessment Code of Practice](#) which 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 published [Programme Assessment and Feedback Principles](#) to highlight the importance of 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 processes involved in grading student assessment.

[Subject Extern Examiners](#) provide an important consultative and advisory function in supporting the development of the subjects 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 \(Research Degrees\)](#) and [Subject Extern Examiners \(Subject Areas\)](#).

Academic Integrity and Freedom Among Staff and Students

With respect to academic integrity at UCD, according to UCD's [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 is also in the process has been updated to reflect the legislative changes brought in by the *Amendment Act 2019* to the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012*. The University has also published [A Briefing for Students on Academic Integrity and Plagiarism](#) and the UCD Library has also published a [Library Guide on Academic Integrity - Referencing, Citation & Avoiding Plagiarism](#). Furthermore, UCD Teaching and Learning has also produced guidelines on [How Do I Support My Students' Academic Integrity?](#) as well as [Guidance on Academic Integrity in Online and At-Distance Assessments](#).

The [Brightspace Virtual Learning Environment \(VLE\)](#) is used to provide e-learning services to staff and students. [Urkund](#) is UCD's originality/similarity checking or plagiarism prevention tool in Brightspace. Urkund means manuscript or document in Swedish. It is called originality checking as Urkund compares text in student assignments with the text in documents in its archives to see if there are any matches. It is up to the lecturer to determine whether any such matches constitute plagiarism. The Urkund archive includes all UCD submissions (including those imported from SafeAssign), student submissions from other participating universities, material publicly available on the world wide web and a wide range of academic databases and journals.

Regarding academic freedom at UCD, a [Statement on Academic Freedom](#) was developed through an Academic Council Task Force which was given responsibility to consider the matter. One of the major purposes of a university, outlined in the *Universities Act (1997)* is the advancement of knowledge. Academic freedom is essential for such advancement. It protects and nurtures the freedom of thinking and expression in teaching, learning and research that is at the very core mission of a university. It is a defining characteristic of universities both historically and globally.

The principle and ethos of academic freedom have been endorsed by both the Academic Council and Governing Authority of UCD. This freedom, within the law, to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions is enshrined in [Statute 25 \(Chapter 1\) of the University](#). This statute decrees that:

5. In the performance of its functions the University shall have the right and responsibility to preserve and promote the traditional principles of academic freedom and be entitled to regulate its affairs in accordance with its independent ethos and traditions and the traditional principles of academic freedom.

6. The academic staff shall have the freedom, within the law, in their teaching, research and any other activities either in or outside the University to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without being disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the University.

Furthermore, the employment contracts for academic staff members include the following standard provision in relation to academic freedom:

“A member of the academic staff of the University shall have the freedom, within the law, in his or her teaching, research and any other activities either in or outside the University, to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the University, for the exercise of that freedom.”

A working group was established in December 2019 by the Academic Council Executive Committee (ACEC) to review the UCD Statement on Academic Freedom to consider the impact, if any, of the substantial growth in UCD’s international engagement and commitments to ensure that the existing statement continues to work in the context of international engagement in jurisdictions where different legislative frameworks apply and environments where different traditions and cultures of scholarly enquiry are established. The Group was due to report to ACEC in March 2020 but was delayed until November 2020 due to COVID-19.

3.0 Learner Resources and Support

Library, Student Social and Study Facilities

The [UCD Library](#) supports the overall University strategy in the areas of education, research, innovation, and promulgation of Irish cultural heritage. Its remit includes the provision of innovative programmes and use of advanced technologies that support student learning and leading-edge research activities. The mission of UCD Library is to organise the University's information to inspire engagement and learning, to enable its use in promoting research and innovation, and to contribute to the preservation of Irish cultural heritage. It is the vision of UCD Library to be the University's centre for information and knowledge management services and expertise, creating dynamic environments that inspire learning, catalyse innovation, and enable the creation of new knowledge.

UCD Library provides services from five sites on two campuses. The James Joyce Library, located on the Belfield campus, is the main library for UCD and provides collections and services support for a wide range of campus stakeholders. There are three specialised libraries: the Health Sciences Library, a modern Library forming part of the Health Sciences building; the Veterinary Library, a modern library within the Veterinary Sciences Centre; and the Richview Library, housed partly in an older Victorian building, serves the Schools in the Richview area of the campus that focus on the built environment. The fifth library, the Blackrock Library is housed on the Blackrock Campus and serves the UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School.

Space available and usage across the various UCD Library sites are identified in Figure 7 below:

Figure 7 - UCD Library space and facilities

Building	Sq Metres
James Joyce Library	13,594.7
Health Sciences Library	2,102.4
Blackrock Library	900.0
Veterinary Library	559.0
Richview Library	375.3
	94.6 (Earth Institute)
Total	18,201.9

Libraries and their overall size

Library	Individual study spaces	Group study rooms	Social study Space	Dedicated bookable postgraduate spaces
James Joyce	2269	6	Hub on Level1	35 PCs & 4 laptop spaces
				38 individual study rooms
Health Sciences	244	6		
Veterinary Medicine	125	1		
Richview	81	1		
Blackrock	117	2		

Study space provision

	Black & White	Colour	Scanning
James Joyce	9	2	2
Health Sciences	2	1	1
Veterinary Medicine	1	1	1
Richview	2	1	2
Blackrock	1	0	0

Photocopying and printing services in UCD libraries

Space	Capacity	Location	Available for
Problem-Based Learning Rooms x6	10	Health Sciences	Academics
Information Skills Room	15	James Joyce	Library Staff
Information Skills Room	35	Health Sciences	Library Staff
Library Link	35	James Joyce	Library Staff; University staff; open study

Teaching Space provision in UCD libraries

Library storage	% full
James Joyce Library general store	Full
James Joyce Library basement store	Full
Special Collections store (over various spaces)	Full
"Tunnel space"- extra storage rooms	Full
Newstead building 466.4 sq metres storage space	c. 75% Full

Closed access storage facilities

The Library Hub is a social learning space that enables students to engage in interactive learning activities, and it includes the UCD Maths Support Centre and the UCD Writing Centre.

The UCD Library has also published a set of online [Guides](#) to help students, teachers and researchers access the information that they need. This includes the following dedicated resources:

- [I am a Student](#) (quick links, subject guides, online tutorials, who to contact)
- [I am Involved in Teaching](#) (ordering books, teaching supports, contacts, guides and tutorials)
- [I am a Researcher](#) (quick links, key services for researchers, guides, contacts)
- [Guides A-Z](#) (complete listing of Library guides, tutorials and videos)

In addition, there is a [UCD Library Guide to Remote Access](#), which was setup to specifically address the challenges arising due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UCD Library has published a [Learning Support Strategy](#). This strategy uses best international practice to enable students to:

- Develop key skills
- Transition from second to third level
- Transition from third to fourth level
- Successfully return to education
- Develop lifelong learning skills and graduate attributes

The strategy is focused on ensuring all students have the opportunity to avail of these supports. Developing the ability to effectively retrieve, evaluate and communicate information is linked to the development of:

- Problem Solving Skills
- Critical Thinking
- Researching Skills
- Communication Skills
- Ethical Awareness

The UCD Library actively responds to the changing needs of each programme and measures their impact on student learning and skill development, and works with Undergraduate & Taught Postgraduate Governing Boards, Teaching & Learning Committees, and Schools and Colleges. [Subject Guides](#) for each academic subject area in the University have been developed through this co-operation. [College Liaison Librarians](#) also act as primary contacts for teaching and learning support and they help teachers with developing the information and research skills of their students, work with teachers to support their module and programme learning objectives, and they provide classroom and online supports.

The UCD Library publishes an annual statistics report on [Key Facts](#) such as resources, collection development, services, skills provision, and Heritage collections. It also engages in a broad range of Community Engagement activities, as outlined in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8 - UCD Library Community Engagement activities



The UCD Library is also subject to periodic quality review, with the most recent reviewing taking place in February 2015. The [Review Group Report](#) and the associated [Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\)](#) from this review are published on the UCD Quality Office website under [Reports and Publications](#). The Library also supports academic schools undergoing quality review through the provision of subject data and reports.

In relation to social activity, the [UCD Student Centre](#) offers the following:

- [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
- [The UCD Student Experience](#) - includes UCD Student Societies, UCD Students' Union, Sports Clubs, University Observer newspaper and Belfield FM radio

The University encourages co-curricular learning, and the UCD Student Centre collaborates with a number of other UCD units, including the UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science, UCD Institute of Sport and Health, UCD Institute for Food and Health, UCD People and Organisation Development, UCD Registry and the UCD Office of the Registrar and Deputy President.

Many of the activities delivered by the UCD Student Centre support the development of leadership and life skills for students, including leadership, teamwork, project management, and presentation and debating skills. The Student Centre, in consultation with students, seeks to explicitly identify the life skills developed through engagement with different activities and to communicate these to students and the broader University.

IT Infrastructure for Students

In relation to provision of IT resources and support, UCD also offers the campus community a wide range of technologies to assist with teaching and research ranging from the Brightspace learning environment, expertise in developing various types of visual content, and ePortfolios. Guidance is provided via the [Educational Technologies in UCD](#) website which is supported by [UCD IT Services](#) and the [Student IT Guide](#) is designed to introduce students to the key IT services available at UCD.

The Student IT Guide is designed to introduce the key IT services available at UCD. Before students arrive on campus they are encouraged to download the free [UCD Mobile app](#) where they will find lots of useful information about orientation. They will also find an interactive UCD map, access to the virtual learning environment Brightspace and library services, an events calendar, dining options and much more. The UCD Mobile app is available for Apple and Android devices.

New students are encouraged to check-out the Discover IT section in the 'Introduction to UCD' module when they first log into Brightspace, the UCD Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). This is designed to help students get started using IT@UCD. Students can also follow UCD IT Services on Twitter [@ucditservices](#) for the latest news and service announcements. The Student IT Guide also provides information about:

- UCD Connect - the gateway to IT Services
- Student Accounts at UCD
- Email at UCD
- Software
- Help and Advice
- IT Facilities
- Office 365, Google Drive and Special Deals
- Virtual Learning at UCD
- Keeping Students and their Devices Safe Online
- Wireless Services

Regular communication with students via Brightspace and their UCD Connect email account provides programme and University information from programme offices, Dean of Students and Registrar.

Student Supports/Welfare

The University makes available an extensive range of supports for learners from pre-entry through to graduation and beyond. UCD recognises that studying at university can be challenging at times for students, and there is a strong support network for students at UCD. From health services to specific programme advisers, student welfare and support is at the heart of what the University does. 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.

[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 may be fully supported in reaching their potential. The Dean of Students also acts as the University [Child Protection Officer](#).

[UCD Programme Offices](#)

The Programme Office (or School/College Office) is typically the main point of contact for most of the administrative 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 supports provided by the Programme 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.

UCD Student Desk

The UCD Student Desk helps students with any question that they might have, whether they are a student (current, former, or prospective), parent, third party or staff member. Assistance may include information on Fresher's Guide, Registration, Fees and Grants, Official Documents, Form Stamping, Thesis Submission, Exams and Assessment, Admissions, and FAQs.

UCD Global

UCD Global offers a range of supports for students, such as a network of Student Advisers, the Student Health and Counselling Service, the Chaplaincy, and disability services offered via 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. Students are encouraged to engage with other international students through the [UCD Global Facebook group](#) and [Virtual Global Lounge Events](#). Students may also submit a query via the [UCD Global Student Connector](#).

Peer Mentoring at UCD

Peer Mentors help make coming to UCD a more welcoming, less daunting experience for students. As well as arranging meetings and social events for their mentees, mentors will also be available to assist with any queries or concerns which their mentees may have. In turn, mentors will be supported by their Student Adviser or Student Progression Manager. The UCD Peer Mentoring Programme aims to help new students make friends and settle into their course; encourage new students to get involved in social activities; prepare new students for first year by encouraging them to develop specific study skills; reassure new students when it comes to concerns they may have about starting college; support new students in solving problems which at the start of Stage 1 can seem very difficult but which, with the right help, can be easily addressed; provide a space where new students can ask questions, no matter how big or small they may seem; assist new students in navigating the various academic and personal supports that are available to them in UCD; enhance the overall quality of the first year experience; and equip Peer Mentors with organisational, communication and leadership skills

Student Advisers

The Student Advisers provide support for all students throughout their university experience. Each programme has a dedicated Student Adviser who is the gateway to support services. Additionally, there are Student Advisers attached to specific groups of students, such as mature and postgraduate research students. If students are experiencing any difficulties the Student Advisers will give them the time and space to talk things through.

Student Counselling Service

Offers a free and confidential service staffed by professionally qualified psychologists and counsellors. Provides support for students when personal issues arise which affect their happiness, well-being, capacity to cope, relationships or learning.

Student Financial Difficulties

Students can experience financial problems during their time in UCD for various reasons. Many students (and their parents) find it difficult to make ends meet due to on-going low income and/or other financial commitments. Similarly, financial worries may be the result of unforeseen events like a family bereavement, accident, or illness. For others there is the added consideration of childcare costs which significantly impacts on their finances while studying. UCD provides some financial support to students undergoing temporary difficulties.

Student Health Service

The Student Health Service provides on-campus medical, counselling and mental health support to registered students of the University. All consultations are treated in strict confidence.

Alumni Buddy Programme

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

Students' Union

All UCD students are members of the Students' Union (UCDSU). The UCDSU is a separate legal entity which receives a financial grant from the University, and it serves and supports all UCD students by providing a voice and space for them to enhance their college experience. 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 Officers.

Chaplains & Prayer Rooms

The university chaplains provide pastoral care, emotional support and spiritual accompaniment as well as acting as student advisers. They are available to all students during times of distress, illness and bereavement. Mass is celebrated daily (Monday to Friday) at lunchtime as well as on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings. At St. Stephen's Chaplaincy, there are a number groups and events exploring faith and spirituality as well as a Contemplation Room that is open to everyone. The chaplains' offices are located in the Health Sciences Building and in the Old Student Centre. Dedicated prayer rooms for Muslim students are located in Woodview House on the Belfield campus and E123 in the Smurfit School, Blackrock.

UCD Access and Lifelong Learning is dedicated to fostering a University environment that is attractive to 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. Aligned with this office are the following dedicated supports for students:

- Disability Access Route (DARE) and Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) schemes
- Access Courses
- UCD Open Learning
- Lifelong Learning
- Mature Years Support
- Disability Support

Once admitted to UCD, there is extensive information and supports 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 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.

