

**Mission Based Performance Compact**  
**University College Dublin**  
*And*  
**The Higher Education Authority**  
*Strategic Dialogue Cycle 3 – June 2016*  
*Commentary*



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## OVERVIEW

This document sets out some key points which UCD wishes to make in addition to submitting the completed Strategic Dialogue, Cycle 3 – Self-Evaluation Report. This document is broken down by priority area with brief commentary on key elements of UCD’s progress. In addition, and as requested by the HEA, commentary on the following areas is also included:

- Implementation of the transitions agenda (*This text is also included in the Self-Evaluation Report Document but is duplicated here for ease of reference*)
- Efforts to improve retention rates; (*This text is also included in the Self-Evaluation Report Document but is duplicated here for ease of reference*)
- Systems and workload management.

It should be noted clearly that this document is not intended to provide a comprehensive overview of all aspects of UCD performance over the past year but rather supports the Strategic Dialogue, Cycle 3 – Self-Evaluation Report and identifies some key points. UCD would be delighted to discuss any of the elements of this report with the HEA.

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## REGIONAL CLUSTERS

### *EDUCATION*

The Joint Programme Development framework has enabled the development of new joint programmes between UCD and TCD in graduate study areas of common interest. Specifically, an MSc in Comparative Social Change which will run from September 2016, with plans for other graduate programmes in the pipeline. Institutions have chosen to take a bottom-up approach using the joint framework as an enabling mechanism.

The relationship between UCD and its recognised Colleges continues to develop. NCAD and IADT are part of the regional cluster and the collaboration both bilaterally and trilaterally continues to develop. Difficulties in aligning of academic calendars, and other processes limits the scope for widespread embedding of shared programme activity, particularly at undergraduate level but given the differences in focus, this is not a significant issue as we are serving quite distinct categories of students and programmes. At postgraduate level, frameworks for joint activity have allowed for the development of joint programmes such as Masters in Spatial Arts and Visualisation.

Initial meetings have taken place with TCD in respect of developing and aligning UCD/TCD access and transfer student progression pathways.

The cross-institutional collaboration project on Progression Pathways has fostered networks and increased awareness for the need to develop a regional approach to admission and progression of under-represented. They are further complemented by the national HEAR and DARE Alternative Admissions routes, with the Director of Access and Lifelong Learning chairing the Project Steering Committee.

*Pls note – Awaiting agreed text from TCD/NCAD re Institute of Education*

### *RESEARCH*

Developments in terms of research include:

- UCD and TCD jointly identified areas of complementary research expertise ahead of the recent SFI Centres Call. These areas were discussed at inter-institutional level and where shared areas of interest were identified, bids were combined. A joint bid in Climate Change (with NUIM) was submitted for review.
- UCD and TCD have developed a consistent policy for research overhead charged to industry partners and have worked together to establish good practice in the consistent application of the policy across both institutions.

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## **PARTICIPATION, ACCESS AND LIFELONG LEARNING**

UCD's strategy document identifies diversity and inclusion as a priority:

*"Attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff"*

(Vision statement; Obj. 5)

UCD's participation rate for access and lifelong learning now stands at 27.2% of our undergraduate student population (*Report of the President, University College Dublin, September 2014 - August 2015. Presentation to the Governing Authority of UCD, 15 December 2015*)

Progress has been made in developing an integrated and collaborative approach to increasing participation in access and lifelong learning. There has been a 20% increase in DARE applications and the participation of students from lower socio-economic groups continues as a key policy priority. Several initiatives have been developed to increase participation of under-represented groups. The collaborative HEAR DARE working groups have identified priority groups within the equity groups. The transition plan to migrate some functions of the HEAR DARE Shared Services Unit to the CAO will further mainstream the alternative admissions schemes.

The UCD Open Learning initiative has opened up undergraduate modules to all learners. The process encourages access to all learners and increases part-time participation.

### ***EMBEDDING WIDENING PARTICIPATION***

The University Strategy 2015-2020 again reinforces the importance of ensuring a diverse student body. The University policy has been to ensure that our procedures and practices facilitate diversity and respond appropriately to it within the core business process and not through separate provision.

