Strategy and Performance Dialogue 2018 – 2021

HEI Self Evaluation Report on Progress

1 September 2018 – 31 August 2021

Section A: Summary Information

Name of Institution	University College Cork
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Date of submission	8 April 2022

Section B: Overview of Institutional Strategic Development and Performance

| Critical Reflection

Max. 5,600-character limit (750-800 words approx.) | The original performance compact (September 2018-August 2021) was based on the UCC Strategic Plan 2017-2022. The onset of Covid-19 in March 2020 forced a re-focussing of UCC strategy in response to the significant impacts of the pandemic. Published in December 2020, 'UCC 2022: Delivering a Connected University' replaces the final two years of the Strategic Plan 2017-2022 'Independent Thinking – Shared Ambition'. It sets out a thematic prioritisation of our strategy, as well as the transformative changes to our core operations in response to geopolitical challenges, the escalating climate crisis and accelerating societal and economic pressures associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

UCC 2022 identifies the key strategic priorities for 2021-2022, clustered within five interconnected thematic pillars: Learning and Teaching; Research and Innovation; Student Success; People and Organisational Culture; and Infrastructure and Resources.

Four of these pillars are clearly aligned with four of our existing Strategic Goals. A fifth pillar – Student Success – addresses pressing challenges for our students. Our existing Strategic Goal 3 – Create value for our community through an international outlook and informed and creative engagement on local and global issues – is now woven into and across each of the five pillars of UCC 2022, affirming our commitment to our local, regional and national communities, and to human societies across the globe.   UCC 2022 builds on our strengths in student focus, sustainability, and community and global engagement, to identify actions to respond to the crisis and position UCC for longterm success.

Through the actions identified in UCC 2022 we align with and adopt the recommendations of the EUA-IEP [European Universities Association – Institutional Evaluation Programme] report of 2020, as well as strategic issues emanating from the quality review process. Our ambition, at all times, is to streamline our systems and processes, thereby reducing duplication and fragmentation, while enhancing efficiency and effectiveness, ultimately releasing time and effort towards the delivery of the core academic mission of the University.

Throughout the Covid pandemic, UCC demonstrated significant leadership, agility and responsiveness through its Campus Business Continuity Group, Research Continuity Group and Academic Leadership Forum which enabled the University to deliver on its core mission of teaching and research. The necessary shift to virtual engagement during Covid has given UCC a powerful new set of skills that will remain part of ongoing practices.

During 2022 we will initiate the process to develop our new Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028. In the meantime, UCC 2022 provides a solid platform to progress strategically and manage risk during a period of uncertainty and transition.

On adoption of UCC 2022 by Governing Body, a sub-committee of the University Management Team (UMT) was established for each pillar, with responsibility to draw up implementation and operational plans and oversee progress. Each committee held reporting accountabilities to the University Management Team and President, who have oversight. The committees engage with the Schools, Colleges and Functional Areas relevant to each pillar domain. The plans developed to give effect to strategic |

	priorities establised timelines for their delivery, and progress of the actions is evaluated along these agreed timelines, continuously reviewed and assessed to ensure that they could and can adapt and evolve in response to the ever changing dynamics.
	In line with the re-focus, UCC's institutional risk management processes and risk register were updated accordingly to reflect UCC 2022 both in terms of strategic and operational risks. Risks were managed during the re-focussed strategy implementation, through the normal six-weekly meetings of the Risk Management Committee, input from the University Management Team (chaired by the President), and overseen from a governance perspective by the Governing Body Audit and Risk Committee.
	Note: The limitations on word and character count and other restrictions of this template (such as not allowing hyperlinks) do not allow for the comprehensive elaboration of benchmarking, risk management, learnings and provision of evidence as provided in the self-assessment reports of previous years.

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Section C: Key System Objectives (KSOs)

KSO 1	Providing a strong talent pipeline combining knowledge, skills & employability which responds effectively to the needs of our enterprise, public service and community sectors, both nationally and regionally, and maintains Irish leadership in Europe for skill availability
KSO 1 Summary Statement *Max. 4,200-character limit (550-600 words approx.)*	UCC has made significant progress under KSO 1. In December 2018, the University launched its first Academic Strategy. The Graduate Attributes programme and the development of a Connected Curriculum are two signature projects which have underpinned the delivery of targets set by UCC. The framework of the Academic Strategy positioned UCC to engage with and benefit from a number of national opportunities over the reporting period. UCC was awarded funding under the HEA Innovation and Transformation Programme 2018 for the project entitled "Supporting Student Transitions to develop distinctive graduate attributes". This funding has enabled UCC to develop a range of transitions activities for students which are showing positive impact. Students are demonstrating enhanced values and graduate attributes which enable them to become agile, adaptive and responsive global citizens. This project has been transformative for students in fulfilling their potential across the backdrop of a hugely dynamic and oftentimes volatile economic and societal landscape. The Connected Curriculum Framework introduced by UCC emphasises the holistic development of students through research based, collaborative enquiry and has been designed to prepare students for their future. The framework comprises six distinct interconnected components which are now made visible in the development and revision of curricular offerings. The six components are employability, sustainability, research based teaching, global reach, civic and community engagement and inter/transdisciplinarity. Focusing on the curriculum through this new lens has enabled UCC to strengthen the academic portfolio. The announcement of the Human Capital Initiative (HCI) in late 2019 presented UCC with opportunities to work with enterprise partners on the co-design of new curricular offerings focusing on priority skill needs. With support and guidance from the South West Regional Skills Forum and funding from HCI Pillar One, UCC launch six new skills based postgraduate programmes (381 students registered to date). These programme offerings build on the significant delivery of Springboard Plus programmes which UCC has developed in partnership with enterprise over a number of years. In addition, UCC is engaging in a range of HCI Pillar Three projects embarking on a journey of reform and innovation in programme design and delivery building on best practice nationally and internationally. Projects such as Virtual Labs have provided our students with the opportunity to engage with world class technology reflective of that used by enterprise partners. Working with other HEI's we have already developed new collaborative offerings in the Sustainability in Enterprise project. The iEd Hub project presents

significant opportunity for the Health and Life Sciences sector. These projects provide learnings for broader curriculum development and career enhancement. (For evidence see UCC website)

UCC is a partner in the IUA led HCI project on micro-credentials (MC2) where there is a sectoral approach to establishing a coherent national framework for quality assured and accredited micro credentials. Working with enterprise partners UCC has launched its first micro-credential offerings meeting skill requirements in a more agile and responsive way.