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 where problems can arise due to a lack of mathematical understanding. The MSC is especially committed to supporting and guiding first year and pre-entry students who have doubts about their background in mathematics and those from targeted widening participation initiatives who aim to increase their confidence in maths.

The mission of the **Writing Centre** is to offer free, 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. Writing tutors are friendly and non-judgemental, and the sessions are student-centred and inquiry driven. The Centre strives to ensure that students are helped to communicate, structure and present their knowledge and ideas in a written format, and that their expertise and critical thinking skills are not diminished by

either fear of, or difficulties with, aspects of the writing process. 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](#). Staff in this office are committed to strengthening the relationship between UCD and its alumni through 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 and Counselling Service, the Chaplaincy, and disability services offered via 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. Students are encouraged to engage with other international students through the [UCD Global Students Facebook group](#) and [Virtual Global Lounge Events](#). Students can also submit any query they may have via the [UCD Global Student Connector](#). Further support and information is also provided in the following areas:

- Campus Support
- Student Advice
- Academic Support
- Campus Life
- UCD Global Lounge
- Global Guides
- Visas and Immigration
- Working in Ireland
- Orientation

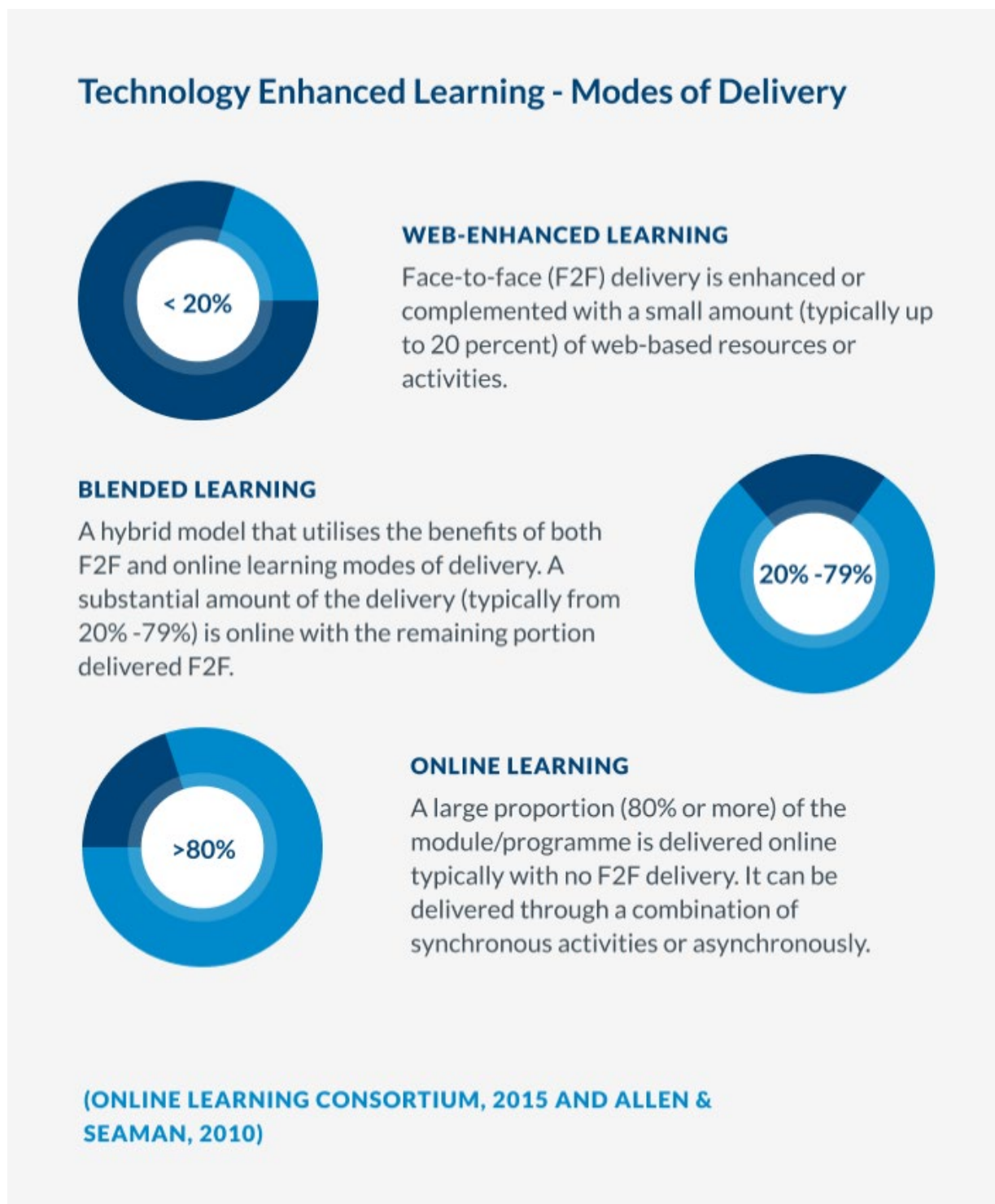
Supporting Student Engagement

[UCD Online](#) offers prospective students a flexible way to study for a globally recognised quality university qualification. Students are taught by the faculty members who teach students on the UCD campus. Upon successful completion of a degree course, a co-ordinated approach to supporting students during their programme is through locally based and Belfield campus programme staff. UCD Online students are invited to a graduation ceremony amongst their UCD Online and campus-based peers. All UCD Online students are members of the UCD community. UCD Online students will receive a UCD student card, providing them with access to UCD Services such as the library, sports centre and other campus/online facilities and services. UCD Online's Module to Masters' pathway increases the flexibility of study options by allowing students to complete a course in a time frame that suits their own personal circumstances, without incurring additional course fees.

UCD Online courses are delivered through the [Brightspace](#) virtual learning environment (VLE). 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 help to reassure and motivate students while studying independently. Lecture material may be presented in a variety of formats including audio/visual lectures, interactive learning materials, podcasts, videos etc. UCD Online also encourages and facilitates students to form study groups.

[UCD Teaching and Learning](#) has developed extensive resources and supports for staff and students to facilitate and enable online teaching and learning. [Technology Enhanced Learning \(TEL\)](#) has become the norm in higher education. The term TEL is used to describe learning that is enhanced, supported, mediated or assessed by the use of educational technologies. In UCD the term Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) is used as 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. Figure 9 below outlines the various modes of delivery which TEL can support:

Figure 9 - TEL Modes of Delivery



[UCD Educational Technologies](#) provides support which is focused on the pedagogical application of educational technologies, demonstrating how they can be effectively used to support learning in face-to-face, blended or online teaching and learning contexts. This includes:

- Virtual Learning Environment (Brightspace)
- Virtual Classroom Tools
- G-Suite for Education
- Student Response Systems (Poll Everywhere)
- Pre-recorded Lectures and Screencasts
- Educational Technology Pilots

UCD Teaching and Learning also provides guidance on [Blended and Online Learning Design](#). There is no 'one-size fits all' approach to the design and development of blended/online learning rather it is highly dependent on the learning context and is nuanced to enhance the student learning experience. While development requires a holistic approach, the approach can vary considerably according to factors such as; discipline, year/level, student cohorts' characteristics and needs, module/programme learning outcomes in addition to the faculty members' teaching approaches and experience. This resource provides guidance on the process of designing blended and online learning, it can be used by faculty and staff to:

- Review and align existing blended and online learning; and
- Guide the development of new blended and online learning

Drawing on the principles of the [ADDIE instructional design model](#) UCD offers guidance on the different phases involved in designing and developing blended and online learning. ADDIE offers a systematic approach to analysing needs, designing and delivering curricula and implementing and evaluating modules/programmes. The five phases of the instructional design model are:

- Analysis
- Design
- Development
- Implementation
- Evaluation

In addition, UCD Teaching and Learning set-up a [Teaching Continuity Measures](#) page in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to highlight key resources on designing for blended and online learning and upcoming training/development opportunities for faculty and staff with teaching responsibilities. This includes extensive resources for staff, including in particular recorded webinars on the following topics:

- Re-designing your module for blended/online learning
- Designing online assessment
- Supporting online learners and group work
- Teaching online and supporting online learners
- Online feedback to students
- Online group work and peer learning
- 'TEL All' Conversation Series - exploring how UCD faculty experienced teaching and assessment during the emergency pivot to online learning

UCD IT Services has also published a [Remote IT Study Guide for Students](#). This includes information relating to Home Broadband Advice, Online Teaching and Learning Services, Virtual Collaboration, Data and File Access, Applications, Device and IT Security and Virtual Private Networks for Research Students.

The University has put in place a [Student Experience Group \(SEG\)](#) that reports to the University Management Team (UMT). This group works with key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the student experience at UCD and links its activities to the University Strategic Plan, Mission and Vision. The group leads the development and operationalisation of University activities, processes and procedures related to the student experience.

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 [UCD 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.

Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) issued the [QQI Statutory QA Guidelines for Providers of Research Degree Programmes](#) in March 2017. A mapping of the UCD framework for research degree programmes was undertaken by the UCD Quality Office, in conjunction with UCD Graduate Studies, and a report on this was considered by the [Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee \(ACQEC\)](#). This exercise confirmed that UCD is broadly aligned with the expectations of the Guidelines. A number of reflection points were identified as part of the mapping exercise and these have been considered further in the context of UCD's ongoing quality assurance and quality enhancement activities.

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 staff, including resources and good practice for supervising PhD candidates, such as:

- [Structured PhD](#) (including [Transferable Skills Training Programme](#))
- [Introduction for Research Supervisors](#)
 - UCD Research Supervisor Support & Development Programme (RSSDP)
 - Key Learning Outcomes of Programme
 - Seminar Series
 - Steps for Developing Good Working Relationships
 - Clarifying Expectations
 - Changing Expectations and Roles
 - Support Tools
 - Checklist for Early Meetings
 - Sample Topics Recommended for Discussion Between Supervisor and Research Student;
- [Facilitating Progress & Managing Challenges](#)
 - Encourage Writing & Give Good Feedback
 - Make Meetings Count
 - Managing Common Challenges
- [Thesis Submission and Examination](#)
 - Theses in Graduate Research Programmes
 - UCD Research Theses Process Flowchart
 - Tips for Supervisors of Research Students Approaching the Viva
 - PhD Examination - Student Information
- [Reflecting on and Interrogation of Practice](#)
 - Pedagogical Approaches to Research Supervision
 - Reflection on Supervisory Practice
 - Essential Reading for UCD Research Supervisors

- Suggested Reading

All PhD students in UCD are on a structured PhD programme. The [Structured PhD Diagram](#) gives an overview of the some of the key aspects of the UCD Structured PhD. All aspects are covered in detail in the [UCD Academic Regulations](#).

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. They will also endeavour to make students aware of all regulations, policies and codes of practice relevant to the students. In addition to Supervisor(s), Schools will appoint a Research Studies Panel (RSP) 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 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 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 RSP must document their educational, training and personal and professional development needs which along with the proposed programmes of research 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](#).

PhD students are also required to gain 30 credits through core and optional modules in the course of 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 the any School-specific requirements. UCD Graduate Studies provides further information about, and useful directory of, [Discipline Specific Modules for PhD students](#).

Workshops covering a wide range of transferable skills are available to assist students, and are provided by UCD Graduate Studies. Participation in [UCD Graduate Studies Transferable Skills Training workshops](#) is recorded on a Transferable Skills certificate which can be downloaded by the student.

These resources illustrate the University's commitment to enhancing the quality of its research programmes and supporting students who undertake such programmes. They also reflect the changing needs of society insofar as graduate research students are now provided with a more expansive set of transferable skills to help prepare them for employment in a wide variety of fields. There are also a number of 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:

- [Policy on Theses in Graduate Research Programmes](#)
- [Policy on Progression in Doctoral Programmes](#)
- [Policy for Supervision of Research Degree Students](#)
- [Policy for Conflict Resolution for Supervisors and Research Degree Students](#)

UCD is No. 1 in Ireland for graduate employability and is unique in Ireland in having a dedicated consultant for graduate research students. The [research student career and skills consultant](#) in UCD Careers Network supports students to explore & plan their career options beyond the PhD programme. This includes:

- 1-1 individual (60 minute) coaching and guidance sessions
- Group and Individual Career Planning to find a 'best fit' in terms of future roles
- Bespoke class delivery of workshops and seminars to increase the employability of Graduate Researchers
- Up-to-date labour market trends and employer networking opportunities
- Applications, CVs and mock interview support
- Regular news bulletins focusing on job vacancies

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 that each student's experience at UCD is as fulfilling and enjoyable as possible.

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 in the thesis. 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 Skills and Career Development](#). UCD Research Skills & Career Development provides Post-Doctoral Researchers with access to training and development opportunities across four core competency areas.

Core Competency Areas & Programmes Available:

- [Research & Research Management](#)
- [Personal & Professional Excellence](#)
- [Teaching, Learning & Mentoring](#)
- [Innovation & Entrepreneurship](#)

In addition to technical expertise, there may be other skills to be acquired to enable career progression. Typical development needs include people and time management skills and communications skills, however for development purposes it is important to explore other options. These may include:

- [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](#)
- [Gathering regular feedback from peers, PI and others](#)

All Post-Doctoral Fellows are encouraged to engage with the [Research Skills and Career Development - Owning and Mapping Your Career Development](#) process with their Principal Investigator. This process provides a road

map that helps identify both professional development needs and career objectives. The key resources provided in this regard are:

- [UCD Research Skills and Career Development \(RSCD\) - Development Plan template](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions on Training & Development](#)
- [A Message from the Vice-President for Research, Impact and Innovation to Post-Doctoral Researchers](#)
- [Career Toolkits for Researchers](#)

Along with one-to-one careers meetings with a Principal Investigator, UCD Postdoctoral Researchers are entitled to at least three confidential one-to-one career development meetings with the Research Careers team over the course of their contract. To book a meeting, Post-Doctoral Researchers can access the online '[Careersconnect](#)' system once a Postdoc Careersconnect account has been opened by a Post-Doctoral Researcher by contacting researchcareers@ucd.ie.

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

In relation to Principal Investigator/Mentor development, [UCD Research Skills and Career Development](#) works in conjunction with [UCD People and Organisation Development](#) to provide support and training.