Furthermore, the University opened a new **Access & Lifelong Learning Centre (ALL)**, in December 2015, which offers a state of the art facility, designed as a 'bridge to the university' for students from a diverse range of backgrounds and circumstances. The new Centre is located in the James Joyce Library Building. This highly visible position in the main student thoroughfare signals the importance the University attaches to widening participation and student diversity. The Centre showcases universal design in practice and its design, layout, features and facilities are intended to be a reference point for future campus development projects.

The Centre offers a suite of specialised services and supports to enable a diverse range of students to enter and participate in the university. These include:

- A wide range of pre-entry initiatives is available, such as supplementary and alternative admissions routes, including HEAR, DARE, Mature Years;
- UCD Open Learning, offers a pathway to part-time undergraduate education. This programme was initiated in 2012, has grown substantially and now over 200 undergraduate modules are available. Students can gather credits for Open Learning Awards at Certificate and Diploma levels. Students can also take these modules for audit;
- The Centre reaches out to the wider community through a wide range of initiatives, including 'Future You', which offers a mentoring and academic support programme, and Mature Years' Access courses that on completion, guarantee access to undergraduate study in UCD.
- The Centre also offers opportunities to continue their development through numerous lifelong learning opportunities, some of which are offered in partnership with cultural institutions.
- Ensuring the students' transition and participation in university life is critical and our approach includes offering needs assessments, specialised guidance, learning, technology and financial supports. We also ensure that students are linked to the university's extensive range of academic and personal services. A critical aspect of our work is the promotion of mainstreaming and inclusion through universal design. This involves working with academic and professional colleagues to design programmes, policies and services, for use to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life.

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## ***PRE-ENTRY INITIATIVES***

The University recognises that attracting students from underrepresented groups in society is both challenging and important if we are to achieve the goals outlined in our strategy. UCD engages in a range of outreach activity including focused on working with second level schools and community and voluntary organisations in the greater Dublin and Leinster area.

These activities include;

- The Take 5 Summer School is a joint initiative between the access programmes of DCU, DIT, NUIM, TCD and UCD and takes place in June. This summer school is for Fifth Year school pupils who are in schools linked to one of the access programmes from these five institutions. *Note: All five institutions collectively agreed to suspend the Take 5 Programme pending a review or resourcing.*
- Future You is a college mentoring programme for 5th Year school pupils who aspire to go on to third level study. The programme is managed for our partner schools in Tallaght, Ballyfermot, Clondalkin, Crumlin, South Dublin and Bray. The aim of the programme is to improve the pupil's awareness of college, to increase their belief in their own ability to attend college and to share important information about how to study, how to apply for college and knowledge of various college supports.
- Future You Summer School; UCD hosts a residential summer school which gives Fifth Year school pupils from linked schools and organisations an opportunity to meet other students who aspire to go to university.
- The Voluntary Student Tutoring Scheme is a programme where UCD students volunteer to tutor a second level school pupil one-to-one in their school for two hours per week over an eight-week period.
- Leaving Certificate Workshops give some additional academic support to a number of 6th Year pupils in UCD-linked schools in their Leaving Cert. year.
- Shadowing Days offer prospective students from linked schools an opportunity to find out more about their chosen area of study and to experience student life first hand.

A specific example of how these initiatives may work in practice is set out below:

- Future You Parents' Forum established to ensure that parents have peer support and accurate information about accessing college, e.g. CAO, SUSI etc.
- Pilot 10 week programme: run in Ballyfermot Civic Centre, 10 parents, weekly attendance, sessions in Ballyfermot Civic Centre on personal development, accessing college, college costs, supporting students, and co-facilitation skills development. We recruited participants through a local coordinator and existing links with the home school liaison officers in UCD Access & Lifelong Learning linked schools.

Members of the UCD Future You Parents' Forum intend to have monthly committee meetings to decide on how best to disseminate information on accessing college and to support their peers. The Parents' Forum plans to co-facilitate information sessions with staff members from UCD Access & Lifelong Learning in UCD and the community, to host coffee mornings in schools in the area, and have a presence at parent-teacher meetings. UCD ALL will continue to work with the Ballyfermot/Chapelized Partnership to ensure that members of the UCD Future You Parents' Forum will participate on the Dublin 10 Education Task Force group and its Progression and Higher Education subgroup.

