



Since its foundation, the growth of UCD and the growth of Ireland have gone hand in hand. This university has now become the university of an independent, modern and increasingly prosperous Ireland. For generations this university has helped to shape the country's economy, society and culture, and it will do so for generations to come.

INTRODUCTION BY DR HUGH BRADY UCD PRESIDENT

VISION

As I took up the position of UCD President in January 2004, I knew that I had become the President of a great university; I said as much in my inaugural lecture delivered on 20 January '04. Yet there are always both challenges and means to build on greatness and I set this as a key target of my Presidency. As such I outlined a vision for UCD at the centre of which were the following targets:

- Recognition as a leading international research-intensive university
- A student-centred university characterised by excellence in teaching and learning
- An outward-looking and socially-inclusive campus
- An academic community which will be agenda-shaping nationally and internationally
- A distinctly Irish university, reaching out to the global Irish community.

Driving this vision is the desire for UCD to be recognised immediately as a university where bold and imaginative teaching programmes and excellence in teaching and learning go hand in glove with a commitment to research, scholarship, innovation and creativity.

Indeed, I believed then and still do today that we can and should be the leading research university in Ireland and among the top universities in Europe. Such a goal is imperative if we are to continue to play a central role in the shaping of modern Ireland, for it will bring together leading researchers, academics and the brightest students

from across the globe, all of whom want to learn, challenge, innovate and inspire. I am proud to say that we have already made significant progress.

However, these ambitious goals will not be achieved unless the total level of funding for the university is significantly increased. Compared to similar-sized institutions elsewhere, we are operating on a much lower level of funding. We will continue to lobby government to support the university so that we fulfil our role as the research-leading and knowledge-driving engine of the Irish economy. We will develop UCD as the preferred destination for research funding and we will establish life-long relationships with our alumni and philanthropic friends so that we can achieve our strategic objectives.

UCD STRATEGIC PLAN 2005 TO 2008

Work on developing and articulating a shared strategic plan and vision commenced in June 2004, when a senior management team was put in place to drive the strategic development process. At the heart of this process was an unprecedented level of consultation which was designed to stimulate discussion about the university's direction and its priorities.

The process was initiated in July with Faculty*/support unit dialogue. All Faculties and support units were requested to reflect on their current mission; how well they were configured to address that mission and the critical challenges and opportunities they faced. During the following three months a process of cross-university dialogue was facilitated. This highlighted the need to align many of our procedures and structures with the objectives of the university.



The Washington Advisory Group (WAG) was commissioned to carry out an external assessment of UCD. Their brief was three-fold:

- To benchmark UCD against similarly sized/configured universities
- To assess UCD's teaching, learning and research strategy and structure
- To review UCD's potential for achieving research excellence in a number of specific key areas.

After the initial rounds of cross-university dialogue, critical areas were identified and Change Management Task Forces were established to address and advise on the following:

- Socialisation and Staff Development
- Structure
- Branding
- Internal Communications
- Promotion Pathways to Professorships
- Management Information Systems
- Academic Workload Models.

I am delighted to report that as a result of the assessments and discussions arising from this process a three year Strategic Plan was formulated. By February 2005 all of the high level objectives laid out in the Strategic Plan were agreed with the Academic Council and the Governing Authority of the university.

Our Strategic Plan focuses on a three-pronged vision: UCD being the best, in terms of a teaching and learning environment; in terms of providing the most innovative and creative research environment; and in terms of maximising UCD's impact on Irish society.

UCD HORIZONS

The UCD Strategic Plan focuses on a number of student-centred strategic objectives aimed at attracting the best students and maximising their potential. We must attract students based on the quality and diversity of our programmes, the range of opportunities available in a modular curriculum, the excellence and international reputation of our teaching staff and the ongoing investment in the learning environment. By being the first university in Ireland to introduce a fully semesterised, modularised and credit-based curriculum in its true form, we will be well on our way to competing on the international stage, as well as leading the way in Ireland.