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 [Introduction for Research Supervisors](#) support programme. All new academics to UCD are required to attend a Research Supervisor Induction Session. Information regarding these sessions is normally communicated to new staff by HR or via their respective Colleges.

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. To achieve that, the Centre strives:

- To become an integral part of the leading Irish research teams and provide a research support environment to build lasting relationships between academics, state agencies, private businesses and charity organisations.
- To develop effective partnerships with national and international organisations that have the common goal to build a state-of-the-art, coordinated umbrella of services for patient care, clinical research, evidence-based medicine and related areas or research.

Within the quality assurance procedures for [Periodic Quality Review](#), postgraduate research students are a specific group of students that the Review Group meets during the site visit, which is a key part of the Periodic

Quality Review of Schools. This allows the Review Group to be informed about the quality of the research student experience.

5.0 Staff Recruitment, Development and Support

UCD Human Resources Strategy

The [UCD Human Resources Strategy 2016-2020 - Growing Through People](#) has been developed through widespread consultation and it sets out the University's work programme for the HR 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 2016-20, and it is designed to provide a supportive community in which every member of the University is enabled to achieve their full potential. *Growing through people* envisages a supportive, developmental environment and culture. It is aligned with best practice and focuses on all employees: leaders, people managers and individual colleagues. It is based on four key strands:

1. Transforming Service and Partnership
2. Enhancing a Performance Culture
3. Developing our Talent
4. Becoming an Employer and University of Choice

The [HR Partners](#) team have a pivotal role to support local leadership teams in Schools and Colleges (and support units) to help deliver on the objectives set-out in the [UCD Human Resources Strategy 2016-2020 - Growing Through People](#), and to align the strategy to local priorities. The development of the new Human Resources strategy is well underway and it is being carefully aligned in support to the overall objectives of UCD's new [Rising to the Future Strategy 2020-2024](#). It will encompass the same strategic period and is expected to be published in 2021. It will feature many of the core strategic foundations within the 2016-2020 strategy as many of these are still very pertinent and proving to yield good returns for UCD, but it will also be reflective of the rapidly evolving nature of the workplace.

UCD was awarded the [Athena SWAN Bronze Institutional Award](#) in March 2017. Receiving this award is a welcome recognition of UCD's commitment to its community to enhance gender equality in the University and is a significant milestone. The Athena SWAN Award was established to promote the advancement of women's careers in higher education and research.

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 [Athena SWAN Gender Equality Action Plan](#) is central to UCD's ability to deliver on this objective. While the focus of Athena SWAN in Ireland is on gender equality among academic staff in STEM disciplines, many of the actions in the UCD Gender Equality Action Plan have been designed to be implemented for all employees and disciplines.

As the UCD Athena SWAN submission highlights, there are a number of challenges to address. The University has already delivered on a range of actions to address these including:

- The appointment of a Vice-President for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
- The establishment of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group reporting to the University Management Team
- A new University Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy
- The development of an Equality Impact Assessment Tool, which will enable and require all policy developers to ensure that UCD policies are inclusive and promote equality and diversity
- The introduction of a social levy, to distribute the costs of leave
- The development of an Equality Impact Assessment Tool, which will enable and require all policy developers to ensure that UCD policies are inclusive and promote equality and diversity
- The introduction of a social levy, to distribute the costs of leave
- Introduction of Core meeting hours
- Gender Balance target for Committee membership

- Introduction of a welcome statement in all advertisements to under-represented groups and mandatory EDI criteria in job descriptions and tips and tools on drafting inclusive job descriptions
- Development of a gender analytics tool for Schools
- Development of targets for promotions based on the cascade model targets

Further detailed steps are identified in the UCD Gender Equality Action Plan, including:

- Unconscious bias awareness raising
- Mainstreaming gender equality across all university processes, including data collection.
- Development of Exit Interview process
- Support for those taking family related leave
- Gender balance in Head of School appointments
- Enhancement of local level induction

The Athena SWAN Gender Equality Action Plan is one important part of UCD's broader agenda around [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#). UCD believes in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and embeds these fairness principles into all aspects of University life. UCD's vision for EDI is to be a leader and role model in equality and diversity in the higher education sector nationally and internationally, and for EDI to be at the heart of all we do.

The [UMT Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) Group](#) was established to support the achievement of this strategic objective and to promote an inclusive and diverse work and study environment for all. This group plays an important role in the mainstreaming of equality, diversity and inclusion throughout the university for faculty, employees and students as the university develops and delivers processes, makes policy decisions and plans programmes and projects. The group leads out on equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives and makes recommendations to the [University Management Team \(UMT\)](#).

Recruitment

UCD is committed to the principle of appointment on merit and our [Recruitment and Selection Policy](#) sets 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 work closely with Hiring Managers to ensure these standards are maintained. The Resourcing team work closely with colleagues in Staff Development to provide training for university staff engaged in the Recruitment process, presenting annually to groups such as new Heads of School and delivering Interview Skills Training throughout the year.

It is our belief that diversity in the workplace begins with inclusivity in our recruitment practices. The [Policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) sets out UCD's mission to be a leader and role model in equality and diversity in the higher education sector and this informs our recruitment practices. The Resourcing Team work closely with the HR Equality and Diversity Manager to ensure an on-going review our policy in line with best practice. The Resourcing Team are engaged in developing and implementing several new initiatives linked to the objectives set out for recruitment in the Athena SWAN Gender Equality Action Plan including an update to our job descriptions and promoting the [Inclusive Recruitment Guidelines](#).

Our goal is to ensure that the recruitment and selection process is a positive experience for candidates. We have developed the [Work at UCD website](#) which 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. A welcome email is sent from HR to the new staff member providing a link to the webpage.

The role of [Resourcing Consultant](#) has been introduced to provide a single point of contact for candidates and hiring managers and the team can provide support and guidance on any aspect of the recruitment process. Further information is available at [UCD HR \(Resourcing\)](#) or via the HR Helpdesk at hrhelpdesk@ucd.ie.

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 [UCD Human Resources](#). UCD Human Resources has an extensive range of relevant documentation which is published on the online [Employment @ UCD Policy Directory](#), examples of which specifically relate to quality assurance of teaching staff, including staff recruitment and staff development, are as follows:

- Ad Astra Assessment Support Policy
- Competitive Retention Policy
- Conference Allowance Policy
- Employee Orientation Policy
- Faculty Induction Programme
- Faculty Promotion Policy
- Head of School Appointment Process Policy
- Induction and Award of Tenure to the Grades of Lecturer/Assistant Professor/Associate Professor Policy
- Leadership Development Policy
- Mentoring for Faculty
- Performance for Growth Policy
- Policy on Remuneration of Non-Core and Non-Exchequer Revenue Generating Activities
- Probation Periods Policy
- Procedures for Promotion to Associate Professor / Professor, Senior Management Pathways 7
- Procedures for the Routine Appointment of DAMC Hospital Consultants as Clinical Lecturers
- Protected Disclosures Policy
- Recognition Policy - Faculty & Staff
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy - Research Funded Staff
- Research Funded Pathway Policy
- Research Careers Framework
- Research Sabbatical Leave for Faculty
- Salary Policy for Post-doctoral Researchers and Research Assistants
- Secondment Policy
- Tutors & Demonstrators Policy
- Visiting Academic and Adjunct Staff Policy

UCD Human Resources also provides a **Managing for Success Toolkit** (UCD login required). This resource has been specially developed to assist UCD people managers in positively managing their team members and supporting their success. The toolkit provides practical tips, tools and links to relevant information. Nothing in this toolkit replaces or alters any existing formal UCD policies or processes which are published on the UCD HR website. Although designed mainly with people managers in mind, many of the materials in this toolkit may be useful for any staff member interested in topics such as communications, motivation, recognition, constructive feedback, team development and effectiveness, and the influence these have on the working environment and individual relationships.

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. The University recognises the challenges it faces and has a genuine commitment to equality of opportunity for staff and students, and to promote and maintain an inclusive work and study environment, where there is mutual respect and dignity. It is fully committed to both meeting and exceeding our obligations under current legislation by doing more than what is required by law. To this end, the University Management Team [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group](#) was established, and as part of the work of this group

a dedicated website for [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) has been created, which includes the University's new [UCD Dignity and Respect Policy \(& related framework\)](#) and additional supplementary procedures to ensure UCD meets and exceed its obligations in this respect which is being activated in 2021.

In relation to provision of IT resources and support, UCD also offers the campus community a wide range of technologies to assist with teaching and research ranging from the Brightspace learning environment, expertise in developing various types of visual content, and ePortfolios. Guidance is provided via the [Educational Technologies in UCD](#) website which is supported by [UCD IT Services](#).

Staff Development

UCD values excellence and understands that excellent performance requires excellent people working in a supportive environment. To this end, the [Faculty Promotions Policy](#) has been developed, along with a complementary [UCD Development Framework for Faculty](#), which is a tool that should be 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 a number of dimensions under each of the categories of Faculty achievement:

- **Research, Scholarship and Innovation**
 - Qualifications
 - Publication and Profile
 - Research Funding
 - Research Supervision and Management
 - Innovation and Impact
- **Teaching and Learning**
 - Engagement with Student Learning
 - Enhancement of Practice: Personal and Professional Development
 - Module / Programme Design and Enhancement
 - Scholarship Dissemination and Esteem
- **Leadership and Contribution**
 - Administration and Leadership
 - Recruitment and Outreach
 - Building Community
 - Building Support
 - Professional Service

Faculty can assess their current position on the framework across the various dimensions. The framework has been developed on the basis that all Faculty including Lecturers are expected to be working, at a minimum, at the level of satisfactory achievement across each of the dimensions listed. Taken in the round, with due consideration for discipline differences, Associate Professors are expected to be working at the level of substantial achievement, Professors at the level of outstanding achievement and Full Professors at the level of exceptional achievement. It is not expected that faculty at higher grades would necessarily be working at levels of substantial, outstanding or exceptional achievement across all dimensions but that activity at a higher level in one area would balance against less activity in another dimension.

The University has also implemented [Performance for Growth \(P4G\)](#), which is a framework that provides the opportunity for all UCD employees to have at least one annual conversation with their line manager, Head of School or alternate reviewer, within which they can:

- Review achievements and challenges from the previous year
- Agree performance objectives for the year ahead
- Agree a development plan for the year ahead

For reviewers, training is provided which builds on a coaching approach to quality conversations that was introduced during the **Leadership and People Management Programme** and **People Management Programme**.

UCD's **People Development Programme** is designed to support individuals and teams in their personal and professional development. The programme is aligned with UCD's strategic objectives, competencies and values. UCD has focused on building capability through its Leadership and People Management Programme, cognisant of the findings from UCD's Culture and Engagement surveys, which have previously indicated that performance management, staff development and reward and recognition were areas for the University to improve upon. Following Performance for Growth (P4G) and the creation of individual development plans (including for teaching staff), the People Development Programme will continue to evolve from an analysis of the needs of staff to develop and deliver relevant training on an ongoing basis.

Furthermore, an **Associate Professor Development Pilot Programme** has been initiated to support teaching staff and help them gain clarity about what is expected in their role. One of the aims of the pilot programme has been to establish what supports are available and create further supports that will fill that void for the individual staff member and start creating networks of colleagues both within a discipline and beyond. The initiative is championed by the College Principals of Science and Social Science and Law and funded a part-time project officer to support the implementation and evaluation of the initiative. This pilot is also supported by the HR Partners for the relevant College and by the Culture & Engagement team.

A key mechanism through which UCD offers and promotes opportunities for the professional training and development of all members of staff is through [UCD People and Organisation Development](#) (part of UCD Human Resources). This area provides development opportunities for both new and existing staff, and is one of nine different training providers from across the University with the common purpose of supporting staff and faculty in their day to day activities, improving skills and expanding areas of expertise.

Some examples of the type of personal and career development opportunities available to staff through the above providers include:

- People Management Development
- Research Ethics for Faculty Supervisors
- Retirement Planning
- Coaching
- Unconscious Bias training
- Dealing with Distressed Students

Running concurrently with existing development supports for staff, the University is currently piloting our LinkedIn Learning Platform for staff which enables access to an online eLearning package of over 16,000 courses. The availability of this resource continues our roadmap towards a blended development experience for staff combining classroom learning with online learning in which learners can, in part, control the time, pace, and place of their learning. The multiyear plan which began in late 2018 lays a roadmap for full realisation of the 70/20/10 model for learning and development. This approach aligns with UCD's strategy 2020 to 2024 - 'Rising to the Future' and two of the four thematic strategic areas as reflected in the HR Strategic Plan: *Developing our Talent* and *Becoming an Employer and University of choice*.

More recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on learning and development functions and learners. Driven by the external environment, the way in which we learn has changed to an online model of 'live virtual', self-directed eLearning and related online materials. Our planned focus of making development accessible through online offerings continues to be relevant and will enable the delivery of content in a workplace where we expect there to be a larger cohort working from home on a regular basis post-Covid-19. This will also continue our offering of development options for staff working in locations outside of the main Belfield campus and faculty in transnational education.

Overall, the engagement with LinkedIn Learning is strong and ahead of the predicted percentage rates; our activation rates is running at 34% (over 1250 employees). In December 2020, contact was made directly with

managers to encourage their teams to engage with LIL this was following up with a targeted message to employees who had not activated their accounts. This initiative resulted in the most substantial increase in activation rates (19%) since the launch in UCD. We plan to trigger this again in conjunction with the next cycle of Performance for Growth (April to June 2021), where it is expected an increase of 9% activation should be achieved.

Many internal training providers across UCD are now promoting LinkedIn Learning on their websites, as the course catalogue is grouped into 3 main categories Business, Creative and Technology, this enables skills development beyond traditional competencies, enabling other units in UCD to curate pathways relevant to their development offerings to support learners. To date, UCD Agile, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, IT services, and UCD Research Skills and Careers Development are all using LIL as a resource on their Webpage for their specific audiences.

In the current context, the timely identification of emerging skills requirements is critical. LinkedIn Learning, revises and adds new content on a weekly basis driven by data from over 20 million jobs on the LinkedIn platform. This ability to use intelligence to inform future content on a real-time basis is an enduring benefit of the investment in this particular platform.

The retention of LinkedIn Learning in UCD will continue our offering of high-quality content delivered by experts which our learners can access on-demand, and equally the provision of a digital learning platform available to employees is wholly aligned with the UCD Strategy of transforming through digital technology.