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## **EXCELLENT TEACHING AND LEARNING AND QUALITY OF THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

### ***STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN T&L***

Intake to UCD's Professional Certificate/Diploma in University Teaching and Learning continues to grow from 35 staff in 2013/14 to 50 staff in 2014/15. An external review of the programme with international academic input was undertaken and further development of the programme has taken place to move towards the development a comprehensive CPD framework for academic staff at all career stages from post-doctoral through to senior academic leadership. This model adopts best practice in the provision and recognition of experiential learning and non-accredited development opportunities. It builds on and integrates the already extensive suite of teaching & learning enhancement projects and seminar series, and it will be informed by the emerging National Professional Development framework being developed by the National Forum for the Enhancement of T&L. An evolving framework of professional development for different groups of staff with a teaching role resulted in an overall increase in CPD participation in 2015: Tutor Training (workshops)- 97; Preparing to Teach (accredited module) for PhD tutors - 25; T&L Seminar Series for PostDoc Researchers who support teaching - 24; Accredited programmes in University Teaching & Learning for faculty - 48 registration in 2015/16. Educational Technology (EdTECx series of workshops & talks) - 80

### ***RETENTION OF FRIST YEARS***

There is an extensive orientation programme for incoming first years the week before the start of their first semester. During this week first years are welcomed formally to the University by the President and they also are introduced to those academic and professional staff with whom they will be working during their time in UCD. We also recognise that not all necessary information on how to settle into the University can be given to students in one week. For that reason, orientation-type events are scheduled throughout the first semester, timed to coincide with the changing needs of students. For example, extra information sessions are provided by Library and IT services timed to take place around their first essay/report that students prepare. Similarly, drop-in student mental well-being information sessions are provided at junctures known to be particularly stressful, such as prior to their first exam. Every incoming first year UCD student is supported for their early weeks in UCD by a Peer Mentor. Peer Mentors are students from the incoming students' programme of study who have been through training and are supervised to allow them to give effective help and guidance to their 'mentees'. Student feedback suggests that this is a highly valued service by first years, many of whom find it easy to relate to a student close to their own age in the early days of their university career. Further details are set out in the section below entitled 'Efforts to Improve Retention Rates'

### ***NATIONAL EXPERTISE ON RETENTION AND PROGRESSION***

Prof Suzanne Quin & Dr Niamh Moore-Cherry from UCD have completed (June 2015) a new national study on non-completion across the Irish HE sector, funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Quin and Moore-Cherry's research has brought together existing qualitative data from HEI's that have been engaged in tracking and evaluating the reasons for student non-completion and non-progression. The overall goal of their study has been to identify reasons for student non-completion and they have identified possible systemic and institutional interventions to address issues of retention and progression nationally. As part of this study the researchers have gathered new UCD-specific data which will update earlier 2011 research. Their report which has been widely disseminated contain a large qualitative component to provide the student 'voice' on why students decide to leave their chosen course.

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## **HIGH QUALITY, INTERNATIONALLY COMPETITIVE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION**

Excellence in research and innovation are central to all that we do in UCD, drawing on the range and depth of our disciplines, the commitment of our community and the strength of our partnerships to deliver impact and value in areas of importance and opportunity. This ambition is set out clearly in our strategy to 2020.

Research and innovation across a university of the breadth of UCD take many different forms. We have fundamental discovery-oriented research as well as research targeting applications in the short, medium or long term. We have lone scholars, small, medium and large research groups, start-up companies and large-scale collaborations with industry or other partners. We conduct research within each of our extensive range of disciplines, and across disciplinary boundaries.

We value all of these modes of research and innovation, and recognise the interdependencies and synergies between them. Whatever the form, we require all research and innovation supported within UCD to be excellent, and unambiguously identifiable as such by the measures applied within the relevant sphere internationally. We also require that they deliver impact – within enterprise, public policy and other arenas, and of course in the nature and quality of the education we deliver to our students.

The institutional objectives and associated performance indicators in our Compact with the HEA reflect our ambitions for excellence in research and our actions to ensure it delivers impact across all of the dimensions noted above.

### ***RESEARCH***

We continued to see significant growth in the field-weighted citation impact of UCD's research base from 1.57 in 2014 to 1.71 in 2015. Given increased global competition in the international research arena and a challenging national funding environment, this performance is exceptional and sees UCD ranked number 1 in Ireland for research impact in current Times Higher Education (THE) rankings. A sustained focus on the quality of our research, selection of the field-weighted citation impact measure as a UCD KPI, internal initiatives to support academic staff to publish in the highest quality outlets and the outstanding commitment of UCD researchers, have all contributed to this success.