Our modularised curriculum, branded UCD *Horizons*, offers students greater opportunities to explore their interests by enabling them to choose subjects, or modules, from outside their chosen degree programme. This has been hugely successful in other international universities and we are proud to be the first university in Ireland to offer this initiative. UCD *Horizons* creates many new learning opportunities and these will be rolled out across the university in the years ahead.



International students, as recognised in the Strategic Plan, are an essential part of the UCD community, introducing a valuable multicultural dimension to university life. We are continuing our efforts to encourage more international students and the academic year, 2004/05, saw close to 3,000 international students at UCD.

RESEARCH-INTENSIVE UNIVERSITY

While the Strategic Plan has taken centre stage, UCD has not been idle on other fronts. Our collective achievements demonstrate the drive and enthusiasm of our staff, as does the impressive amount of funding we have attracted in the past two years. Our investment in

Recently opened student common room with laptop facilities

International Students

infrastructure ensures that the landscape of UCD changes continuously for the benefit of students, staff and Ireland.

We are striving to become a leading research-intensive university. Our goal is to become the destination of choice for top research talent from across the disciplinary spectrum and, to that end, our investment in state-of-the-art facilities continues.

*UCD Conway
Institute of
Biomolecular and
Biomedical Research*



In September 2003, UCD opened the Conway Institute of Biomolecular and Biomedical Research, Ireland's most advanced biomedical research centre.

In October 2005, we opened the Genome Resource Unit (GRU) in the Mater Misericordiae University Hospital, and a second GRU will open shortly in St Vincent's University Hospital.

We will shortly open the new Centre for Synthesis and Chemical Biology (CSCB) to facilitate studies at the interface of chemistry and biology.

This is tremendous progress and I am delighted to announce that it will continue into 2006 and beyond.

*The DSS supports
students to use
assistive technology
in the pursuit of
their studies*

The volume and value of awards made to the university between 2003 and 2005 has also risen; in 2003/04, UCD was awarded €50 million, an increase of 9% on 2002/03. For 2004/05, this figure jumped to €63 million, an increase of 26%.

In 2005 the IDA approved a €72 million grant to a UCD-led partnership to establish the National Institute for Bioprocessing, Research and Training (NIBRT) on the Belfield campus. This is the largest award ever made in the State for research and I congratulate everyone involved.

UCD is the largest trainer of PhD students in Ireland and we are soon to ramp up our efforts in fourth level education, reflecting national priorities. The initial stage will see the formation of graduate schools and fully

modularised postgraduate programmes. Our intention is to make the UCD PhD the gold standard for the qualification.

ACADEMIC RESTRUCTURING

An unhelpfully large number of sub-divisions in our academic structure had historically been one of our key restrictions. This inbuilt inefficiency restricted the levels of collaboration and communication between colleagues as well as placing considerable administrative burdens on academic staff. This stifled innovation, creativity and research opportunities. To achieve our goals, therefore, we focused on a restructuring of the university on an unprecedented scale.

The resultant Change Management Programme focused on facilitating the academic restructuring of UCD, which saw the 90-plus Departments and 11 Faculties transformed into a new structure of 35 Schools and five Colleges. The five colleges are:

- UCD College of Arts and Celtic Studies
- UCD College of Business and Law
- UCD College of Engineering, Mathematical and Physical Sciences
- UCD College of Human Sciences
- UCD College of Life Sciences.

Within these Colleges the core unit is the School, both in terms of academic activity and research output. This new structure entailed changes across the university in terms of roles, responsibilities and processes, as well as the structure itself.





Special conferring held on 3 November '04 to mark the precise day of the 150th anniversary of the opening of the university

The success of this effort, coupled with the radical change to our academic programme, was made possible through the diligent and tireless efforts of all university staff. In recognition of such effort as well as a solid bedrock of historic achievement, UCD has committed itself to regular promotional rounds for our staff. In particular, promotion to professorial level will now be possible through varied routes.