[UCD Teaching and Learning](#) serves a critical function in the ongoing professional development of those in a teaching role in the University. The aim of UCD Teaching and Learning is to foster positive and effective student learning experiences by developing and supporting excellence in teaching and academic development.

UCD Teaching and Learning offers three [accredited programmes in University Teaching and Learning](#). The programmes are designed to be flexible, research-informed and practice-based. A suite of modules will be offered in each academic session, facilitating faculty to choose in accordance with their interests and development needs:

- 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 twice a year, once in September and once in January. Participants choose their start time depending on the module that is of interest to them.
- The **Professional Certificate, University Teaching and Learning**, which carries a credit volume of 15 ECTS is our principal professional qualification aimed at UCD faculty. The Professional Certificate will be awarded to those candidates who successfully complete any two modules. This programme is offered twice a year, once in September and once in January.
- 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.

A choice of modules are offered to participants including, for example:

- Becoming a Better University Teaching
- Assessing for Teaching & Learning
- Designing Modules for Learning
- Active Learning with Technology
- Problem-based Learning
- Teaching Across Cultures
- Getting Published in Teaching

UCD Teaching and Learning also provides 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'. A number of Schools deliver Graduate Teaching Assistant modules to support the development of disciplinary teaching strategies.

The University, through UCD Teaching and Learning, also supports [Fellowships in Teaching and Academic Development](#). The overall aim of this scheme is to identify and develop faculty with both the pedagogic expertise and the leadership capacity to effect transformational change in teaching, learning and assessment practices both in discipline-specific areas and thematically, across the institution. Fellows are selected through a competitive process. Working in multi-disciplinary teams, they engage in policy/practice based research on a theme of strategic importance to the university, including, for example, exploring and developing research-teaching linkages in the delivery of high quality student learning. A key outcome of the Fellowship scheme is the production of a series of evidence-based findings and recommendations which can inform the development of future institutional policy and strategy planning as well as the development of relevant academic resources for on-going enhancement.

Innovation in teaching and learning is also encouraged through focused [Projects](#) which are also supported by UCD Teaching and Learning. Current and recent projects include:

- Assessment Enhancement Implementation Framework
- Curriculum Review & Enhancement
- UCD Digital Badges Pilot
- Student Digital Ambassadors
- Understandings and Perceptions of research/teaching linkages amongst academic staff
- Exploring the impact of research teaching linkages on the undergraduate experience

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 [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 Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning** recognise individuals or teams of UCD staff who have made outstanding contributions to student learning in a specific area.

Both schemes are tiered with awards at college and university level. Students play a key role in the awards process through nominating UCD faculty and staff for an award. All those nominated are invited to apply to either one of the award schemes.

Additional support mechanisms, strategies and [resources](#) for enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and research provided by UCD Teaching and Learning include:

- Teaching Resources
- T & L Community
- Facilitating Self-Assessment of Teaching & Learning for Quality Review
- Research into Teaching

UCD Research Skills & Career Development provides staff with access to training and development opportunities across four core competency areas. Core Competency Areas & Programmes Available:

- [Research & Research Management](#)
- [Personal & Professional Excellence](#)
- [Teaching, Learning & Mentoring](#)
- [Innovation & Entrepreneurship](#)

In addition to technical expertise, there may be other skills to be acquired to enable career progression. Typical development needs include people and time management skills and communications skills, however for development purposes it is important to explore other options. These may include:

- [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](#)
- [Gathering regular feedback from peers, PI 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

6.0 Information and Data Management

UCD uses a wide spectrum of data sets to inform decision making across and at different levels within the institution, in order to collect, analyse and use relevant information about programmes and other activities to assure and enhance the quality of those activities, and to meet the aims and objectives set-out in its strategy. UCD has also developed a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) which are 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 its individual subjects are also benchmarked - in the framework on the [QS World University Rankings](#). UCD also makes annual submissions for the [Times Higher Education Impact Rankings](#) which assess universities against the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This enables UCD to likewise benchmark its activities against other comparable institutions, and this is of particular value in relation to the UN SDGs insofar as it enables UCD to define objectives and set clear targets in the context of one of the four themes of the [UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future](#) which is Creating a Sustainable Global Society. The University benchmarks and monitors the implementation of its Strategic Plan against an agreed set of KPIs. Within the reporting period, UCD has also engaged with the [UniForum](#) project which provides a framework for University management to benchmark against institutions, and to identify and drive improvement in its administrative services. In addition, the University's [Periodic Quality Review](#) process - which involves external, independent evaluation of all Schools and support 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 essentially a supporting function within UCD which aims to inform decision making and planning at senior management level. The Director of Institutional Research reports to the Director of Strategic Planning and their activities are closely aligned to the work of the [UCD Quality Office](#). The Director of Institutional Research, 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. This suite of statistics gives each unit under review a consistent and reliable source of information to begin their self-assessment process. A suite of reports are 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 and Progression Rates** - can be obtained directly from the Director of Institutional Research
- **Module Enhancement and Student Feedback Report** - information to support the module enhancement process including registration and de-registration counts, grade distribution and student feedback
- **Access and Lifelong Learning Students** - information on students registered with UCD Access Centre and Adult Education Centre and Part-Time Undergraduate students
- **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](#) also provides Heads of Schools and their nominees with access to a [Research Statement Report](#), which provides a view of research activity at University, College, School and Institute level, showing information and metrics on research funding, staff and publications, using a combination of the university business systems and Bibliometrics data. The report is available from the Research tab in InfoHub (the University's internal reporting system which is available through UCD Connect - UCD username and password required) and provides information such as:

- **Research Funding** - proposals and awards (volume, value and % overhead for the past five years), active grants (current volume, value, average duration)
- **Research Publications** - RMS profiles (volume for the past five years), Thomson Reuters' InCites (volume, impact, % cited, % with collaborators for the past five years)
- **Research Metrics** - Total Full Time Equivalent (FTE), Academic FTE, % Research Active Academics, Financial Trajectory Indicator (average award value less average expenditure over three years)

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
- Purchasing Unit
- Finance Systems
- General Ledger
- Fixed Asset Register
- Financial Planning and Resources
- Financial Statements
- Policies & Procedures
- Taxation
- Forms
- Resource Allocation
- University and College Budgets Ancillary Budgets
- Financial Planning for New Initiatives Full Economic Costing Exercise
- Maintenance of Management Reporting Structures Post Authorisation
- Staff Financial Planning and Resources

The UCD Finance Office, together with IT Services, provides [Budget Management Reporting support](#) which enables financial planning for staff costs. These reports are only made available to key Finance Office Staff and College Finance Managers.

For additional internal reporting and information management purposes, and accessed via [UCD Connect](#), the **InfoHub** online reporting system (UCD login required) delivers fast access to information in UCD's business systems e.g. student information, HR reports and Finance reports. It provides high-level summaries and graphs and enables quick and easy drilling to detailed information. Key institutional data is considered as part of the Periodic Quality Review of Schools and support 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](#) (UCD login required) available through [UCD IT Services Analytics & Reporting](#) to enable them to carry-out this function. These provide important tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, as well as other important student-related metrics. Sample reports which are used for this purpose 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
- Curriculum Management School Summary
- 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 also receives the outputs from the annual [StudentSurvey.ie](#), and these outputs are evaluated 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.

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, this survey captures whether UCD graduates are in employment, in further study or training, or seeking employment, nine months after graduation. The data collected is submitted to the HEA for use in publications, and it is also available internally to staff in UCD through the [InfoHub Report Catalogue](#) (UCD login required).

Graduate Outcomes data can also be made available to UCD staff via InfoHub 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.).

[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.

Working in conjunction with UCD Research, IT Services has also delivered a suite of [Research Analytics](#) reports that provide a statement of research activity at university, college or school level. These reports draw together information from a wide variety of sources, relating to number and value of proposals submitted and grants awarded, number of publications, and number of staff that are research-active. The reports provide information spanning a number of years, to enable senior university management to view the trend in research activity over time. In addition to being able to view summary information, users can drill into the numbers to view more details of the relevant item.

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, Module Access Management, the Programme Register, Student Feedback Survey Management and Timetable Management.

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. 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](#).

In addition to this, the UCD Library has also 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 policy also sets out the following priorities:

- To serve the curricular needs of students and academic staff on and off campus
- To support graduate research in selected areas, based upon graduate programmes To support fourth level graduate research (doctoral and postdoctoral)
- To support academic staff research
- To provide remote access to resources for users whenever possible

UCD Records Management and Freedom of Information - the functions of this unit are to ensure organisational compliance with the University's obligations under the *Freedom of Information Acts (FOI), 1997 and 2003*, the *Data Protection Acts, 1988 and 2003* and the *Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000*. Its role is also to advise the University in the management of university 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.

UCD General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Road Map - UCD has always and continues to strive to provide the best possible protection for personal information held by the University. With the advent of GDPR in May 2018, the university is fully committed to taking all necessary actions to ensure compliance with this legislation. The University is engaging with all faculty and staff to ensure that everyone in the UCD community is aware of their rights and obligations under this legislation. UCD appointed a new Data Protection Officer (DPO) in August 2018 and the University has provided, through a dedicated [GDPR website](#), a wide range of dedicated resources and training tools to assist all members of the UCD community to become familiar with the obligations and requirement of the GDPR.

7.0 Public Information and Communication

The [UCD University Relations](#) office manages, *inter alia*, the external and internal communications functions of the University. Primarily concerned with building and enhancing the reputation of the University among stakeholder groups, the office manages the projection of the UCD brand, major university events, media relations, marketing to prospective students, the production and publication of university-level online and print communications, as well as the processes around internal communications. The key areas of provision for which UCD University Relations is responsible are:

- Internal Communications
- Internet & New Media (including profiles on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Snapchat](#))
- Information Sources for Staff
- Publications Identity & Marketing
- UCD Crest Brand Guidelines

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 admissions 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](#)
- [Scholarships](#)
- [UCD Horizons](#) (the modular and credit-based structure for taught degrees at UCD)
- [CAO - Think Bigger UCD](#)
- [Campus Life](#)
- [Summer School](#)
- [UCD Open Day](#)

This information is collated and managed by the **Student Recruitment** and **Admissions** units, which are both part of [UCD Registry](#). These units work with Schools, and in co-ordination with the **Curriculum Team in Administrative Services** (another unit which is part of UCD Registry who are the business owners of the Curriculum Management System), 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. 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 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, 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](#)
- [Assessment in UCD](#)
- [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 [UCD Student Desk](#) in particular provides important public information, providing support for students and an integrated service for all registration, campus, programme, module and student welfare issues.

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

- [UCD Academic Regulations](#)
- [Protocol on Programme Transfer](#)
- [Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning](#)
- [Policy on Progression in Doctoral Programmes](#)
- [UCD Quality Office Practice Note on the National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#)

Research and Related Services

See section 1.1 regarding the University's research activities; and section 4 which is focused 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 activity. 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), QQI Core Guidelines and related documents and its implementation ensures the University's compliance with the 1997 Universities Act, Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (2016), QQI Core Statutory

Quality Assurance Guidelines (2016), and UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. A key feature of the quality process is a commitment to the involvement of staff, students and other stakeholders in the process.

The mechanisms used by the University include regular peer review of academic and support units, robust programme approval and curriculum review processes, robust approval, monitoring and review of collaborative taught programme provision, module evaluation, extern examiner reports, established procedures for faculty and staff appointments and CPD, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, embedded student representation on University committees, systematic student representation in the quality processes and participation in the Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee, peer review of the University's linked providers,

The UCD Quality Office is responsible for managing the periodic quality review process. Further information and guidance on the review process, its guidelines, procedures and review schedule is published on the [UCD Quality Office website](#). The formal quality process involves the following elements - preparation of a self-assessment report, site visit, review group report, quality improvement plan and progress report. Procedures are in place to support the review process and the type of review taking place. A wide range of internal supports such as HR, EDI, Library, Research, institutional research are available to support units undergoing review and these are published at [UCD Supports & Resources for Quality Review](#).

Evaluation and Findings from Quality Assurance Evaluations

The University has in place a Quality Framework that enables it to assure the quality of provision. Evaluation of findings or recommendations are implemented at the level of the school/unit within agreed timelines. Review Group Reports are considered by ACQEC, UMT and Governing Authority and a process for monitoring by the University on implementation of the recommendations is in place and is also 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. A number of additional reports are produced annually for ACQEC and line reports with aggregated information from the Periodic Quality Review Reports each year on topics including Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation, EDI, Global and Human Resources.

8.0 Monitoring and Periodic Review

Self-Evaluation

Self-evaluation and monitoring of the University's educational offerings is a key component of the [Periodic Quality Review Process](#). 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. Self-evaluation involves the preparation of an analytical and reflective self-assessment report(SAR) that involves engagement with staff of the unit, other university units, students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders. It involves the engagement of a peer review group which assesses the SAR, conducts a site visit and produces a peer review report with commendations and recommendations.

The University's strategic and holistic approach to review acknowledges that the various aspects of a unit's operations and their mutual dependency. Separate guidelines have been developed for academic schools, support units, linked providers, transnational programme provision and these are available on the [UCD Quality Office website](#). It covers areas such as strategy, management of the unit, staffing and facilities, teaching and learning, curriculum, research, collaborative provision, external outreach, resourcing and quality mechanisms. It 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 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 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 Review of Schools and Professional Support Units

Periodic Quality Review is a cyclical process which is carried out in academic schools, support units, transnational programme provision, linked providers and thematic areas. Periodically, thematic reviews will also be undertaken at a cross institutional level such as curriculum review, student services and research institutes. Typically the review model comprises four key elements:

- Preparation of a Self-Assessment Report (SAR)
- A site visit by a Review Group that includes internal (UCD) and external experts, both national and international
- Preparation of a Review Group Report
- Preparation of Quality Improvement plan and Progress report (one year later)

Review Group Reports for Periodic Quality Review are typically finalised 8-10 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 UMT and UCD Governing Authority. The reports provide the findings of the review group and outline their commendations and recommendations. Following the review the Unit prepares a Quality Improvement Plans (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 by the Unit in the University's annual planning process. Progress on the implementation of the QIP is provided one year after the preparation of the QIP and considered by a Committee chaired by the Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President. It involves members from the Unit, the College Principal/Vice-Principal, the Review Group Chair, and a representative from the UCD Quality Office. The quality reports that are published are as follows:

- Periodic Quality Review Reports
- Linked Provider Reports
- Collaborative / Transnational Provision Reports
- Positive Practice Identified in UCD Quality Review Reports
- Consolidated Recommendations from Quality Review Reports across Key Areas
- Thematic Review Reports
- Internal Governance Reports on Quality Assurance/Enhancement
- External Institutional Review Reports

Criteria used for Recruitment of External Independent National and International Experts

External Reviewers/Evaluators

The University has approved the criteria for the appointment of external reviewers and these are published at [Composition of Periodic Quality Review Groups](#). The following must be considered by units when nominating external Review Group members. These include:

- Gender representation
- Depth of reviewer expertise within the subject area
- Fluency in the English language and experience in report writing
- Extent of management experience in comparable units and/or at institutional level
- Affiliation with world-class units and institution(s)
- Representation of the breadth of knowledge 'strands' within the subject area
- External profile within the subject area - experience representing the discipline on groups or within agencies at national or international levels

Exclusions include:

- Recent role as Subject External Examiner within UCD
- Conflict of interest regarding any relationship with the unit or associated staff
- Current partner in research or other collaborations with the unit or associated staff

Additionally, any relationship the unit has with potential nominees must be declared by Head of unit prior to selection of Review Group.