The strength of our research base is further evidenced by our performance in securing prestigious international funding awards. ERC and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) awards continue to increase in number and quality with UCD proposals ranked first in Europe in the most recent Individual Fellowship and European Industrial Doctorates MSCA programmes. Over the last 3 years our research funding base has stabilised with new awards consistently in excess of €100M. Of this, over 30% is secured from non-exchequer sources. Diversification of the funding base is underpinned by a strong performance in Horizon 2020 and increased funding from industry sources. UCD, along with 3 other Irish HEIs is now ranked among the top 50 institutions in Europe for Horizon 2020 awards. This is an outstanding performance and will ensure the sector is on track to deliver against the ambitious national target of €1.25bN set at the beginning of the programme.

While our research outputs and funding performance are strong, they are built on a precarious base of infrastructure and core funding. Additionally, the commitment of the Government to research funding and the ambition outlined in *Innovation 2020* is unclear. In this context, we sound a cautionary note around the sustainability of current performance.

### ***INNOVATION***

The University is strongly committed to developing Ireland as a Global Innovation Leader. UCD's *Strategy 2015 – 2020* closely reflects the national aspirations identified in *Innovation 2020* and identifies ways in which this will be delivered through innovation, by engaging with enterprise, developing talent, managing intellectual property and collaborating nationally and internationally. The strategy builds on successes in innovation as well as identifying new approaches, including the recently announced University Bridge Fund (see below).



## UCD Strategic Initiatives

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UCD is a proven leader in research and innovation, a winner in two of the four categories in Knowledge Transfer Ireland's *2015 Impact Awards*. Over the next five years it will deliver ever greater impact, with a strong focus on excellence and talent. Key actions/goals for knowledge transfer/industry engagement/commercialisation have been defined:

- Facilitate and drive ease of engagement for internal and external partners
- Drive quantity of outputs in accordance with international standards
- Drive quality of outputs based on downstream outcomes and impact

Quality of outputs is a major focus, with a view to improving outcomes and impact. The plan for the UCD is primarily directed towards further developing and improving existing programmes/operations with a specific focus on:

- Broadening the commercialisation pipeline across all critical UCD research areas.
- Continuing to develop and refine the UCD spin-out and licensing models.
- Supporting implementation of the UCD enterprise engagement model.
- Developing toolkits and training to better engage researchers and staff with the KT agenda.

UCD's outputs in 2015 demonstrate the scale of the university's technology transfer success. We are confident that we can build on that momentum. Our aim is to further embed the innovation agenda within UCD over the coming years and, with the focus on the quality, drive economic impact.

## ***THE UNIVERSITY BRIDGE FUND***

The University Bridge Fund is a €60M venture capital partnership driven by University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin and available to benefit all third level research institutions in the country (see <http://www.universitybridgefund.com/>). UCD and Trinity worked in alliance to lead this initiative and brought together public, private and international institutional investors under its umbrella. The establishment of the Fund is a step change in Ireland's focus on translating academic research into high quality jobs and the country is now joining a select group of countries that has a dedicated to translate innovative academic research into companies that compete in global markets.

## **ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT WITH ENTERPRISE AND THE COMMUNITY AND EMBEDDED KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**

UCD's performance against target in securing new industry partnerships in excess of a threshold of €25,000 is on track. However, of greater note is the scale of recent partnerships. In 2015, UCD secured the largest SFI industry partnership awarded; the ESIPP programme in energy systems is a €1M partnership between the State and Irish's largest energy companies (ESB, Eirgrid, AIB and Glen Dimplex). In line with our strategy to enhance the quality of our engagements with industry a new Director of Strategic Partnerships, reporting to the President, was appointed in 2014. During 2015, UCD signed a partnership agreement with IBM in education, research and innovation and other agreements are in train in 2016.

Over the course of 2015, UCD has continued to build a strong profile for its public engagement and outreach activities with initiatives such as Science Expression Film Festivals running 16 screening and panel discussions over the year. 2015 also saw the Inaugural SCI:COMM conference. Initiated by UCD's Alex Boyd, the conference focused on enhancing the means and methods used by scientists to communicate to diverse audiences.