Responding to a national skills and addressing teacher supply challenges (as set out in the Teacher Supply Action Plan) UCC introduced a new BEd Gaeilge in 2020 with approximately 80 students now enrolled.

UCC has been working to maintain Irish Leadership in Europe for skills availability and in this context has been developing a European University. Together with 7 other European universities work on establishing (UNIC) The European University of Post-Industrial Cities has been underway since October 2020. This alliance is creating a European inter-university 'campus', where students, staff and researchers enjoy seamless mobility (physical, virtual or blended) to study, train, teach, do research, work or share services at cooperating partner institutions. The learnings from this project will inform and enhance future curricular offerings.

Strategic Priority 1.1	Key Performance Indicators	Pre-compact Baseline 2018	Overall Target 2018-2021	August 2021 KPI Value *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
Strengthen world-ready graduate skills by engaging collaboratively with employers through the Regional Skills Forum and other forums, creating innovative interdisciplinary programmes across the Colleges of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Science; Business and Law;	# of Undergraduate Programmes with work placement	62 UG Programmes: 39 with compulsory placement 19 with optional placement	Undergraduate programmes with work placement to be introduced by 2021: 2018/19 BSc Data Science and Analytics 2018/19 BA (Hons) (Psychology and Computing) 2019/20 BAgrSc (Hons) – Bachelor of Agricultural Science Work to develop 4 year concurrent education degrees BEd Gaeilge (potentially for	64 UG Programmes (entry routes) 34 compulsory 21 optional Introduced 2018: BSc Data Science & Analytics BA Psychology & Computing Introduced 2019: BAgrSc Agricultural Science Introduced 2020:

Medicine and Health; Science, Engineering and Food Science and introducing degree structures that embed greater opportunities for extended work placements.			2020/21); and BEd Science (potentially for 2021/22)	BEd Gaeilge
	# of students participating in work-based, clinical and international placements and % of undergraduate programmes offering such placements	4,300 students across 90% of our undergraduate programmes participated in work-based, clinical and international placements in 2017	Increase – no specific target	2018/19 - 4,132 2019/20 - 4,356 2020/21 - 4,178 * * Reduced numbers are linked to COVID preventing travel abroad in particular
	AACBS accreditation	No baseline	Achieve and maintain high status international accreditation and international recognition including advancement of Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation for Cork University Business School.	The AACSB Initial Accreditation Panel visit took place in person at UCC campus 6-9 Feb 2022. The panel's recommendation will be considered by AACSB Board in April. If attained CUBS will join the world top 2%.
	# of new entrants and range of subjects offered	No baseline	Increase student intake and the range of subjects offered, in line with public need.	CAO Intakes: 2019 - 3,636 2020 - 3,892 2021 - 3,882 (as reported in November each year) Intake spread across a range of 64 CAO entry routes. 6 new

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				programmes introduced since 2018. Source: ITS System
SP 1.1 Commentary *Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)*	UCC has exceeded planned achievements under KSO 1. As outlined above UCC engaged with and was successful in securing funding under a number of national funding calls which enabled UCC to deliver beyond the initial expectations. UCC completed a Thematic Review of Work Placements. The recommendations of the International Advisory Panel placed emphasised broadening the focus from work placements to work-integrated learning (WIL). A project has commenced which will enhance career development and increase opportunities and employability-related self-efficacy for students. UCC has commenced the rollout of "InPlace" a new placement system. A positive and progressive step, this will align all work placement activity in one over-arching university platform. Cork University Business School has gone from strength to strength. The School launched its strategic vision 'Shaping Leaders for a Sustainable Future', articulating the ambition to create responsible business leaders who will innovate to maximise the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit. Deepened relationship with the Irish Management Institute and the process of integrating IMI into the University's academic systems, structures and policies have served to promote greater alignment and helped to realise opportunities for collaboration across UCC and IMI, including with CUBS. Evidence: see UCC/CUBS website			**Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Green
KSO 2:	**Creating rich opportunities for national and international engagement which enhances the learning environment and delivers a strong bridge to enterprise and the wider community**			
KSO 2 Summary Statement	During the period 2018-2021 UCC made considerable progress enhancing international opportunities and engagement. Unfortunately, the COVID Pandemic had a particularly disruptive effect on the international domain: standard actions (and indicators), like in/outbound mobility, international recruitment, and institutional collaboration, were impossible under the prevailing conditions. Although AY 2020/21 was certainly less measurably successful in terms of internationalisation metrics, this was a sharp			