As of the final day of this reporting period, 31 August '05, I am delighted to say that the new university structures, under Statute 6, will come into effect on 1 September '05, and that we are ready for first year students to enter our innovative modularised and semesterised curriculum.

HIGH QUALITY STUDENT EXPERIENCE

At UCD the student experience is influenced by the nature and the quality of the learning environment, which embraces availability and accessibility of student facilities and the extra-curricular activities that allow students to succeed, both academically and socially.

We are continually adding to and improving the facilities on campus. Plans are well advanced for the development of a substantial Gateway complex. This will add further student facilities and provide many opportunities for local communities to engage with and use the Belfield campus. This development will take place within the framework of a revised Campus Development Plan which has the objective of a healthy, sustainable and living campus as its main tenet.

A key aspiration of our Strategic Plan is to be socially inclusive, and our Disability Support Service (DSS) and work within the New ERA programme have delivered

impressive results. A Mature Student Adviser was also put in place in 2004 to provide for the needs of adult learners in UCD.

SHAPING AGENDAS

There are not many universities that have had the opportunity to celebrate 150 years of education, but in 2004 we had that opportunity. An exciting programme of events ran throughout the year, celebrating everything that is distinct about UCD and its historic contribution, as well as its future ambitions. *Celebrating the Past – Creating the Future* was the highly appropriate strapline for the duration of UCD 150.



Another key project undertaken in year 2004/05 was to articulate the university's identity and assess its image in the minds of relevant stakeholders. This work informed several other projects, including a re-branding of the university with a new visual identity which set out to portray clearly UCD's strong heritage and modern drive, and our national role and international aspirations.

*Sir Peter Sutherland,
former EC
Commissioner
for Ireland*



We are actively pursuing a richer relationship with our alumni. As individuals they can and do affect positive change and promote UCD in Ireland and abroad. At the same time, fundraising from private sources has played a vital role in helping UCD achieve its ambitious goals.

Over the period of this report, UCD has been able to honour some of the most influential and prominent contributors to Irish society and the global community. In November 2003 we presented the Charter Day Medal to Mr Denis Brosnan, and in 2004 we presented Sir Peter Sutherland, former EC Commissioner for Ireland, and UCD graduate, with the inaugural Foundation Day Medal. It has been my privilege also to confer Honorary Degrees on many outstanding national and international figures since the beginning of my Presidency. This includes special ceremonies held to mark the Bloomsday centenary in June 2004 and the precise day of the 150th anniversary of the opening of the doors of Newman's Catholic University on 3 November 1854.

*An Taoiseach,
Bertie Ahern, T.D.
at a special
reception to mark
UCD 150 where
the UCD 150
Scholarship
Programme was
launched, held
in NovaUCD*



At this point I believe that it is important to acknowledge the tremendous contribution that my predecessor, Dr Art Cosgrove, President of UCD from 1994 to 2003, made to the university. During his tenure he oversaw huge physical development of the campus as well as significant institutional advancement and reform. His legacy in constantly championing UCD's case with

government, the HEA and other stakeholders has enabled us to continue to move forward quickly. A full appraisal of Art's contribution is set out later in this report. Similarly, I wish to acknowledge the outstanding contribution made by former Registrar, Dr Caroline Hussey.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution that the previous Governing Authority made and thank them for their hard work and support. The current Governing Authority, appointed for the period 1 February '05 to 31 January '09, is ably chaired by Mr Kieran McGowan. I deeply appreciate the efforts and contributions of all 40 members of this and the previous Authority in the guidance and help they offer me and my Senior Management Team in working towards achieving UCD's strategic objectives.

And finally I would like to acknowledge the crucial role all staff of UCD play daily in running this fine institution. Your incalculable contribution is evidenced on every page of this report.

HUGH BRADY
President