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## ENHANCED INTERNATIONALISATION

### ***INSTITUTION OBJECTIVE***

*“Increase the number of international students undertaking programmes of study at UCD (with final target, end 2016, of 6,000 students)”*

The interim target for UCD at end 2015 was to achieve 5,700 International Students. In the Academic Year 2014/15, UCD had increased the number of International Students to 6,589 (of which 5,801 are full-time) with a further 5,639 in overseas campuses. The reasons for this increase, amongst others, included:

- Increased representation and engagement with priority UCD international student recruitment markets:
  - In support of our Global Engagement Strategy, 2014/15 saw the expansion of UCD’s network of Global Centres (UCD now has a network of Global Centres in the USA, China, India and South-East Asia). These Global Centres support the development of institutional partnerships, admission and enrolment of international students, and the engagement of UCD alumni. UCD Global Centres supported increased campaigning by UCD academic staff in key markets which in turn attracted more interest and ultimately, registrations.
  - Growth in the US Study Abroad programme, which was supported by the development of innovative new programmes in subject areas and cohorts that have not traditionally engaged in Study Abroad, such as freshman, engineering and nursing.
- Attractive scholarship campaign to attract top performing international students to compete with attractive scholarship programmes available in competitor institutions in UK.
- Improved marketing collaterals, IT systems support student recruitment & conversion, and streamlined processes including centralisation of non-EU admissions
- UCD welcomed the first cohorts of students from collaborative programmes with Beijing Dublin International College (BDIC).

### ***INSTITUTION OBJECTIVE:***

*“Expand opportunities for UCD students to spend 1 or more semesters away from their home campus (with final target, end 2016, of 600 students)”*

Interim target for UCD at end 2015 was to achieve 580 students. In the Academic Year 2014/15, 588 UCD students participated in an Erasmus or other Exchange programme, exceeding end 2015 target. Furthermore, indicative performance for the academic year 2015/16 suggests that over 630 students spent 1 or more semesters away from UCD Dublin campuses, participating in an Erasmus or other Exchange programme. The reasons for this increase, amongst others, included:

- Scaling up of central promotions amongst undergraduate student body:
  - increase in the number of promotional talks - 3 each week on average
  - targeted talks by language, country, as well as a series of 'Budgeting for Exchange' workshops
  - pop-up ‘Study Abroad Fairs’ in buildings around campus rather than one study abroad fair based in UCD Global Lounge
- Local promotions (demonstrating School engagement with institutional objectives):
  - UCD has a network of Exchange academic coordinators at Schools level and these were better leveraged to promote exchange, particularly Erasmus (as they do the selection for Erasmus) to their students
- Local ‘accommodation’ of exchange to allow for programme nuances:

## UCD Strategic Initiatives

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- UCD Sutherland School of Law permitted students to go on exchange for one semester only instead of an academic year (which traditional had only been permitted) with result that more students took up the opportunity to on exchange
- Outgoing student exchange programmes expanded with UCD sending students for the first time to Argentina, Uruguay, and to new U21 partner, the University of Maryland.
- Increased exchange spaces in US through development of mixed study abroad/exchange agreements with established partners.
- Student and staff mobility will be supported over the coming years with funds secured from the Erasmus+ Credit Mobility Programme. UCD was Ireland's most successful institution in the first round of applications for this new funding programme, with nine successful bids covering six continents.