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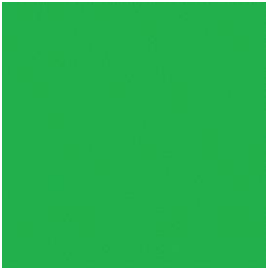|	
Max. 4,200-character limit (550-600 words approx.)	reversal of the trendlines from the previous five years, and in AY2021/22 UCC has made a full recovery to meet or exceed 2019/20 levels of mobility, intake, and enrolment.
	Student headcount metrics notwithstanding, UCC's infrastructure for internationalisation has been markedly enhanced and several large-scale initiatives have launched during the period under review. These projects are very much in line with KSO2 and the strategic priorities:
	Following external review and analysis, GB approved the creation of a VP Global Engagement role (2019/20). The post is in recruitment with an appointment expected in May 2022. The role will galvanise international thinking and anchor strategic priorities for the international domain.
	The Academic Strategy and Connected Curriculum continue to inform UCC's Strategy, and have benefited all students, including international students. Initiatives like Graduate Attributes and Transitions In are concrete examples of enhanced, co-curricular learning. Launch of a unified, in-house CRM and application engine "UCC Apply" (2020/21, expanded in 2021/22) improves global reach and access by providing a consistent and efficient platform for recruitment and admissions. UCC Data Hub provides detailed searchable data on intake and enrolment by level, domicile, region, and other parameters.
	Ongoing participation since 2019 in the UNIC consortium (part of the European Universities Initiative) has established significant new collaboration—including proposed joint-degrees, micro-credentials, large-scale mobility both under the Erasmus umbrella and otherwise, and academic-community interface in the City Labs).
	The necessary shift to virtual engagement has given us a powerful new set of skills for global outreach that will remain part of our ongoing practices. Virtual recruiting fairs allowed us to reach different markets and segments with lower costs and environmental impact. Hybrid academic course delivery advanced our ability to engage students asynchronously and to teach/assess students remotely (under carefully managed schemes). The digital prospectus and virtual open days improved how we promote UCC both locally and internationally. Campus Connect created a peer to peer platform for incoming students to connect with current students.
	UCC is developing a custom-built, state of the art Business School building in Cork City Centre. The building will strengthen the capacity of Cork University Business School (CUBS) to provide world class business education and research to the region, in association with industry. The University's strategic commitment to the project aligns to national policy priorities as evidenced through Higher Education Strategic Infrastructure Fund HESIF financial support .The changing HE landscape and the evolving nature of the learning and teaching experience has recast our approach to the building and presented CUBS with an opportunity to redesign the future of business education. Early engagement with our design team, led by RKD architects, informs this discussion. The project is currently at Stage 1: Conceptual Design /Feasibility Study and it is anticipated that the project will progress to Stage2: Detailed Design in May 2022.

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Strategic Priority 2.1	Key Performance Indicators	Pre-compact Baseline 2018	Overall Target 2018-2021	August 2021 KPI Value *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
Embed internationalisation more deeply and sustainably into the university's identity by increasing the quantity, quality and diversity of international students, enabling the increased internationalisation of the curriculum and strengthening the culture of global mobility, inbound and outbound, for students and staff. Increase the number of students studying abroad in the EU Erasmus programme and with exchange partners outside the EU in UCC's wide range of partner institutions worldwide.	# of students studying abroad in the Erasmus+ programme and with exchange partners.	2017/18: 378	500 in 2021	18/19 - 415 19/20 - 346 20/21 - 220*
	# of international students	2017/18 – UCC had 3,410 international students representing 16.1% of the student population	3,810	2018/19 3,802 2019/20 3,863 2020/21 2,630 * *Reduced numbers are due to COVID and associated travel restrictions. For 2021/22 the number is at 3,994 meeting the overall target. Source: ITS records system

SP 2.1 Commentary	The 2020 target was not met due to a higher than normal attrition rate as students opted out of studying abroad due to issues including exam failure, financial challenges and personal issues. The 2021 target was not met due to COVID-19.			Colour rating for this Strategic Priority: Amber
Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)	UCC provided significant support to international students during the pandemic. In order to ensure safe and compliant arrival of international students during the pandemic, UCC joined the HE sector in delivering a Greet and Transfer service for International Student that included processing, and communicating arrival details for UCC students (new and returning), greeting and guiding arrivals to transport at Dublin Airport and providing transport to UCC, providing pre-arranged taxi transfer for Cork Airport arrivals and coordinating and administering ad hoc services for those arriving as part of a large cohort or outside of the dates of the formal service.			
	UCC also launched a "Transitions In" programme to orient students safely during the pandemic. This was an online onboarding and development platform targeted at international students. Where circumstances required, online delivery of academic modules was deployed, with an eye to minimising the challenges of extreme remote learning.			
Strategic Priority 2.2 Drive the commercialisation of research and technology transfer, through mechanisms such as licensing, patents, creating spin-out companies and supporting external start-up companies. Establish additional investment-ready high potential spin-out companies	**Key Performance Indicators**	**Pre-compact Baseline 2018**	**Overall Target 2018-2021**	**August 2021 KPI Value** *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
	# of high potential spinout companies from UCC research	UCC established 13 spin-out companies in the 4 years up to and including 2017	Establish 12 additional investment-ready high potential spin-out companies between 2018 and 2021	Between Jan 2019 and Dec 2021, UCC established 13 new Spinout companies [as defined by Knowledge Transfer Ireland(KTI)]
	# of licences, options and assignments (LOAs)	26 LOA's in 2017	31 in 2021	Between Jan 2019 and Dec 2021, UCC established 111 new LOA agreements [as defined by KTI] including 45 in 2021.