Extern Examiners

For **Subject Extern Examiners**, the University has published (via the [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, who shall:

- Comply with all University examination guidelines and procedures, and all relevant programme requirements, University regulations, policies and codes of practice that relate to the graduate research programme of study.
- Assume a major role in the viva voce examination.
- Where Examiners unanimously recommend award of the degree, liaise with the nominated Intern Examiner in compiling a high-level joint Final Degree Report on behalf of all Examiners containing an assessment of the academic standards of the thesis, the Examination Committee’s recommendation relating to degree award, and, if relevant, the candidate’s performance in the viva voce examination.
- Where the Examiners disagree and cannot unanimously recommend that the degree be awarded, submit a separate report, via the Chair of the Examination Committee, to the Academic Council Committee on Examinations for review and adjudication.
- Continue in the role of Extern Examiner, in the situation where a candidate is required to revise and submit a thesis for re-examination.

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 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 underwent its review in 2019 with the review team report published in 2020. The University has prepared its institutional quality improvement plan which it has submitted to QQI and is currently working on implementing the recommendations. A Steering Group, chaired by the Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President, has been appointed to oversee the implementation of the Institutional QIP. An update report is due to QQI at end of June 2021.

The University engages with QQI on an ongoing basis through its annual quality assurance reports, dialogue meetings and quality assurance procedures, and contributes 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)	PRSB
Name of body:	National Social Work Registration Board (CORU)
Programme titles and links to publications	Graduate Diploma Social Work MSocSc Social Work https://www.coru.ie/about-us/registration-boards/social-workers-registration-board/about-the-social-workers-registration-board/
Date of accreditation or last review	2017
Date of next review	2022

2. Type of arrangement (PRSB/awarding body/QA body)	PRSB
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	2014
Date of next review	2020

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/Services/Accredited-Courses/Chartered-Engineer.aspx																																															
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="573 365 1575 446">Programme</th> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="1575 365 1898 446">Graduating Classes</th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 446 1575 511"></td> <th data-bbox="1575 446 1711 511">From:</th> <th data-bbox="1711 446 1898 511">To:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 511 1575 592">Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Biomedical Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 511 1711 592">2018</td> <td data-bbox="1711 511 1898 592">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 592 1575 657">Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 592 1711 657">2013</td> <td data-bbox="1711 592 1898 657">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 657 1575 722">Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electrical Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 657 1711 722">2013</td> <td data-bbox="1711 657 1898 722">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 722 1575 787">Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electronic Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 722 1711 787">2013</td> <td data-bbox="1711 722 1898 787">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 787 1575 852">Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 787 1711 852">2013</td> <td data-bbox="1711 787 1898 852">2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 852 1575 917">Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 852 1711 917">2011</td> <td data-bbox="1711 852 1898 917">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 917 1575 982">Master of Engineering in Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 917 1711 982">2019</td> <td data-bbox="1711 917 1898 982">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 982 1575 1047">Master of Engineering in Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 982 1711 1047">2019</td> <td data-bbox="1711 982 1898 1047">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 1047 1575 1112">Master of Engineering in Electrical Energy Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 1047 1711 1112">2012</td> <td data-bbox="1711 1047 1898 1112">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 1112 1575 1177">Master of Engineering in Electronic and Computer Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 1112 1711 1177">2012</td> <td data-bbox="1711 1112 1898 1177">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 1177 1575 1242">Master of Engineering in Energy Systems Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 1177 1711 1242">1982</td> <td data-bbox="1711 1177 1898 1242">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 1242 1575 1307">Master of Engineering in Engineering with Business</td> <td data-bbox="1575 1242 1711 1307">2011</td> <td data-bbox="1711 1242 1898 1307">2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="573 1307 1575 1450">Master of Engineering in Materials Science & Engineering</td> <td data-bbox="1575 1307 1711 1450">2011</td> <td data-bbox="1711 1307 1898 1450">2023</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Programme	Graduating Classes			From:	To:	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Biomedical Engineering	2018	2023	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Civil Engineering	2013	2023	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electrical Engineering	2013	2023	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Electronic Engineering	2013	2023	Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Mechanical Engineering	2013	2022	Master of Engineering in Biomedical Engineering	2011	2023	Master of Engineering in Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering	2019	2023	Master of Engineering in Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering	2019	2023	Master of Engineering in Electrical Energy Engineering	2012	2023	Master of Engineering in Electronic and Computer Engineering	2012	2023	Master of Engineering in Energy Systems Engineering	1982	2023	Master of Engineering in Engineering with Business	2011	2023	Master of Engineering in Materials Science & Engineering	2011	2023
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	Master of Engineering in Mechanical Engineering	2011	2023
	Master of Engineering in Structural Engineering with Architecture	1982	2023
Date of accreditation or last review	Misc. (see table above)		
Date of next review	Misc. (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	University Certificate Nursing; Professional Certificate Nursing; Professional Diploma Nursing; Higher Diploma Nursing; Graduate Certificate Nursing; Graduate Diploma Nursing; MSc Nursing; https://www.nmbi.ie/Home		
Date of accreditation or last review	2018		
Date of next review	2023		

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	14
Joint/double/multiple awards	24
Collaborative programmes	27
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. Collaborative provision (Type of collaborative provision)	Linked Provider
Name of body (/bodies):	Institute of Banking (IoB)
Programme titles and links to publications	<p>Specific details of all IoB programmes are available at https://iob.ie/programmes. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 Professional Certificates at NFQ level 7 • 1 University Diploma at NFQ level 7 • 14 Professional Diplomas at NFQ level 7 • 1 Bachelor of Financial Services at NFQ level 8 • 1 Higher Diploma at NFQ level 8 • 8 Professional Certificates at NFQ level 8 • 4 Professional Diplomas at NFQ level 8 • 5 Professional Certificates at NFQ level 9 • 6 Professional Diplomas at NFQ level 9 • 4 Graduate Diplomas at NFQ level 9 • 2 Master of Business Administration at NFQ level 9 • 5 Master of Science at NFQ level 9

Date of last review	May 2019
Date of next review	2025-2026

2. Collaborative provision	Linked Provider
(Type of collaborative provision)	
Name of body (/bodies):	National College of Art and Design (NCAD)
Programme titles and links to publications	<p>Specific details of all NCAD programmes are available at https://www.ncad.ie/students/programme-information/. These include:</p> <p><u>Undergraduate Programmes</u> First Year Studies BA in Design BA in Design or Fine Art and Education BA in Fine Art BA in Visual Culture Critical Cultures Information for BA in Fine Art, BA in Design and BA in Education Programmes</p> <p><u>Postgraduate Programmes</u> MA / MFA in Art in the Contemporary World MA in Design History & Material Culture MA in Interaction Design MA in Socially Engaged Art and Further Education MFA in Art in the Digital World MFA in Fine Art MSc in Medical Device Design Professional Master of Education (Art & Design)</p>
Date of last review	June 2017
Date of next review	2020-2021

3. Collaborative provision	Collaborative Programmes
(Type of collaborative provision)	
Name of body (/bodies):	RCSI and UCD Medical College (RUMC)
Programme titles and links to publications	<p>Specific details of all RUMC programmes are available at https://www.rcsiucd.edu.my/programmes/. These include:</p>

	Foundation in Science Undergraduate Medicine Pre-Medical MSc Health Research MSc Public Health Structured MD Structured PhD RCSI Surgical Training Malaysia-Ireland Training Programme for Family Medicine (MInTFM)
Date of last review	May 2014
Date of next review	2021-2022

4. Collaborative provision	Collaborative Programmes
(Type of collaborative provision)	
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/ . These include: BE Internet of Things Engineering BE Electronic & Information Engineering BSc Software Engineering BComm Finance
Date of last review	May 2019
Date of next review	2025-2026

5. Collaborative provision	Joint/double/multiple awards
(Type of collaborative provision)	
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 . These include: Pg Cert Veterinary Public Health Pg Cert Dip/MSc Food Regulatory Affairs Pd Dip/MSc Food Regulatory Affairs - Veterinary Public Health
Date of last review	February 2018
Date of next review	2024-2025

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 advance 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	7
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1. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Wuhan University (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	4+2 Engineering and Architecture https://en.whu.edu.cn/
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	10 May 2017
Date of next review	2020
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

2. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Chang'an University (China)
Programme titles and links to publications	3+1+1 and 3.5+0.5+1 - Institutional Understanding (Engineering & Architecture) http://en.chd.edu.cn/
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	11 April 2019
Date of next review	9 September 2020
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 - Joint Programme (Health & Agricultural Sciences) https://english.scau.edu.cn/

Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	8 November 2009
Date of next review	23 October 2020
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

4. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Shenzhen University (SZU) (China) http://www.szu.edu.cn/2013/english/
Programme titles and links to publications	2+2 (Multiple Award: UCD BSc SEM + SZU BBA or SUS BMgt)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	2015
Date of next review	7 April 2020
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

5. Articulation agreement:	
Name of body (/bodies):	Tunku Abdul Rahman University College (TARUC) (Malaysia) https://www.tarc.edu.my/
Programme titles and links to publications	2+2 (TARUC Diploma + normal UCD BSc award)
Date of agreement/arrangement or last review	11 November 2015
Date of next review	10 November 2020
Detail of the agreement	UCD reserves the right to keep the agreement confidential given commercial sensitivities.

[Higher Education Institution]

2021

Annual Quality Report (Institution)
PART B: INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE
ENHANCEMENT & IMPACT
Reporting Period 2019-2020

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) in 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 the [UCD Strategy 2020-2024](#). This strategy follows-on from the significant progress made under the previous strategy, which is outlined at [UCD Strategy 2015-2020 - Summary of Achievements](#). Over the last five years UCD has made remarkable progress towards the objectives of the previous strategy. It has achieved improvements in student satisfaction; research quality, quantity and impact; student-faculty ratio and gender equality. Notable achievements have been made in the area of engagement, a central theme of that strategy. There has been extraordinary increases in alumni engagement, industry engagement and global engagement, and a significant increase in philanthropic support. These achievements, made against a backdrop of reduced government funding for Irish universities, were enabled by the development of non-exchequer income.

During the period of the last strategy, UCD also moved to a five-year planning horizon, with projections of student and faculty numbers extended to ten years, informing a strategic campus development plan. UCD adopted a financial strategy which will see the student-faculty ratio reduced and the institution’s infrastructure needs addressed over the period of the new strategy. A number of objectives of the last strategy have been substantially achieved - twelve key indicators of achievement in relation to the objectives set-out in the previous strategy have been identified, as follows:

Figure 10 - Highlights of accomplishments vis-à-vis the UCD Strategy 2015-2020



A change to the annual planning process for 2019-20 included increased alignment between the quality enhancement activity and unit planning. Units that have undergone quality review during the reporting year are required to incorporate their Quality Improvement Plans into their submission. They are also required to report on implementation in subsequent reporting periods.

UCD Institutional Review

The University underwent its QQI institutional quality review of the effectiveness of its Quality Assurance policies and procedures in 2019-20. Following the submission of the Institutional Self-assessment report, an external Review Team visited UCD between 14-18 October 2019 and met with Governing Authority representatives, Senior Management, University faculty and staff, students, employers, linked providers. Further information about UCD's preparation for Institutional Review is [available here](#). A Review Team report was forwarded to UCD in February 2020 and the University submitted a response to the report. The Review Group Report was published in April 2020 and is available on the UCD Quality Office website and QQI website. Feedback from the Review Team report confirmed that UCD is committed to ongoing reflection and enhancement of its activities, and that it has a positive quality culture, and meets its obligations under the QQI Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines, the European Standards and Guidelines (2015) and other related external guidance on quality, as well as the Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (2012).

A University Steering Group to oversee the implementation of the UCD Institutional Quality Improvement Plan was appointed by the University, and chaired by the Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President, and include three representatives from ACQEC. All recommendations were addressed in the QIP with allocated responsibility for implementation. The QIP was considered by UCD Governing Authority in June 2020 and submitted to QQI following its' approval. The Committee will provide a six month update report to the University with a progress report to QQI in June 2021.

Further additional documentation in relation to institutional review is published on the [UCD Quality Office website](#) and includes the following:

- [External Review of UCD, 2019 - Review Team Profile](#)
- [UCD Institutional Profile 2019](#)
- [Institutional Quality Review 2019 - Institutional Self-Evaluation Report \(ISER\) Case Studies](#)
- [External Review of UCD, 2019 - Review Team Report \(April 2020\)](#)
- [UCD Institutional Quality Improvement Plan \(July 2020\)](#)

Establishment of two new Joint International Colleges

In April 2020, UCD established two new Joint International Colleges with Chang'an University in Xi'an and the South China Agricultural University (SCAU) in Guangzhou. The approval of these two new international colleges by the Chinese Ministry of Education is in addition to its joint international partnership with Beijing University of Technology and marks a major milestone for UCD and confirms its standing as Ireland's Global University.