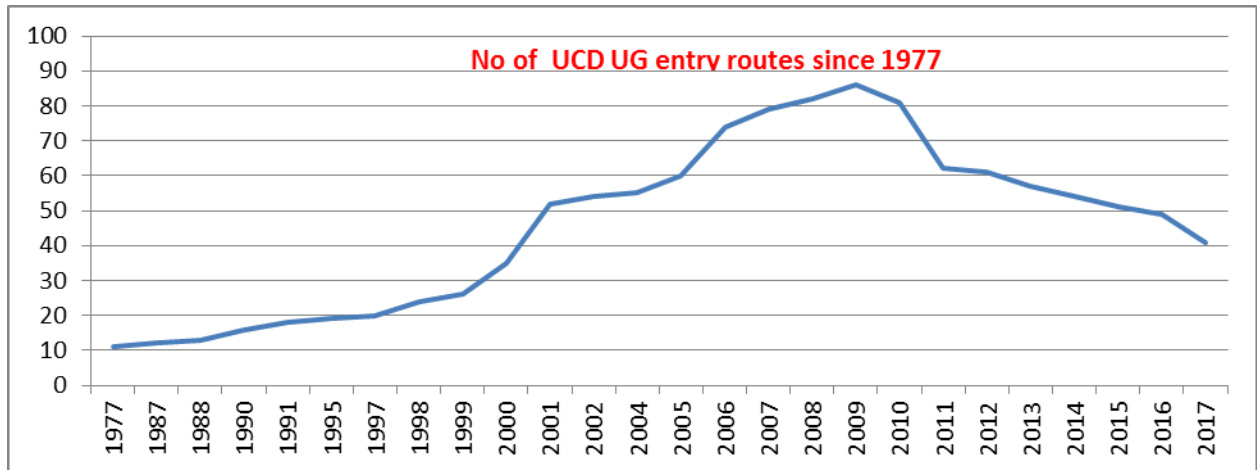
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## **INSTITUTIONAL CONSOLIDATION**

Following clarity from the HEA that no additional funding was available to support consolidation activities between UCD and NCAD, the discussions on the merger of the two institutions halted and UCD re-aligned its focus to centre on closer engagement through the regional cluster activity and engagement between UCD and NCAD as a recognised College of the University.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSITIONS AGENDA

One of the objectives set out in UCD's strategic plan is to "consolidate and strengthen our disciplines ". Over the past decade and as part of the Transitions agenda, UCD has reduced the number of Undergraduate entry routes from a high of 86 courses in 2009 to 41 courses for 2017. This has been achieved by consolidated and restructuring many programmes to allow entry via broader discipline areas. This provides students with the flexibility to experience the wider curriculum during the early stages of their programme before specialising on a particular degree stream at a later stage. These changes also resulted in the simplification of entry requirements.



## **EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RETENTION RATES**

Since 2010 UCD has developed a number of key initiatives under the overall banner of 'Focus on First Year'. Importantly these projects have been informed by institutional research and analysis of institutional data to identify key areas where change has proven to be valuable and to evaluate the effectiveness of specific interventions in supporting and retaining first year students. These interventions include

### ***EXTENSION OF ORIENTATION EVENTS***

There is an extensive Orientation programme for first years the week before the start of the semester. During this week first years are welcomed formally to the university by the President and they also are introduced to those academic and professional staff with whom they will be working during their time in UCD. We also recognise that not all necessary information on how to settle into the university can be given to students in one week. For that reason orientation-type events are scheduled throughout the first semester, timed to coincide with the changing needs of students. For example extra information sessions are provided by Library and IT services timed to take place around their first essay/report that students prepare. Similarly drop-in student mental well-being information sessions are provided at junctures known to be particularly stressful, such as prior to their first exam.

### ***PEER MENTORING:***

Every incoming first year UCD student is supported for their early weeks in UCD by a Peer Mentor. Peer Mentors are students from the incoming students' programme of study who have been through training and are supervised to allow them to give effective help and guidance to their 'mentees'. Student feedback suggests that this is a highly valued service by first years, many of whom find it easy to relate to a student close to their own age in the early days of their university career.

### ***DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC ADVICE***

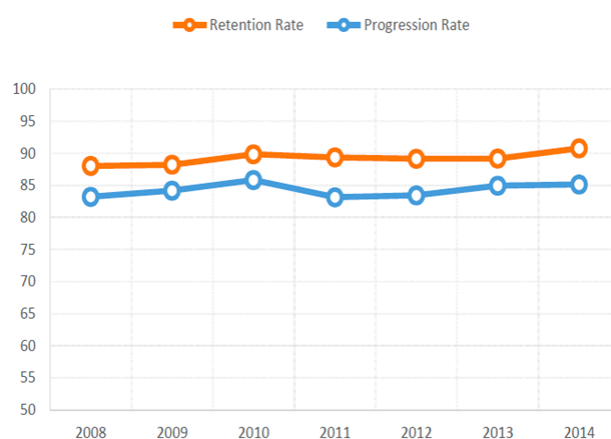
For many students the move to university is a time of considerable uncertainty. Because of this Student Advisers are employed in each College to provide assistance to any students who need extra help or advice in planning their academic study. Advisers are also available to work with students who may encounter personal or family difficulties during their time at university. First year student data also reflects the importance that they place on the guidance and advice that they receive from academic staff, and the importance that they place on their relationship with those who teach them.