between 2018 and 2021.				Source: KTI 2021
SP 2.2 Commentary *Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)*	Licensing UCC has delivered a strong performance in terms of licensing intellectual property (IP) arising from its research activities, especially in the context of the global COVID pandemic. In the 3 year period, UCC had 111 LOAs with industry. This is the highest of any Irish University (source Knowledge Transfer Ireland "KTI Review And Annual Knowledge Transfer Survey 2018-2020"). 30% of LOAs were to SMEs of which 50% were UCC spinouts. The resultant gross licensing income for the financial years Oct 2018-Sept 2021 was over €1.5m. This included three 6-figure payments from multi-national companies (MNCs) with whom the University enjoys extensive research collaboration links with companies of all scales. This supports the thesis that sponsored research drives licensing outcomes not only in terms of the quantity of licensing activity but also its quality, and that active relationship management is key to success. Spin-out Companies Across the three year period spin-out company creation was strong at UCC with 13 such companies established, exceededing our target. In the period 3 companies were acquired by international MNCs bringing investment and high value jobs to the region. In this period, UCC's IGNITE graduate programme supported 52 start-up companies and GatewayUCC Incubation Centre hosted 14 companies.			**Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Green
KSO 3:	**Excellent research, development and innovation that has relevance, growing engagement with external partners and impact for the economy and society and strengthens our standing to become an Innovation Leader in Europe.**			
KSO 3 Summary Statement	Building on UCC's long-standing commitment to outstanding research connected to learning (ref. KSO-1), the institution comprehensively addresses KSO-3 within the institutional Strategic Plan (2017-2022), the Research & Innovation Strategic Plan (2017-2022), the Academic Strategy and as set out in Pillar Two of the recent institutional strategic pivot, UCC 2022 – Delivering a Connected University (https://www.ucc.ie/ucc2022strategy). UCC is fully committed to the enhancement of key areas of research strength, while			

Max. 4,200-character limit (550-600 words approx.)	also identifying and empowering emerging areas. In addition, excellent research performance by our researcher community will be supported, rewarded and incentivised.

Strategic initiatives put in place to achieve this goal are delivering. UCC is one of the best-funded research universities in Ireland with research investment of €96 million secured in 2020/21, despite the challenging environment arising from the COVID pandemic. Regarding research income sourced from the enterprise sector, UCC's performance in this area is the highest nationally (Source: Knowledge Transfer Ireland Annual Report 2020) reflecting the institution's long track record of effective collaboration with key industry partners. The direct impact of relevant research outcome is evident by the commercialisation metrics summarized under KSO-2. Analysis of the citation impact performance of our scholarly outputs reveals that UCC has performed significantly above the world average, with year-on-year increases over the last six years and is currently the leading Irish institution for citation impact (Times Higher Education World University Ranking, 2022). Highlighting UCC's global reach and the significant interdisciplinary focus of our research, the UCC research community now collaborate with 5,026 research-performing entities across 140 countries, generating over 9,500 publications (Source: SciVal, March 2022).

Since its establishment in 2007, success in European Research Council (ERC) funding programmes is recognized as a global benchmark of research excellence. To help improve UCC's performance in this presitigous programme, an ERC Enhancement Strategy and Support Plan was put in place in 2020 and, over the last 12 months, UCC have secured 6 ERC awards valued at over €11 million, our best ever performance. UCC's success in engaging competitively with all EU funding programmes was also reflected in the European Research Ranking tables – in 2020, UCC was ranked 33rd out of hundreds of institutions across Europe and is the number 1 ranked institution in Ireland.

In December 2021, a major new initiative - UCC Futures Institutes (https://www.ucc.ie/en/futures/) - was launched with the goal of connecting research across disciplinary boundaries, providing an environment of creativity, curiosity and critical thinking that generates knowledge and translates research into sustainable benefits and value for society. This initiative, with significant institutional investment, will seek to build a foundation for economic, societal and cultural resilience and prosperity, creating and securing our future through excellence in research. It will bring new research talent to UCC and empower our research community to achieve their ambitions and nurture the next generation of research leaders.

UCC'S colleges led seminars, information sessions and workshops focus on developing early Career Researchers and new Research Leaders and provided specific input in supporting funding applications for new Research Leaders. For example, to incentivise and recognise high impact publications and research excellence the College of Business and Law Research Awards are granted annually and the Law School is introducing a new Research Strategy which is targeting high impact publications. |

A further example sees CUBS establishing the CUBS Journal List which outlines leading, international and high impact journals that should be targeted for publication. The total number of outputs in these journals has grown significantly since its introduction from 26 in 2017-18 to 58 in 2020-21. The Law School is introducing a new Research Strategy which is targeting high impact publications.

Strategic Priority 3.1 Position UCC as the location of choice to attract and retain the most talented researchers at all career stages, from early career PhD students to world leading Principal Investigators and provide research and infrastructural supports that nurture the next generation of research leaders.	Key Performance Indicators	Pre-compact Baseline 2018	Overall Target 2018-2021	August 2021 KPI Value *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
	# of postgraduate research enrolments in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs	PhD enrolments: 667 (2017/18)	867 in 2021	840 (for the reporting period 1 Sept 2020 – 31 Aug 2021) (Source: UCC ITS Students Record System)
	# of funded postdoctoral positions in disciplines aligned to enterprise and other national needs	222 (May 2018)	310 in 2021	244 (as of 31 Aug 2021) (Source: UCC Human Resource Core Information System)
	Human Resources Excellence in Research Award from the European Commission	No baseline	Renew UCC's Human Resources Excellence in Research Award from the European Commission in 2021 (subject to European Commission assessor availability).	UCC successfully renewed the HR Excellence in Research Award for the second time.
SP 3.1 Commentary	Although the target number of postgraduate research enrolments and postdoctoral positions is below the overall target, they represent a significant uplift from the 2018 base line figures. The PhD enrolment outcome is also significantly higher than the figure reported for 2020 (701). Interruptions to research programmes as a consequence of the COVID pandemic has undoubtedly been a factor in this overall outcome, particularly for research projects funded or co-funded by			**Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Amber

Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)	enterprise (the basis for this metric and a key source of research income for projects that recruit postdoctoral researchers). It should also be noted that the national research funding environment does not prioritise the financial support of PhD studentships. The IRC PhD Scholarship Programme, a key source of funding in this regard, represents a minor component of the overall national R&D spend.	
	As called out in the 'UCC 2022 – Delivering a Connected University', the development of a Strategic Fund to specifically support PhD students and postdoctoral researchers will be essential to ensure the objective to expand these metrics is achieved (Action 2.2.2). This project is now at an advanced stage and a Business Plan to enable the Fund is currently being finalised and will be submitted for University management approval shortly.	
	UCC successfully renewed the HR Excellence in Research Award for the second time.	