In partnership with [Chang'an University](#) in Xi'an, the capital of Shaanxi province in central China, UCD will establish the **Chang'an-Dublin International College of Transportation (CDIC)**. This international college will offer dual-degree programmes in civil engineering infrastructure, automotive engineering and transport and city planning & environmental policy. The first enrolment of students is planned for 2020. Some 360 students, 120 per programme, will be enrolled in the first year with a total enrolment of 1,440 planned for the international college. In partnership with [South China Agricultural University \(SCAU\)](#), UCD will establish the **Guangzhou-Dublin International College of Life Sciences and Technology (GDIC)** in Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong province in south China. GDIC will offer dual-degree programmes in horticulture, biological sciences and food safety &

security. The first student enrolments are scheduled for 2020. In its first year, the international college will enroll 180 students and the total enrolment will be 720 after four years. The partnership with SCAU reflects the specific strengths both universities have in agricultural and food sciences. Both are ranked in the top 50 in the QS World University Rankings in this area and UCD is also ranked 19th in the US News and World Report best universities for agricultural sciences.

These new ventures build on the success which UCD has achieved through the [Beijing-Dublin International College \(BDIC\)](#), which is a joint international partnership between University College Dublin (UCD) and Beijing University of Technology (BJUT) and is located on the BJUT campus in Beijing. BDIC underwent periodic quality review in May 2019, and the outputs of this review - including the various commendations and recommendations, and the objectives set-out in the associated Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) developed in November 2019 - fed directly into the planning process for the new CDIC and GDIC projects.

1.2 Update on Planned QA Objectives identified in Previous AQR

No.	Planned objectives (Previous AQR) Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable (NOTE: These are all included from Section 5.1 of the 2020 AIQR)	Update on Status Provide brief update on status, whether completed or in progress. If an action was planned in the previous AQR, but not completed, provide reasons/short reflections for the delay/non-completion.
1	Ongoing projects and initiatives in relation to the pursuit of the objectives set-out in the various strategic plans, including: UCD Strategy 2015-2020 , UCD Education Strategy 2015-2020 , UCD Strategy for Research, Innovation and Impact 2015-2020 , UCD Human Resources Strategy 2016-2020 - Growing Through People , UCD Library Strategy 2016-2020 , IT Strategy 2020 , UCD Strategic Campus Development Plan 2016-2021-2026 and the Global Engagement Strategy 2016-2020 .	Information on the status of projects and initiatives associated with the UCD Strategy 2015-2020 is provided via the UCD Strategy 2015-2020 - Summary of Achievements . The new UCD Strategy 2020-2024 was published in November 2019; other linked strategies within the University are in the process of being developed and are expected to be published in 2021.
2	Ongoing development of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress against the objectives and initiatives articulated in the UCD Strategy 2015-2020 , including identification of targets and appropriate peer institutions against which UCD practice and performance may be benchmarked.	The Governing Authority approved the new UCD Strategy 2020-2024 High Level Key Performance Indicators at its meeting of 20 February 2020. These KPIs are managed by the UCD Institutional Research unit and are kept internal to the institution.
3	Aligned with the UCD Strategic Campus Development Plan 2016-2021-2026 , ongoing building work associated with the UCD Future Campus project and the new UCD Student Residences project will continue in the 2018-19 reporting period.	At a meeting of the UCD Governing Authority in December 2020, two major buildings comprising Phase 1 of the Future Campus Masterplan - the Centre for Creativity and the Centre for Future Learning - were approved to go to tender for the construction works and the enabling works for the site were approved to go ahead. The Governing Authority also approved the signing of the contract for the construction of Phase 2 of the Student Residence Masterplan.
4	Aligned with the UCD Human Resources Strategy 2016-2020 - Growing Through People , a number of key initiatives and developments will be rolled-out in 2019-20 reporting period.	UCD undertook an interim review of Performance for Growth (P4G) Cycle 1 in September 2019. Working with Government and with the approval of the University Management Team (UMT), UCD HR also rolled out a Job Sizing Framework commencing in October 2019. This framework is an important tool to allow UCD to recognise where roles have grown over a period of time and reflect the effort of those administrative and professional staff who have been carrying out such roles over an extended period of time.
5	The key focus in relation to quality assurance and enhancement at UCD in the next reporting period is the consideration of the outcomes from the UCD Institutional Review 2019 , as part of the QQI CINNTE Review Cycle for Irish Higher Education .	The Review Team Report for the External Review of UCD was published in April 2020. UCD also developed, approved and published the associated Institutional Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in June 2020.
6	Publication and implementation of the new UCD Strategy 2020-2024 .	The new UCD Strategy 2020-2024 was published in November 2019. Work is ongoing on implementing the Strategy.
7	A Student Experience - Variation Mapping exercise will be undertaken to explore the variation in the UCD student experience, to document current approaches, and to consider ways in which unwanted variance should be addressed. A number of enhancement projects will be commenced on foot of this review.	Led by the Dean of Students, in co-operation with UCD Agile , the 'Mapping our Students' Experience' project revealed how UCD's students see and navigate the complex UCD landscape. It highlights what students see as some key strengths of the University as well as some of the challenges they experience during their time as a student.
8	An Outbound Mobility Working Group will be established to make recommendations and oversee measures to enhance the supports available for UCD students who wish to	Due to COVID-19, the University made the decision in May 2020 to suspend outgoing and incoming reciprocal student mobility. This development has led to the suspension of the

	undertake study in international contexts as part of their programme.	Outbound Mobility Working Group until student exchange is re-established. University will continue to monitor.
9	A project to consolidate graduate research governance and operations will commence with the objectives of improving efficiency, supporting operational developments, enhancing monitoring and auditing capabilities, and redirecting operational and administrative work away from faculty.	Led by the Deputy Registrar and Dean of Graduate Studies this project has been completed and implemented for September 2020.
10	An Academic Report to Governing Authority will be prepared and presented by the Registrar. It will present an overview of UCD's academic performance during the 2018-2019 academic session, informed by the University's information systems and student data. This will be the first edition of what is anticipated to be an annual series of academic reports to Governing Authority, and that each edition will summarise the University's academic performance during the previous 12 months.	At its meeting of 26 March 2020, the Governing Authority noted the Academic Report for 2018/2019.

1.3 Governance and Management

1.3.1 QA Governance Meetings Schedule

Body	Meeting dates
Governing Authority	26 September 2019, 17 October 2019, 12 December 2019, 20 February 2020, 26 March 2020, 14 May 2020, 25 June 2020
Academic Council	25 September 2019, 21 November 2019
Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee	27 November 2019, 5 March 2020, 30 April 2020
University Programmes Board	3 September 2019, 10 October 2019, 26 November 2019, 26 February 2020, 8 April 2020
University Management Team	10 September 2019, 24 September 2019, 8 October 2019, 22 October 2019, 5 November 2019, 19 November 2019, 4 December 2019, 17 December 2019, 21 January 2020, 4 February 2020, 18 February 2020, 3 March 2020, 18 March 2020, 31 March 2020, 15 April 2020, 28 April 2020, 12 May 2020, 26 May 2020, 9 June 2020, 23 June 2020 NOTE: In order to manage University operation and governance during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UMT held additional crisis management meetings in the period March-August 2020

1.3.2 QA Leadership and Management Structural Developments

In the reporting period (1 September 2019 - 31 August 2020) the following leadership and management developments occurred:

- New Heads of School took up their roles in the following Schools:
 - UCD School of Art History & Cultural Policy
 - UCD School of English, Drama & Film
 - UCD School of Social Policy, Social Work & Social Justice

- UCD School of Psychology
 - UCD School of Philosophy
 - UCD School of Education
 - UCD School of Civil Engineering
 - UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy & Sports Science
 - UCD School of Biology & Environmental Science
 - UCD School of Chemistry
 - UCD School of Computer Science
-
- A new College Principal took up their role for the UCD College of Engineering and Architecture
 - A new Director of Quality commenced on 1 April 2020
 - The Director of Academic Governance role was vacated in May 2020, a temporary Director will be appointed with recruitment and appointment to be undertaken in the 2020-2021 period.

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 Applied Language Centre	11-14 November 2019	Report finalised, not yet published.
UCD School of Music	10-13 February 2020	Report finalised, not yet published.
UCD Registry	2-5 March 2020	Report finalised, not yet published.
NOTE: The reports for the above three reviews are complete and are currently under consideration by the relevant University committees.		
UCD Teaching & Learning	Site visit postponed due to COVID-19 (5-8 October 2020)	
UCD School of Sociology	Site visit postponed due to COVID-19 (19-22 October 2020)	
UCD Finance Office	Site visit postponed due to COVID-19 (12-15 April 2021)	
National College of Art and Design (Linked Provider)	Site visit postponed due to COVID-19 (October 2021)	

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		1	2		13		
<i>of those:</i>							
On-site processes		1	2				
Desk reviews						1	
Virtual processes							
Average panel size for each process type*		4	4.5			1	
NOTE: The above data does not include reviews postponed to the next reporting period due to COVID-19							

* 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

Type of Expert/ Role on Panel	Total	Gender			Internal	National	International			Institution Type	
		Male	Female	Other, or unspecified			UK, incl. NI	Other European	Outside of Europe	Similar	Different
Chair	3	1	2		3						
Secretary <i>NOTE: UCD does not utilise a Secretary role, but does use a Deputy Chair, information for which is included here</i>	3	0	3		3						
Academic/Discipline Specific	7	4	3				7			7	
Student Representative	0										
QA	0										
Teaching & Learning	0										
External Industry /Third Mission	0										
NOTE: The above data does not include reviews postponed to the next reporting period due to COVID-19											

2.0 IQA System – Enhancement and Impacts

Governance and Management of Quality

Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee

Following the appointment of the Director of Quality a review of the business of the [Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee](#) was undertaken by the Director in consultation with the Chair of ACQEC. This included an alignment of the Committee's business with Academic Council governance requirements, an agreed annual workplan for the Committee and the scheduling of an additional meeting. At its last meeting in 2019/20 ACQEC agreed clear processes for enhanced engagement and operational effectiveness by members as part of reviewing its work plan for the academic year 2020/21. This included mapping of the committee's business ensuring full discussion of agenda items and agreed outputs. This will take effect from 2020/21 and will be monitored and reviewed.

Other work by the Committee included changes brought in by Section 43A of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019*, ACEC approved an ACQEC and ACCSCC proposal to refer to the legislation in the [UCD Student Plagiarism Policy](#) and [UCD Student Code of Conduct](#), a review of the new [UCD Policy for Internal Reporting on Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body \(PSRB\) Accreditation of UCD Programmes and Units](#), and participation of ACQEC members on the institutional quality review team site visit, Following the week-long visit of the Review Group to UCD in October 2019, ACQEC considered a post-review reflection and lessons learned document compiled by the UCDQO. Lessons learned were incorporated into internal Periodic Quality Reviews, the review of the process (as set out in the [QQI CINNTE Review Group Report recommendations](#)) and will inform planning for our next institutional review.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to support Schools/Units whose site visit was postponed or scheduled for the first trimester of 2020/21, ACQEC approved a proposal from the UCD Quality Office on conducting periodic quality review site visits remotely on a temporary basis. Two School/Unit reviews and one institutional review (NCAD) were postponed. A total of nine School/Unit reviews had been launched at the start of the calendar year 2020 with five units requesting postponement due to the impacts of COVID. The proposal was underpinned by the European Standards and Guidelines, QQI Core Statutory Guidelines, relevant legislation and the [UCD Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Policy](#) and is supported by a more detailed operational paper. A case study is provided as part of this 2021 AQR submission.

UniForum

[UniForum](#) is an information-sharing and benchmarking forum of leading universities. It applies a well-tested and internationally recognised methodology to capture information on how institutions strategically manage their administrative resources. This information is used by the University to understand and benchmark resources so that it can plan for and enhance the delivery of efficient and effective services. The UniForum project was launched by UCD in November 2019 and sponsored by the Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President. It was designed to enable UCD to more formally benchmark itself to other international institutions. The process involved line managers mapping all professional staff across a number of categories, coded against a UniForum Activity Framework. Using data and analysis the University has identified a number of projects to support greater alignment of work activity for implementation in 2020/21.

Periodic Quality Review of UCD Schools and Units - Remote Site Visits

UCD's [Quality Assurance and Quality Enhancement Policy](#) outlines the principles and key features of UCD's quality assurance and quality enhancement process that is composed of critical self-evaluation and rigorous peer review of academic and support units by review groups of peers that are independent of the unit under review.

Site visits form part of UCD's internal review process. The impact of COVID-19 led to the postponement of two unit site visits, and impacted the rescheduling of a Linked Provider institutional review site visit. It has also caused challenges on forward planning for current 2020/21 reviews with requests by five schools to postpone their review by one year. The impact of postponing reviews will require a review of the University cycle of reviews for the coming year. To enable the delivery of site visits at a distance, particularly for those units who had submitted their SARs, a revised approach was proposed by the UCD Quality Office to conduct online or a blended approach on site visits. A set of principles to deliver site visits remotely were rapidly developed by the UCD Quality Office and approved by ACQEC pm 30 April 2020. This required an amendment to the current approach of Review Group pre-preparation, three-and-a-half-day onsite visit with the unit, and producing the review group report. An operational document was produced by the UCD team which will be piloted on two site visits in October 2020.

Key changes to existing arrangements include:

- Duration of the site visit will be adjusted from three and a half days to a flexible format that reflects the capacity of the RG and the Unit. It will be delivered virtually on a digital platform agreed between the Unit and UCD Quality Office as advised by IT Services.
- Pre-planning meeting will take place earlier. Additional time will be front-loaded for the Review Group to consider documentation and prepare for the site visit. It will require additional desk review activity.
- Training will be provided for all stakeholders in advance.
- Careful consideration will be given to the spread, timings, duration, and number of participants in stakeholder meetings to maximise the value of these exchanges reflecting the need for additional considerations associated with remote engagement.
- The UCD Quality Office will set up and administer an online solution that facilitates effective remote collaborative working of the Review Group and smooth running of online meetings with key stakeholders.
- A café style approach to meetings with students may be implemented.
- Requests for written submissions/responses from stakeholders to Review Group queries may be required.

Programmes of Education and Training

The impact of COVID-19 on UCD and its programmes of education and training was significant as the University pivoted from face-to-face teaching to online delivery on the majority of its programmes. Led by the Registrar, a co-ordinated response, managed by Deputy Registrars, Deans, Heads of schools, faculty, professional units and staff, to move teaching online was put in place. Significant supports to faculty, staff and students were provided to support at-distance learning. The priority was to support students in their learning. Resources were provided to staff to enable the delivery of semester teaching and online assessment, and IT resources were developed to support students and staff online. Changes to University governance and oversight were put in place to support the conduct of academic committees to enable transition of University committees online and a rapid response to required changes on programmes with amendments to [Academic Regulations](#).