### ***DEDICATED SUBJECT SUPPORTS***

Drop-in Maths and Academic Support Centres are available to all students, including first years, who need extra one-to-one tutoring in these areas. Supported by academic staff, these centres provide valuable assistance to students and first year students rate this service very highly in their feedback.

UCD Undergraduate Degree Students: Progression rate from first year to second year

Programme Group	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Agriculture	86.2	84.8	90.5	92.4	90.2	93.1	92.9
Architecture	84.6	72.3	81.6	83.1	70.0	83.8	86.4
Arts	76.1	77.3	78.5	71.3	71.4	72.5	73.7
Business	89.3	92.2	93.9	93.0	92.4	92.5	92.2
Engineering	86.6	88.9	89.3	89.0	85.7	86.6	88.3
Law	95.7	92.9	93.3	91.6	94.8	95.2	93.8
Medicine	95.7	94.8	89.7	92.8	87.8	94.3	93.3
Other Medicine & Medical Sc	98.7	98.5	99.3	99.0	98.0	97.1	97.5
Nursing	82.1	84.4	88.3	76.2	89.0	78.2	75.9
Public Health & Perform Sci	86.3	86.7	83.7	88.3	85.4	92.3	83.2
Science	71.5	77.3	80.6	80.3	87.6	88.5	88.4
Social Science	86.3	83.3	88.7	82.1	85.6	86.4	85.6
Veterinary Med	96.6	94.0	94.6	92.0	92.6	94.1	94.5
<b>UCD Overall</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>84.2</b>	<b>85.8</b>	<b>83.2</b>	<b>83.4</b>	<b>85.0</b>	<b>85.1</b>



**Definition: Progression is defined as:** The total number of a full-time undergraduate degree entering cohort who progress directly to second year at the end of their first year of study. A student progresses to the next year if the student completes and passes the final examination for that year or attains the required number of credits to progress. Undergraduate degree entering cohort is full-time undergraduate degree students entering first year for the first time.

Progression rates from first year directly to second year have been improving since 2011. For the entering cohort of 2014/15 progression rates are now 85.1% While lower progression rates are found in Arts and Nursing

Some of the highest progression rates are found in Medicine and Para Medicine subjects, Veterinary and Law



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## SYSTEMS AND WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT

It is currently UCD policy that each school should have a workload model in place. However, UCD acknowledges that the quality and sophistication of these models varies across the schools. UCD is currently undertaking a significant body of work to put in place a framework which is both sufficiently standardised to enable realistic comparison across schools and colleges but is also sufficiently flexible to accommodate the different challenges and realities facing schools. This work is being undertaken under the joint direction of the Registrar and the Director of Human Resources.

UCD recognises the necessity of putting in place consistent workload models across the University to:

- Ensure greater consistency and transparency in academic workloads;
- Support the principles of fairness and equity within and across schools;
- Ensure alignment with University objectives and KPIs;
- Support Athena Swan/EDI initiatives;
- Promote excellence in research;
- Embed a performance culture at UCD.

Underpinning these objectives, UCD has now drafted a set of underlying principles governing workload models. These are:

- All UCD Schools should operate a formal academic workload model.
- UCD academic workload models should address Research, Teaching and contribution and outline the normal expectations required of individuals across all three of these components.
- All academic staff are expected to be research-active.
- All academic staff should contribute regularly to the teaching commitments of the School to which they are affiliated, apart from exceptional circumstances agreed with the Head of School.
- All academic staff should contribute regularly to the committees and administrative commitments of the School to which they are affiliated apart from exceptional circumstances agreed with the Head of School.
- Academic workload models must ensure that the necessary work of a School is carried out and that essential roles within the School are performed.
- Models, and their operation, should demonstrate reasonable equity, clarity and transparency.
- Models, and their operation, should be informed by regular and open consultation and communication.
- Academic workload models should be consistent with the strategic objectives of the School, College, and University.

These principles are in the process of being refined and finalised. It is expected that this process will be completed by end 2016.

The UCD University Management Team has recently run a workshop on the implementation of more consistent workload modelling across the University and is in the process of developing an implementation workplan with defined timelines and deliverables for the design and rollout of updated and standardised workload models.