Strategic Priority 3.2 Increase UCC's capacity to deliver impact in society, the economy and the community, and meet national economic, societal and cultural development needs through the coherent delivery of innovation and cocreation initiatives.	Key Performance Indicators	Pre-compact Baseline 2018	Overall Target 2018-2021	August 2021 KPI Value *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
	Amount (€) in funding from industry sources.	In 2016/17, UCC secured €10.6 million from industry sources, a 123% increase over 5 years	€12m by 2021	€11.3M (Source: UCC's Agresso Financial Management System)
	# of research projects with enterprise	In 2016/17, UCC initiated 106 research projects with the enterprise sector	110	476
	Horizon 2020: # of successful applications and overall value (€)	As of March 2018, UCC researchers have secured 107 Horizon 2020 awards (38 as coordinator and 69 as partner).	Increase the total funding secured under H2020 to €100m	As of Aug. 2021, UCC researchers secured over €118 million of investment from 237 Horizon 2020 awards.

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		The total financial drawdown amounts to €54 million.		Institutional-set target: €110.3 million.
SP 3.2 Commentary *Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)*	Over the 7 years of Horizon 2020, UCC researchers secured over €118 million of investment from 237 awards. This achievement significantly surpassed the ambitious €110.3 million target set out in UCC's Horizon 2020 Action Plan. UCC's success is also reflected in the European Research Ranking tables – in 2020, UCC was ranked 33rd out of hundreds of institutions across Europe and is the number one ranked institution in Ireland. To help improve UCC's performance in the highly prestigious European Research Council (ERC) funding calls, an ERC Enhancement Strategy and Support Plan was put into action by UCC in 2020 - in the last 12 months, indicative of the plan's success, UCC have secured 6 ERC awards, our best ever performance. The amount of funding secured from enterprise sources in 2020/2021 is €11.3 million, slightly less than the projected target (€11.6M) but a 11% increase on the previous year. The number of research projects with enterprise also went up from 468 (110 is an error) to 476 in 2021. A key mitigating factor has been the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on institutional research activity, and this was particularly evident in the appetite of our industry partners to initiate new research projects during the relevant period. However, as evidenced by the metrics reported here, recovery of enterprise support for UCC research is well underway.			**Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Green
KSO 4:	**Significantly improves the equality of opportunity through Education and Training and recruits a student body that reflects the diversity and social mix of Ireland's population**			
KSO 4 Summary Statement	UCC's commitment to KSO 4 is evident in the most recent University strategy document UCC 2022. Action 3.1.1 commits to offer an equitable experience for all students and Action 3.2.2 aims to align support for our diverse student body with changing needs. There have been several significant developments in the reporting period. A Head of Access was appointed as part of a new organisational structure ensuring a strategic approach to the delivery of Access Services. In December 2019, the Access team			

Max. 4,200-character limit (550-600 words approx.)	relocated to the newly opened Hub building with purpose-built offices and student consultation spaces. This improved the visibility of Access services enhancing the student experience.
	The Autism Friendly Initiative saw the implementation of several initiatives to make the University as a whole more Autism friendly. A dedicated "Calm Zone" is now open on the main campus, providing a place of respite and calm for students. The Autism & Uni toolkit is being used by current and prospective students to support the transition into UCC. Staff can undertake a digital badge in Autism awareness.
	The Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH) has provided additional capacity enabling positive change. UCC's success in securing funding in all three streams of PATH provides coordination and integration of new and emerging initiatives across the Southern Cluster and within UCC. The successful collaboration across the Cluster resulted in the approval of a continuation of PATH funding in 2021.
	UCC was delighted to receive case study funds for the "Inclusive Education & Employment Pathways" project. This funding is being utilised to develop rights-based, inclusive education programmes for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (PWID). The anticipated outcomes for the project are expanded inclusive higher education opportunities for PWID, enhanced progression pathways for graduates with intellectual disabilities through Internships/Education/Training Progression Pathways; bespoke online training in Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Higher Education for academic staff from across the HEI sector; Digital Portfolio of Inclusive Teaching and Learning Resources for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Higher Education co-created with PWID available to HEI sector; Increased capacity in and awareness of inclusive education among academics and students supported by dissemination activities showcasing core learnings from the project.
	UCC is very proud of its achievements in supporting Access students, HEA graduate data shows that UCC has the highest number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds achieving first-class honours (16%) and 2H1 (62%) across the University sector. UCC successfully pivoted its model of student support during the pandemic. Supports for students are now offered using a hybrid model.
	During 2021 the laptop loan scheme was launched and provided vital technology support for students. UCC ensured devices got to students in need as quickly as possible arranging collection or delivery as appropriate.
	The impact of the pandemic meant that student finance became a key concern and the additional Student Assistance Funding provided much needed financial support to students and was supplemented by UCC's COVID Hardship funding and philanthropic support. Student Support Staff worked collaboratively with the Students Union to implement a responsive range of supports for students.
	The "Inclusive UCC" programme commenced in early 2021. The project is investigating, disseminating and promoting good practices of inclusive teaching across the University. This includes Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and digital accessibility.