Staff Recruitment, Management and Development

Performance for Growth (P4G) and Job Sizing Framework

UCD undertook an interim review of [Performance for Growth \(P4G\)](#) Cycle 1 in September 2019. P4G is a framework that provides the opportunity for all UCD employees to have at least one annual conversation with their line manager, Head of School or alternate reviewer, within which:

- achievements and challenges of the previous year are reflected on and feedback is provided;
- objectives for the coming year are agreed;
- a development plan is discussed and agreed;

- career aspirations are explored and supported where possible.

Working with Government and with the approval of the University Management Team (UMT), UCD Human Resources also rolled out a [Job Sizing Framework](#) for support staff commencing in October 2019. This framework is an important tool to allow UCD to recognise where roles have grown over a period of time and reflect the effort of those administrative and professional staff who have been carrying out such roles over an extended period of time. Further information is available <https://www.ucd.ie/peopledevelopment/p4g/>

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

As outlined under Programmes of Education and Training, all teaching was moved online. Training for staff and resources were developed to support teaching, learning and assessment online, with additional supports were provided by [UCD Teaching and Learning](#). [Academic Regulations](#) were changed to support delivery. Module delivery and modes of assessment were reviewed by faculty. New reporting mechanisms related to student performance were developed as well as an online examinations schedule. Ongoing engagement was also undertaken by the University with professional and statutory bodies for programmes with clinical requirements on clarifying how their professional requirements would be applied and to support students with clinical placements.

Supports and resources for learners

A student centric approach on frequent communications by the Registrar and Deputy President with students was put in place that outlined the supports available and the changes in assessment, examinations and amendments to [Academic Regulations](#) which acknowledge the extenuating circumstances of the pandemic on UCD students. The Dean of Undergraduate Students developed [FAQs for taught students](#) which were amended to reflect the changing circumstance. Ongoing support by Heads of Schools and the University took place to ensure information and resources were provided to guide students in engaging with the new types of assessment and coursework, such as the provision of an assessment guide which was developed in partnership with the [Students' Union](#), the development of a live examination support channel. Additional resources were provided for students with additional needs through [UCD Access and Lifelong Learning](#), [Student Advisers](#) and the [Student Desk](#) in Registry. Further information is provided in the case study on the range of supports put in place by the University to support student learning and evaluating that experience. The impact of COVID-19 on supports and resources for learners during the 2019-2020 reporting period is outlined in section 4. Additional Themes and Case Studies below.

Information and Data Management (including analysis and impact of information gathered via the national Student Survey)

UCD Strategy and KPIs

The Governing Authority approved the new [UCD Strategy 2020-2024](#) High Level Key Performance Indicators at its meeting of 20 February 2020. These KPIs are managed by the UCD Institutional Research unit and monitored on an ongoing basis.

[StudentSurvey.ie and PGR Student Survey.ie](#)

StudentSurvey.ie (the Irish Survey of Student Engagement) asks students about their experiences of higher education, including their academic, personal and social development, and how their institutions provide opportunities and support for this development. The survey for postgraduate research students (Masters by Research and PhD) opens every second year during February - March for a three-week fieldwork period that is also specific to each institution. This survey was first run in 2018 and is now on a biennial survey cycle, with the next survey happening in spring 2021. The questions have been designed to match the experiences of research students and have been pre-tested with groups of research students in several institutions. UCD receives the outputs from this annual nationwide survey, and these outputs are evaluated 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.

Other Parties Involved in Education and Training

Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)

A policy review process of the existing [UCD Policy for Internal Reporting on Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body \(PSRB\) Accreditation of UCD Programmes and Units](#) (approved by ACEC on 22 May 2018) commenced in February 2020 as required under Section 3 of the approved policy stipulates that, “*This policy will be reviewed by ACQEC (or its nominee) within one year of the implementation of the policy.*” Following engagement by the IUA and universities with QQI a project on PSRBs commenced in July 2020 to establish a set of principles for HEI and PSRB programme accreditation. A draft document was provided entitled “*Towards Principles for Programme Validation, Professional Accreditation and Approval, and other Professional Engagements with Education Providers*”. A series of workshops have been undertaken with feedback due on the document at the end of December 2020. The University is currently working on drafting its response. Work on the policy was paused to accommodate this ongoing project with QQI and separate University work with schools, led by the Dean of Undergraduate Students, on challenges for clinical and work placements due to COVID-19 on programmes with professional accreditation.

Self-evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Institutional Review

The key development within the 2019-2020 reporting period was the [External Institutional Review of UCD](#) by QQI. As part of the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) CINNTE quality review cycle for higher education institutions 2017-2023, an external Review Team visited UCD between **14-18 October 2019**. Further information about UCD's preparation for Institutional Review is [available here](#). The Review Group Report was published in **April 2020**, and a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was considered by UCD Governing Authority in **June 2020** and published in **July 2020**. Key relevant documentation is available via:

- [External Review of UCD, 2019 - Review Team Profile](#)
- [UCD Institutional Profile 2019](#)
- [Institutional Quality Review 2019 - Institutional Self-Evaluation Report \(ISER\) Case Studies](#)
- [External Review of UCD, 2019 - Review Team Report \(April 2020\)](#)
- [UCD Institutional Quality Improvement Plan \(July 2020\)](#)

Unit Review

Unit review on-site visits took place in the UCD Applied Language Centre, UCD School of Music, and UCD Registry. Site visits for UCD Teaching and Learning and the School of Sociology were postponed until October 2020 due to COVID-19.

Annual Programme Review of Transnational Provision

Annual update reports on transnational programmes were submitted to the UCD Quality Office in Spring 2020 and considered by ACQEC.

Quality Assurance of Research Activities and Programmes

Ongoing assurance of research activities is overseen by UCD Research and Innovation. KPIs are linked to its Research Strategy. The Unit is currently working on its strategy for 2021-24.

Ongoing quality review of school's research activity is managed within the University's unit review process.

Third-Mission Activities, Societal and Community Engagement

UCD COVID-19 Response

The UCD Community has risen to the challenge posed by the global pandemic. A dedicated website on the [UCD COVID-19 Response](#) highlights the University's contribution to the pandemic. In particular, the [UCD National Virus Reference Laboratory \(NVRL\)](#), which provides a diagnostic and reference service for clinicians investigating viral infections throughout Ireland, has played a key role in working with the Health Service Executive as a primary testing centre for COVID-19. University faculty and staff have also responded through their research, participation on national committees providing advice on COVID-19, provision of specialized CPD module training, provision of Contact Tracing facilities and staffing, and provision of materials and equipment. Other highlights include:

- [UCD Covid-19 Contact Tracing Centre and training facility](#)
- [Recruiting and training volunteers for SARS CoV 2 testing](#)
- [UCD Centre for Precision Surgery Covid-19 projects with the Mater Hospital](#)
- [Home monitoring of respiration in Covid-19 patients using smartphone technology](#)
- [Expanding Care Capacity through Remote Monitoring of Covid-19 patients](#)
- [UCD researchers tackling the Covid crisis talk about their work](#)
- [Understanding and preventing Covid-19 outbreaks in meat processing plants](#)
- [Outbreaks in the workplace: understanding and preventing super spreading events](#)
- [Inoculating against Covid-19 misinformation](#)
- [How can we help children adjust to the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond?](#)
- [Communicating Covid-19 cases and deaths: guidelines for media](#)
- [UCD National Covid-19 Food Survey in pandemic lockdown](#)
- [UCD Centre for Emergency Medical Science fills in PPE knowledge gap](#)
- [UCD offers free online critical care courses for ICU nurses of Covid-19 patients](#)
- [UCD Maths Support Centre puts 143 tutorial videos for Leaving Cert online free](#)
- [Top UCD virology experts advising businesses on Covid-19 health and safety](#)
- [UCD national coordinator in EU-wide network to accelerate Covid vaccine trials](#)

Internationalisation

Establishment of two new Joint International Colleges

UCD was successful in its proposal to develop two new joint colleges in China - one in Guangzhou, the South China Dublin International College (SDIC) which will focus on agriculture and food and will involve UCD School of Agriculture and Food Science and UCD School of Biology and Environmental Science; and one in Xian, the Chang'an Dublin International College (CDIC) which will focus on transport and will involve UCD Schools of Civil Engineering, Mechanical and Materials Engineering, and Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy. These ventures were approved by the Chinese Ministry of Education in April 2020. UCD will have a total of three joint colleges in China.

Integration of UN sustainable development goals (SDG)

One of the four themes of the [UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future](#) is Creating a Sustainable Global Society. This theme emphasises the University's long-standing commitment to sustainability, and to undertaking research, education, governance and engagement which advances the 17 UN Sustainable Developments Goals through generating, sharing and applying knowledge for maximum impact on the campus, nationally and internationally. Over the course of 2019, the [UCD SDG Seminar Series](#) has underscored how the UCD research community is already making significant contributions to meeting the targets as set out in the Goals. Staff, students and external stakeholders have heard from colleagues from across all six Colleges; from UCD Institutes, Centres and Schools; and from partners in academia, government, industry and the charitable sector, outlining the work being carried out and the challenges ahead.

In April 2020, it was announced that **UCD has been ranked 34th in the world** in the [Times Higher Education Impact Rankings](#) which assess universities against the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. This position reflects UCD's ongoing commitment to advancing sustainability with respect to research, education, campus operations and external engagement. The seventeen SDGs provide a common framework for global action on sustainability, with a focus on major global issues such as quality education, gender equality, and an end to poverty and hunger worldwide. UCD is ranked number one in Ireland in three of the individual rankings:

- Partnerships for the Goals (Goal 17)
- Decent work and Economic Growth (Goal 8),
- Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (Goal 9)

And the University's highest ranking is 18 for SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. Under the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings SDG 17, Partnerships for the Goals is mandatory and over 800 universities were assessed this year. UCD's ranking position in 18th is a reflection on the strength of the University's research, publications, relationships to support the goals and education for the SDGs.

UCD participated in 9 of the 17 SDG individual Impact Rankings, and its performance amongst the Top 100 rankings includes:

- SDG17: Partnership for the Goals: UCD Ranked 18th
- SDG8: Decent Work & Economic Growth: UCD Ranked 23rd
- SDG9: Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure: UCD Ranked 25th
- SDG3: Good Health & Wellbeing: UCD Ranked 80th
- SDG11: Sustainable Cities & Communities: UCD Ranked 81st

More than 770 Universities from around the world were assessed in this new ranking which aims to highlight those universities best achieving the goals set out by the UN. Universities were invited to submit data on as many SDGs as they are able.

2.1 Initiatives within the Institution related to Academic Integrity

The principle and ethos of academic freedom have been endorsed by both the Academic Council and Governing Authority of UCD and is contained in the University's [Statement on Academic Freedom](#).

The three key principles regarding the management of academic freedom centre on:

- a) Freedom of Expression;
- b) Freedom within Teaching and Learning; and
- c) Freedom within Research and Dissemination.

Within the reporting period, the [Academic Council Executive Committee \(ACEC\)](#) established an Academic Freedom Working Group (AFWG) in December 2019. The purpose of the AFWG was to review the UCD Statement on Academic Freedom to take into account the impact, if any, of the substantial growth in UCD's international engagement and commitments to ensure that the existing statement continues to work in the context of international engagement in jurisdictions where different legislative frameworks apply and environments where different traditions and cultures of scholarly enquiry are established.

The AFWG included nominees from each College and from UCD Legal, UCD Global, and UCD Human Resources. The group developed a set of recommendations and undertook an all-Faculty consultation process in March 2020. In response to the feedback received through the consultation process, the Group is currently revising its recommendation. Finalisation of the recommendations were delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 and will be submitted to Academic Council in the following reporting period.

UCD is also engaged with the [QQI project on Academic Integrity](#), which relates to new provisions included in the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019* which was enacted in July 2019. In the early part of 2020, the UCD [Student Plagiarism Policy](#) was amended by the Academic Council Executive Committee, to include reference to Section 43A of the *Qualifications and Quality Assurance Act (Education and Training) (Amendment) Act 2019*.

QQI also established the [National Academic Integrity Network \(NAIN\)](#) in November 2019. The NAIN will help QQI to establish the nature of academic misconduct practised in Irish higher education institutions; to identify appropriate measures institutions can take to both prevent and address such misconduct; and to inform dedicated communications strategies and/or enhancement initiatives developed in this area by QQI. The Network members are nominated by their Higher Education Institution's Registrars and take a leading role in approving the objectives of the Network, providing feedback on draft documents and initiatives and acting as the means of the communication between their institution and the Network. UCD takes an active role in the work of the NAIN and has appointed two UCD faculty to sit on the working groups.

3.0 QA Improvement and Enhancement Plans for Upcoming Reporting Period

3.1 QA and QE supporting the Achievement of Strategic Objectives

Following the publication of the University's institutional report in 2020 a Quality Improvement Plan was prepared and approved by the University. This QIP is published on the UCD Quality Office and QQI websites. The report was submitted to QQI on 30 June 2020 and the University is currently working on implementing the recommendations. A six-month update report will be provided to the University Governing Authority in December 2020 and a progress report will be provided to QQI at end of June 2020. The following contains the prioritised recommendations of the Review Team. Oversight on implementation is the responsibility of a Steering Committee chaired by the Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President.