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The Employability Programme for students with Disabilities expanded during 20/21 through philanthropic support. The programme aims to increase the number of students with disabilities securing post-graduation employment. 14 employers in the Cork region are offering mentoring and internships to over 100 students with disabilities. Following the success of the Level 6 Leadership in the Community programme (completed by 22 Traveller women in 19/20), 19 learners progressed to Level 7.

Strategic Priority 4.1 Build on UCC's Access strengths to date by further widening participation and enhancing access for all students, fostering an inclusive environment that mainstreams diversity and equality.	Key Performance Indicators	Pre-compact Baseline 2018	Overall Target 2018-2021	August 2021 KPI Value *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
	% Intake of Students through Access Admissions routes	2017/18: 23%	25%	23% UCC maintained its position of 23% undergraduate intake via Access Admission routes. While the % intake remained constant, there was an increase of approx 250 Access students (overall intake increased).

SP 4.1 Commentary *Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)*	UCC is performing very well in widening participation, while still not meeting its ambitious target of 25% undergraduate full-time intake via Access routes. Data from the HEA Systems Performance KPI dashboard show that UCC has 16.6% Students with Disabilities, slightly higher than the national figure of 16.5% and Mature Students at 7.8% are again higher than the 7% national average. While the percentage of students from disadvantaged backgrounds attending UCC is lower than the 10% national average at 6%, UCC has shown small but significant growth with an increase from 5% in 17/18 to 7% in 19/20. When the HEA DIS data 2019/20 is analysed further, it highlights that 10% of Disadvantaged new entrants over 305 points attend UCC, compared to 6% in both UCD and TCD and 5% in MTU, demonstrating that UCC is enrolling a high percentage of students from Disadvantaged background within the points range of the institution. The 2020/21 intake saw growth in Mature and QQI numbers, stabilisation in DARE numbers and a decline in HEAR admissions. This decline in HEAR admissions was a national trend, a direct impact	Colour rating for this Strategic Priority: Amber

	of the school closures at CAO application stage in early 2020. The intake numbers measured here are only reflective of full-time undergraduate intake and they do not take into account figures such as the Traveller Women engaged in part time programmes.

KSO 5:	**Demonstrates consistent improvement in the quality of the learning environment with a close eye to international best practice through a strong focus on quality & academic excellence**
KSO 5 Summary Statement *Max. 4,200-character limit (550-600 words approx.)*	In addition to the standard activities of undergoing periodic statutory quality reviews and having in place a robust external examiners system, UCC very deliberately cultivates a culture of promoting engagement with quality and academic excellence: from annual recognition of teaching excellence awards (with nominations accepted from peers, students and alumni) to competitive internal funding calls for small/medium/large grants. In 2021, UCC published its first Assessment Framework and regularly generates new and revises existing teaching and learning policy. UCC's (online) PG Certificate in Teaching & Learning remains one of the largest PG programmes in UCC, and UCC retains the highest percentage of staff with accredited qualifications in teaching and learning in higher education. Throughout 2018-2021, UCC nurtured existing and grew new partnerships in teaching and quality related projects with external HE parties from the IUA to the EUA to universities globally. The University is engaged in a capactiy building project for higher education quality in Haiti and a multi-partner project in South America for quality assurance development. Its President Emeritus, Professor Michael Murphy, is Chair of the EUA's Learning & Teaching Steering Committee. The Vice-President for Learning & Teaching is a Board Member of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning since 2019 which has supported close to €1m in teaching enhancement projects in UCC over the last two years. Its Office of the VP for Learning & Teaching staff have led and participated in several EUA 'Thematic Peer Review' groups from topics such as "Active Learning" to "Leadership and Organisation for Teaching & Learning at European Universities". UCC is since 2020 a member of the UNIC consortium of Post-Industrial Cities. UCC, via The ASEM Education and Research Hub for Lifelong Learning (ASEM LLL Hub) which ACE is leading 2020-2025, puts Cork at an innovation nexus as it links the city to a research and policy agenda spanning Asia and Europe, focusing on lifelong learning, an acknowledged key driver of innovation and promulgated as a universal right through the United Nations' Global Commission on the Future of Work. UCC's Skills Centre, a unit of Office of the Vice President for Learning & Teaching, works closely with students to develop academic writing and study skills, offering drop-in and scheduled group and 1:1 sessions, and in 2021 began a substantial piece of work on enhancing students' understanding of and engagement with academic integrity matters. The student voice is valued at UCC, with student representation on all relevant teaching & learning related decision-making and advisory bodies and Office of the Vice

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President for Learing & Teaching has hosted for the past several years a number of paid student interns from the IUA and Associates from the National Forum.

UCC continues to perform extemely well in Springboard+ and HCI type funding calls, and is a national leader in digital badge and micro-credentials design and delivery. It is a national leader also in the integration of the UN's SDGs in the curriculum.

Strategic Priority 5.1 Strengthen the Continuous Professional Development Framework for all academic staff at UCC	Key Performance Indicators	Pre-compact Baseline 2018	Overall Target 2018-2021	August 2021 KPI Value *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
	# of Digital Badge in UDL awarded	No baseline	Enhance staff development by extending digital badging to include a badge in Universal Design for Learning.	57 staff completed the Digital Badge in UDL between 1st Sept 2018 - 31st Aug 2021 Source: UCC Teaching & Learning Office
	# of publishable papers per year	No baseline	Strengthen the integration of research, teaching and learning through supporting staff research and scholarly output in relevant disciplinary journals and other international fora on the basis of 6 publishable papers per year.	24 papers between 1st Sept 2018 - 31st Aug 2021 (please note the MA did not run 2019-2020).
	% and # of staff who teach that have achieved the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education	70% of staff who teach have achieved the Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.	No specific target set	118 academic staff took the PG Cert between 1st Sept 2018 - 31st Aug 2021. 51% of UCC academic staff to date have completed the PG Cert.

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		Based on March 2018 benchmark data (research by UCC staff in the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (CIRTL)) UCC is the only higher education institution in the country with a fully integrated, online postgraduate certificate and diploma in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education.		Source: UCC Teaching & Learning Office
SP 5.1 Commentary *Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)*	The Centre for digital education supported staff around the best practice application of technology to education. 'Teach Digi' is an innovative series of UCC digital educational training supports delivered in conjunction with IUA's 'Enhancing Digital Teaching & Learning' project. Informed by the project pillar of "Students as Partners" a project strand is a Podcast series called "Ag Caint", Irish for "In Conversation". This podcast series is underpinned by our five pillars of student feedback and offers a wide range of conversations with academic and professional services staff, and with their students, reflecting the lived and shared experiences during the pandemic. Training sessions, Q&A's, roundtable events, and cross-department collaborations run alongside the podcast series, ensuring reach and impact across the University. The podcasts, pre-recorded content and the recorded live sessions are now live as staff resources, all curated since the onset of the pandemic in 2020 and have had a total of 4,037 downloads and 1787 unique views. In addition, the CDE manages the administration of digital badges within UCC. Up to 31 August 21, 83 different digital badges had been issued to 2,679 recipients across all four colleges. This included both staff and students. Of these, 68% had been 'accepted' meaning they had been downloaded and used online.			**Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Green
Strategic Priority 5.2	**Key Performance Indicators**	**Pre-compact Baseline 2018**	**Overall Target 2018-2021**	**August 2021 KPI Value**

Implement an improved and comprehensive quality enhancement approach at UCC				*Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
	Roll out of evaluation framework for Academic Quality Reviews	N/a	Develop and implement evaluation framework for effectiveness of all academic quality reviews 2020/2021.	Plans have been re-framed due to COVID requiring a re-design of the review process to online. Review schedule maintained with some reviews delayed. Annual quality report, to GB puplished online.
	# of Case Studies accessible internally and disseminated externally	UCC has identified its benchmark and comparator universities as follows: University of Southampton, University of Edinburgh, Leiden University, Aarhus University, University of Otago, Queen's University Belfast, NUIG, UCD, and TCD.	By 2020/21 a repository of 25 Case Studies accessible internally and disseminated externally to support excellence in the student learning environment.	Currently 15 case studies accessible online with more being finalised. Source: UCC Quality Enhancement Office
	# of Internally benchmarked and peer validated published Case Studies of Good Practice	No baseline	Internal benchmarking and peer validation of 6-8 published Case Studies of Good Practice for enhancing students' learning per year.	Currently 3-4 Case Studies of Good Practice on average each year are published. This will rise as delayed reviews are completed in the coming academic periods.
	# of Digital Badges for Quality Peer Reviewers	No baseline	In 2018/19 Digital Badges for Quality Peer Reviewers rolled out to recognise students' engagement as Reviewers, awarding 8-10 badges per year.	A total of 13 Digital Badges have been awarded to student reviewers. Due to a delay of certain reviews due to COVID, this number is expected to

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			increase over the next reporting period.
	Roll out of Student Quality Portal and # of students participating in quality processes	No baseline	In 2020/21 evaluate student participation in quality, and update in light of international practices and outcomes achieved at UCC.	Student Portal created with access to information and guidance on how students can participate in quality at UCC. Evaluation of student participation ongoing.
SP 5.2 Commentary *Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.)*	The emergency response of UCC to enable the continuity of academic activities necessitated a pragmatic prioritisation in the delivery of core teaching and research, without losing sight of core responsibilities to quality. This resulted in a delay of a small number of quality reviews which have been rescheduled. This has had a subsequent impact on the number of Case Studies available and Digital Badges Awarded for the period of this report. Two thematic reviews were completed (Work Placements and Teaching & Assessing with Technology). Both centred on evaluating the student learning experience as well as operational excellence to identify areas of good practice and for enhancement. Reports from both reviews are available on the QEU website. The creation of a Student Portal to help support and recognise the role of students in the review process is a key milestone. It is a resource to drive engagement with students in the quality process at UCC and provide content to help guide them how to be involved and represent peers on a review panel. Supporting this, is the implementation of the Student Reviewer Digital Badge which recognises the significant role our student reviewers play in the review process. Equally important are the many students who engage as stakeholders during review panel interviews or through targeted survey feedback providing student insight for a review.	**Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Amber	

KSO 6:	Demonstrates consistent improvement in governance, leadership and operational excellence.