No. (# relates to UCD Institutional Review Report recommendations)	Relevant objectives Note: Include reference to the relevant section of the preceding AQR, where applicable	Planned actions and indicators <i>Note: Include details of unit responsible, and how planned action will address the relevant strategic priority and/or reengagement advice/CINNTE recommendation.</i> <i>If the institution is preparing for cyclical review, include how the planned actions will address the relevant review objective(s).</i>
4.9	The review team recommends that UCD review its QA processes and consider consolidating processes to ensure that schools have the capacity, and are enabled, to effectively self-evaluate, reflect and implement quality improvements.	a. UCD will review its QA processes as part of its institution-wide consultation process (see p. 1) and seek to ensure greater alignment between its QA processes and leadership roles and responsibilities, enhancing recognition and ongoing embedding of quality at institutional and School level and supporting Schools and Units in self-evaluation, reflection and implementation of the necessary quality enhancements. b. Academic Council Quality Enhancement Committee (ACQEC) will identify and consider opportunities to integrate and align quality processes with the strategic priorities of the UCD Strategy, Rising to the Future 2020-2024, UCD annual planning process, and alignment with university governance (see also recommendation 4.91). Responsible: ACQEC (lead), UMT, Registrar, VPRII, College Principals, UCD HR, Director of Strategic Planning, and UCD Director of Quality
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.	a. Review Head of School role and responsibilities. UCD Agile will work with Heads of School Group. b. Continue to utilise the Performance for Growth and academic workload models. Responsible: UCD HR (lead), UMT Extended Leadership Group, and UCD Agile
4.34	The review team recommends that UCD review the implementation of the Researcher Career Framework to ensure that it is equally and equitably implemented across the university so that faculty on fixed-term contracts (e.g. postdoctoral fellows, faculty and staff	We will review the RCF to ensure our postdoctoral community is well supported. Responsible: UCD HR (lead), UCD Careers Network and UMT Research, Innovation and Impact Group

	appointed to international campuses) have the opportunity to undertake appropriate career development.	
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.	<p>Better identifying opportunities to combine or extrapolate already extant information to better inform decision-makers at UCD.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Set-up working group (Reporting to UMT) to build on the previously completed benchmarking exercise to identify appropriate comparator universities. Working Group to review available external benchmarking data sources to identify which might be used to inform UCD policy and decision making Working Group to review and prioritise opportunities for combining and extrapolating information already available at UCD. <p>Reviewing and enhancing the data available on the student experience to ensure a high-quality experience for all students at UCD.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Working Group to review development and usage of information on the student experience at UCD and opportunities for its enhancement. (Student representation will be included on the Working Group.) <p>Information users at UCD are better informed of the information available and how it can be accessed, extracted and presented to support decision making.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Development of further training materials to better inform and support decision makers. <p>Responsible: Registrar or nominee (lead) to Chair group</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Design and implement agreed supports/resources arising from the recommendations of the Working Group. <p>Responsible: Director of Institutional Research (lead) and Director of Strategic Planning</p>
4.91	The review team recommends that, as a globally-competitive, research-intensive institution, UCD review its quality processes with a view to securing a more effective balance between learning and teaching, and research and to demonstrating robust institution-level research quality (recognising the lack of ESG framework for research quality and the infancy of research quality expectations).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The VPRII will work with ACQEC to secure a more effective balance between learning and teaching, and research and demonstrating robust institution-level research quality, based on a shared understanding of what quality enhancement means for UCD as a leading research and teaching university. <p>Responsible: Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact (VPRII) (lead), UCD Director of Quality, ACQEC and Registrar</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> ACQEC and UCD Director of Quality will review the periodic quality review processes to align with the strategic priorities of the University to include research quality (recommendation 4.9 also refers). <p>Responsible: ACQEC (lead), UCD Director of Quality, VPRII and Registrar</p>

Other planned Activity includes:

Provision of Induction Training and briefings for Student representatives on ACQEC	Responsible: UCD Quality Office
Quality reviews: Review of seven-year cycle of reviews due to impacts arising from COVID, ongoing implementation of annual QA Cycle of Reviews and temporary delivery of review site visits at a distance	Responsible: UCD Quality Office

Implementation of annual Quality Improvement Plan and progress reports	Responsible: UCD Quality Office
Preparation and publication of the University's first Sustainability report and integration of the UN SDGs across education, research, governance and engagement.	Responsible: Professor Colin Scott, Chair, Project Steering Group
Development and publication of Education, Research, and Global strategies as part of the implementation of the UCD Strategy, 2020-24	Responsible: Registrar, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Deputy President; Vice-President for Research and Innovation; Vice-President for Global Engagement
Development of annual reporting on Review Group analysis to include recommendations on EDI and UCD Global	Responsible: UCD Quality Office and ACQEC
Implementation by Academic Affairs of UniForum data outputs and identification of projects to improve and support unit activity	Responsible: Registrar; UCD Agile and Academic Affairs; Functional Heads

3.2 Reviews planned for Upcoming Reporting Periods

3.2.1 Reviews planned for Next Reporting Period

Unit to be reviewed	Date of planned review	Date of last review
UCD Teaching and Learning	5-8 October 2020	2013
UCD School of Sociology	19-22 October 2020	2013
UCD School of Agriculture & Food Science	22-25 March 2021	2013
UCD School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering	18 March-7 April 2021	2013
UCD Finance Office	12-15 May 2021	2013
UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy & Sports Science	12-15 April 2021	2013
National College of Art & Design	8-11 June 2021	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 One: GRB Drop-In Clinics for Graduate Research Board (GRB) Professor Barbara Dooley, Deputy Registrar and Dean of Graduate Studies

Who are we and what do we do?

The [UCD Graduate Research Board](#) is the governing board for graduate research programmes and graduate research students in the university with a remit to provide consolidated and consistent graduate research governance. The Board formally commenced September 1st, 2020, during COVID-19. Administrative support for this function is delivered by a dedicated team within Graduate Studies. This team supports the GRB, which meets once a month, and each College and each school has a dedicated contact on the team who can provide advice on submissions to the Board, from admissions through to extensions, and matters relating to UCD academic regulations and policy as they relate to research students. The GRB team was established remotely and has worked remotely since Summer 2020.

Why did we set up Drop-in clinics?

There are approximately 1,900 active research students in the university and, in addition to the policy and procedural matters that the Board will consider, an average of 150 student recommendations are submitted for each meeting. An approaching submission date will lead to an increase in queries and, due to COVID-19 restrictions and the limits this placed on communication channels, the team wished to provide colleagues they support with an alternative to the emails that may require detailed and time intensive back and forth.

What did we do?

The GRB team hold monthly (optional) Drop-in clinics, a day or two before the GRB submission deadline. Google invitations are sent out to our administrative contacts, a few days/week in advance, giving the time and date of the session. Initially these sessions ran for an hour but we realised that this was longer than necessary so this was updated to a half hour slot that can be extended in response to demand. Colleagues can drop in for the full session or just for a short time to ask their questions or listen to queries from other Schools. At some sessions, we have provided short presentations covering the more popular topics e.g. COVID related thesis no fee extensions.

Did it work?

The feedback we have received from Schools to date has been positive with examples below:

"I find these [Drop-In Sessions] really useful as a platform to share issues and hear how other Schools are dealing with similar matters." and

"Thank you... for taking queries earlier at the drop-in clinic, which is very helpful to have as a forum to raise some general queries."

Benefits?

We have found that Schools appreciate these sessions, and the opportunity to share experiences, and the insight into School concerns is very useful to a new team. The queries raised at these sessions, particularly if they appear to be shared across Schools, have allowed us to identify new resources to support colleagues across the university.

These sessions also have the benefit of providing clarity and consistency to colleagues, who will have the opportunity to hear about similar scenarios in other Schools. The clarity this provides, and faster turnaround on answers that the drop-in sessions provide, assists colleagues in supporting and communicating with students on complex matters. We hope to continue on the success of the drop-in sessions once we return to campus either in the current format or by providing some similar mechanism to support schools.

Case Study Two: Maintaining and Enhancing the Undergraduate Student Orientation Experience During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Jason Masterson, UCD Orientation Manager

Context

Framed against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, [UCD Orientation 2020](#) required the largest redesign in the programme's history, with a root and branch reform of every aspect required to deliver a blended University welcome. A twin track planning approach for both online and in-person components had envisaged that all undergraduate Stage 1 students would receive a socially distant campus tour and welcome event. However, all in-person components became unavailable at short notice due to national restrictions, and a chiefly virtual delivery ensued.

Orientation is delivered across three major themes; University Welcome and Introduction, Programme Welcome and Social integration aspects. The three themes then fit into a number of delivery strands which are Pre-Registration, Orientation week and Trimester 1.

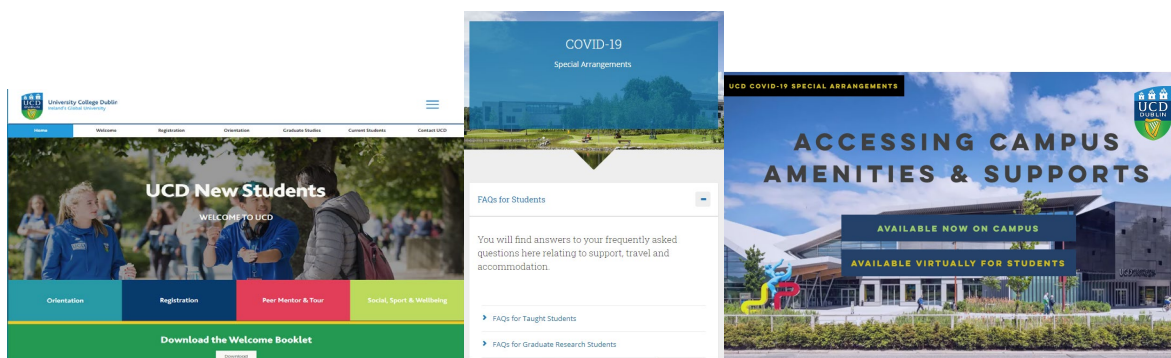
In order to deliver an effective programme in 2020 a number of new and ambitious projects were delivered:

- [New Students Website](#)
- New Bright-space module "Introduction to UCD"
- Embedding the UCD "Becoming an Active Bystander" programme into virtual Orientation.
- A new [student events calendar](#) to advertise student events directly to students
- Update to UCD Mobile App with the inclusion of a specific New Student Orientation module
- Transition of the [Welcome Booklet](#) to online only and a new slimmed down Welcome Pack
- Launch of [UCD Virtual Tour](#) (led by Student Recruitment) - 58% of new students took a tour
- A suite of [new social media](#) and [video resources](#)
- [A virtual Presidents' Welcome](#)
- Virtual Peer Mentor training and delivery programme, using Brightspace
- A detailed but un-used plan to deliver over 600 in person tours during Orientation week
- Continued support of Colleges and Units throughout Trimester 1 with information [release](#).
- UCD for ALL Welcome became a virtual event (targeted at non-traditional entry pathways)
- UCD Global delivered virtual programming through the incoming student portal and online courses.
- A detailed plan for on campus activity and [related student guidance for coming onsite](#)
- A [website](#) providing students with realtime information as to what is available on campus.

Delivering with Cohesion and Maintaining Student Collaboration

Orientation projects were largely delivered under the auspices of the UCD Orientation Advisory Group. The group was Chaired by the Dean of Students and includes approximately 40 staff and student representatives from around the University representing all units and areas with a wide-reaching remit to deliver Orientation communications and programming. During the period from March 2020 - August 2020 the Advisory met on 10 occasions, with working groups for Peer Mentoring, Virtual Orientation, On Campus Tours among others to distribute the significant body of work needed to deliver these changes on time for Orientation 2020.

Colleges, Programmes and Units reported excellent engagement during Orientation Week activities with most Colleges reporting engagement levels in excess of 90% across 177 events which tallies well with previous years. Whatever Orientation 2021 may bring the learnings and resources created in 2020 will leave a legacy for the Orientation team and students alike with many resources now available for year-on-year use. From survey analysis, overall student satisfaction with orientation was found to be around 82% which is lower than the previous year, but given the pivot to largely virtual delivery was higher than expected.



Existing resources were also bolstered and access to vital supports were maintained throughout with blended offerings for Student Health and Counselling, Student Centre and Residences all remaining open. UCD's Digital Therapy service [Silvercloud](#) grew a client base of 496 (growth over 18 months) to a client base of 1215 by Feb 2021 (1 years' growth of almost 200%).

Case Study Three: Delivery Unit Quality Reviews Remotely UCD Quality Office

Who are we and what do we do?

The [UCD Quality Office](#) is responsible for developing, implementing and promoting quality across the University and ensuring that a culture of quality enhancement is embedded in all activities of the University. Part of the remit of the Office is to manage a schedule of quality reviews. The process involves supporting the preparation of a self-assessment report, managing the appointment of the review groups and site visit preparations, the production of a review group report, quality improvement plan and progress report.

Why did the UCD Quality Office move to remote delivery on site visits?

UCD had scheduled six site visits reviews (2019-20 schedule) during 2019/20 in addition to UCD's own institutional quality review by QQI. These reviews included two academic, three support units and one linked provider reviews. Prior to COVID-19 site visits were conducted on-site in the units under review. With the establishment of temporary remote working for staff the Unit had to postpone two site visits scheduled for March/April 2020 (UCD School of Sociology and UCD Teaching and Learning). The team had also commenced the process for new 2020-21 cycle of reviews in January 2020 of nine units - seven academic, one joint UCD/RCSI collaborative programme and one collaborative programme. The team wished to support schools and units who had submitted their self-assessment reports, those units commencing their self-assessment report preparation and minimize impacts on the current 7-year review schedule and ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

What did we do?

The Team adopted a collaborative approach to developing site visit online delivery. A [proposal to temporarily conduct quality review site visits remotely](#) was submitted to ACQEC for their approval. This was prepared by the Quality Office Team with initial input from the Director and staff of UCD Teaching and Learning. Additional consultation with the Heads of the two postponed reviews, and Review Group Chairs informed the preparation of an [operational working document](#) which outlined the roles and responsibilities of the UCD Quality Office, unit under review, review group members and site visit stakeholders, the digital platform to be used, the structure, timeline, organisation and support of the site visit. The UCD Quality Office took on responsibility for co-ordinating the site visit, engaging with staff, students, alumni and employers to meet with the Review Group, and supporting the Review Group. Testing by the team on using the digital platform, the provision of technical support and training to RG members, the use of a gatekeeper role to manage site visit attendees, and post-visit supports were some of the additional supports put in place.

Did it work?

Two site visits were piloted in October 2020 and both went well. Overall feedback from Review Group members was positive, particularly on the participation and engagement of senior management, faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders such as employers and alumni. Conducting site visits remotely enabled the progression of the quality assurance cycle of reviews. The Review Groups also commended the pre-planning, organisation, communication and digital platform used for the site visits, and the support provided by the UCD Quality Office. Other feedback by the Review Groups acknowledged that it was “*a temporary solution but did not replace onsite visits*”, and the possibility of missed cues in meetings,

Benefits?

By conducting site visits remotely it has enabled the University to meet its legislative requirements on Quality Assurance and University requirements to review its activity that will continue to be delivered remotely in semester two, 2020/21 for those units who wished to progress their quality reviews. A hybrid approach on conducting site visits remotely and onsite is planned following a return to campus, particularly on pre- and post- site visit planning. For units under review it has facilitated a progression of their quality process and opportunity to highlight best practices within their unit and areas for enhancement.