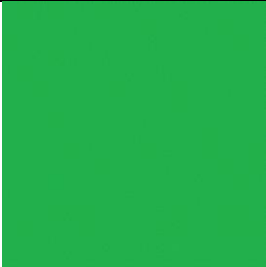| **KSO 6 Summary Statement** *Max. 4,200-character limit (550-600 words approx.)*	The University has continued to implement governance and leadership improvements through the implementation of the recommendations in an external review of Governing Body and the Code of Governance for Irish Universitites 2019. The effectiveness of the Governing Body oversight has been improved through revisions to the conduct of business ensuring a focus on strategy, finance and performance. The operation of the 5 GB Committees has been improved through revision of the terms of reference, development of work plans aligned to the strategic plan, competency based filling of vacancies and improved gender balance.
	Throughout the COVID pandemic, UCC demonstrated significant leadership through its Campus Business Continuity Group, Research Continuity Group and Academic Leadership Forum which enabled the University to deliver on its core mission of teaching and research .
	The University continues to improve its policy framework including a new Conflict of Interest Policy and dedicated website; and considerable updates to the Disclosures Policy in light of new legislation. Risk management continues to be further embedded with a revision of the Risk Management Policy undertaken in 2020, development of a risk appetite statement for the activities of the University. UCC has a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit within the Office of the Deputy President and Registrar, which implements a progressive EDI strategy aligned to the recommendations of the HEA Gender Equality Review. In December 2019, the Governing Body approved a Gender Equality Action Plan 2020-24.
	Ten Schools have unit-level gender action plans. Sixteen more plan Athena SWAN submissions by 2023. UCC 2022 commits to implement and resource UCC's Athena SWAN action plan.
	Maternity leave cover is now provided for all academics. Targeted measures are in place for the professional development of female postdoctoral researchers e.g. Aurora and Aspiring Leader Programmes.
	UCC undertook a comprehensive review of Academic Promotion Schemes. Revised Regulations in relation to promotion schemes (Senior Lecturer and Professor (Scale 2)) were approved and implemented in 2019/20. In 2018, UCC incorporated gender balanced Promotions Boards, comprehensive briefing sessions for applicants, mentoring for female staff and mandatory Unconscious Bias and Gender Equality training for Promotions Board Members and Heads of School. Following the assessment processes, 45% of female applicants were successful in attaining Promotion to Senior Lecturer and 48% of female applicants were successful in attaining promotion to Professor (Scale 2).
	UCC is committed to improving gender balance in applicants shortlisted for interview. Measures to ensure maximum participation of the underrepresented gender at application stage include guidelines to combat gender stereotyping in advertising and review of candidate packs to emphasise engagement with equality and diversity considerations. All recruitment packs now include an updated equal opportunities statement.

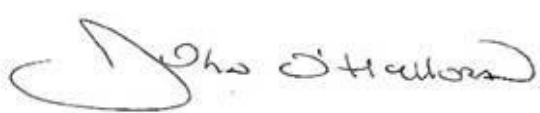University College Cork, Self-Evaluation Report

	Academic unit heads received training in 2019 and 2020 as part of the revised Senior Lecturer and Professor (Scale 2) promotions schemes, to highlight their responsibilities regarding advancing gender equality. Evidence of leadership in advancing equality is now also an essential, explicit criterion for promotion to Senior Lecturer and Professor Scale 2.
	The four module EDI in HE online training programme is available to all staff since May 2021.

| Strategic Priority 6.1

Implement the recommendations of the HEA Gender Equality Review | Key Performance Indicators | Pre-compact Baseline 2018 | Overall Target 2018-2021 | August 2021 KPI Value

Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | # and level of Athena Swan Awards | No baseline | Submission of three departmental applications for Athena Swan annually. | 11 departmental applications submitted, in addition to successful institutional renewal (bronze)(2019). |
| | Roll out and engagement with Equality Data collection | N/a | Comprehensive Equality Data collection system developed. | UCC's Equality Data committee, & EDI Unit are developing an EDI Data Strategy. The appointment of an EDI Data Analyst has been approved on a permanent basis. |

| SP 6.1 Commentary

Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.) | Athena Swan: 3 departmental awards were submitted in 2018/19 (2 successful), 3 in 2019/20 (all successful) and 5 in 2020/21 (2 at Silver level)(4 submissions successful). UCC now holds 10 bronze departmental Athena SWAN awards. Four submissions are planned for 2022, and six annually for 2023 and 2024.

Following an external review of Governing Body (GB) effectiveness in February 2019, all GB committees and their associated terms of reference have been reviewed. The University has renamed the GB Committee on Staff to the People Committee which has an oversight role in the development and implementation of the University's equality, diversity and inclusion strategies | **Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Green |
|---|---|---|

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	and policies. The university has a dedicated Equality Committee which reports to the People Committee annually.			

Strategic Priority 6.2 Implement an improved, effective, transparent and accountable governance model and culture within the university	**Key Performance Indicators**	**Pre-compact Baseline 2018**	**Overall Target 2018-2021**	**August 2021 KPI Value** *Max. 210-character limit (30 words approx.)*
	# of recommendations implemented	No baseline	Deliver on all the recommendations as set out in the Public Accounts Committee Report on the Examination of the Financial Statements for the Third Level Sector by 2021.	UCC is compliant with recommendations as set out in PAC report.
	% Staff informed of obligations under SiPO and Ethics in Public Office legislation	No baseline	100% staff fully aware of their obligations under Standards in Public Office and Ethics in Public Office legislation, and the requirement to declare any real or perceived conflict of interest	Annual process carried out in January 2021 to inform Designated Directors and staff in Designated Positions of Employment of their obligations. A website is in place with information and forms.
SP 6.2 Commentary	UCC has a strong focus on effective, transparent and accountable governance. Significant work has taken place to ensure compliance with the Code of Governance for Irish Universities 2019. The revised Disclosures Policy was approved by Governing Body in June 2021. Conflict of Interest training has been provided to management team and work is now underway to communicate this			**Colour rating for this Strategic Priority:** Green

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| Max. 1,400-character limit (200 words approx.) | training across the University. The Risk Management Framework was enhanced by the addition of a risk maturity model and functional area self-assessment process and the Risk Management Committee terms of reference was updated to incorporate the principles of the Code of Governance. Legal costs are kept under review and are reported annually to the HEA. All material governance matters are advised to the HEA. A review of compliance of University subsidiaries with the newly published Code of Governance for Subsidiaries of Irish Universities 2022 and an external review of Governing Body and its Committees are planned for 2022. | |

Section D: Signature

Note: This section should be signed by the President or on behalf of the President.

Name of signatory	John O'Halloran
Title	President, University College Cork
Signature	
Date	8 April 2022