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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

In early 2004 I set out a series of targets that were central to my vision for UCD as a leading, internationally recognised, research-intensive university. Those targets were deliberately ambitious. I knew that they would take exceptional levels of energy and commitment from everyone across the university if they were to be met. I am happy to report that academics from all our Schools and Colleges and their administrative and technical colleagues have worked together superbly to take us closer to our goals.

The vision I articulated was underpinned by an awareness of UCD's position in Ireland and the wider world. The harsh reality is that we face greater competition than ever before for the best students and staff in a global market.

At a national level, the overall pool of potential students is getting smaller and the range of options for our potential students is ever widening. At an international level, exceptional third and fourth-level students and researchers will only choose to come to UCD if we have a worldwide reputation for our commitment to research, scholarship, innovation and creativity.

As we continue to strive towards our ambitious goals, I am very pleased to report that what has been achieved in the last year has been quite remarkable. It is a great tribute to the entire UCD staff that in such a short space of time we have completely restructured the university and the curriculum. Our five new Colleges and 35 new Schools continue to go from strength to strength. This

new and dynamic academic structure will be the foundation of all that we achieve in the future and the first fruits are already to hand. Among many other advances, we have continued to develop our five new Graduate Schools, revamped the promotions procedure and raised the international profile of UCD.

Since I became President, I have taken every opportunity to impress on government the need to transform third level and create a dynamic fourth level sector in Ireland. I have been very impressed by the level of political commitment that, if followed by investment, will ensure Ireland establishes a truly excellent, internationally competitive education sector.

During the year we welcomed several members of government including An Taoiseach, An Tánaiste and the Minister for Education and Science to open new facilities. The next five years will see major investment in the promotion of research and innovation in the Irish higher education sector through a number of pioneering initiatives.

The government's ongoing support for UCD, and for third and fourth-level education generally, is most welcome.

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2008

In early 2005, all the high-level objectives of our Strategic Plan were agreed. The plan focuses on a three-pronged vision of UCD being the best in terms of:

- Teaching and learning environment;
- Research environment;
- Impact on Irish society.



We are making strong progress in each of these areas.

Our teaching and learning environment has been transformed with the successful launch of *UCD Horizons* - a modularised, semesterised and credit-based curriculum.

We want to be the country's premier fourth-level institution and have launched five new Graduate Schools to support a university-wide commitment to research and innovation.

UCD's impact on Irish society continues to be significant with UCD academics playing key roles in the development and implementation of national and international strategy and policy.

#### ATTRACTING THE BRIGHTEST AND BEST

Applications to UCD rose by over 10% in 2006, reversing the decline of the previous three years. The curriculum reform and the launch and marketing of *UCD Horizons* have been major factors in making the university such an attractive choice for students.

*UCD Horizons* has been exceptionally well received and students have taken the opportunities it offers to make informed, mature and creative choices about how to widen or deepen their knowledge from the programme they are studying.

The number of international students attending UCD rose by 8% in the year under review and 110 countries are now represented on campus. Also, UCD joined Universitas 21, a major international network of over 20 research-led universities that will offer our students and staff a range of mobility, research and academic opportunities. It will also offer us significant best-practice benchmarking opportunities.

#### RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP AND INNOVATION

Our aim is to advance knowledge through cutting-edge research in an environment that encourages and attracts world-class researchers from across the disciplinary spectrum. We are forging exciting educational and research partnerships and collaborations with academic, industrial and not-for-profit organisations, thereby enhancing confidence in UCD as a destination for investment from the public and private sectors.

UCD attracted significant increases in the volume and value of contracts in 2005/06, being awarded 664 contracts worth almost €83 million, an increase of a third over the previous year.

Our research institutes offer state-of-the-art facilities, technology platforms and a critical mass of researchers and academics. Ireland's leading biomedical research centre, the UCD Conway Institute raised over €30m in peer-reviewed grant income in the past year.

*Pictured at the UCD Foundation Day dinner were, left to right, Dr Paddy Hillery, Mrs Maeve Hillery, Dr Hugh Brady and Dr Michael Smurfit*



*Pictured at the launch of the Wyeth Research Ireland facility at the UCD Conway Institute: (left to right) Dr Hugh Brady, Mary Hanafin TD, Minister for Education and Science and Dr Frank Walsh, Executive Vice-President, Discovery Research Worldwide for Wyeth*

#### FOURTH LEVEL

The government's explicit commitment last year to the establishment of Fourth Level Ireland was a pioneering step in higher education. Specifically, it will underpin the development of a world-class system for Masters/PhD training in Ireland by providing the best of support and facilities for our rapidly expanding graduate-student cohort. My firm intention is to make the UCD PhD the gold standard for Fourth Level Ireland.

#### CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

UCD's main campus at Belfield is a wonderful resource which we must develop in a sustainable way to maximise its benefit to not only our students and staff but also the wider community in which it is placed. We will double the number of students living on campus over the next five years to 6,000. My ambition is to change the feel of

the campus - to make it a 24/7 centre of learning and living where a sense of scholarliness is pervasive.

We have launched the Campus Development Plan, having consulted with our local community and other stakeholders. A central part of the plan is the Gateway Project - a new complex which will link the university's main entrance off the N11 with the core of the campus.

*Pictured at the launch of the alliance between UCD and the Institute of Bankers in Ireland (from left to right) John Trethowan, President of the Institute of Bankers in Ireland, Dr Philip Nolan, Registrar, UCD and Brian Cowen TD, Minister for Finance*



A major international competition will provide the world's leading architects with an opportunity to create an iconic landmark for Dublin and Ireland. The development will enhance the working and living environment for students and staff and open up the campus to local and wider communities.

Work is also starting on UCD's Science District with the aim of developing a transformative resource for Irish science.

I believe that a university education is not solely about academic endeavour. Involvement with the university community through sporting and student activity is equally important. Through outstanding facilities, and a wide range of extra-curricular activities, we are providing the stimuli and guidance that develop healthy and rounded individuals.

### HONORARY DEGREES AND AWARDS

Last November UCD honoured former President of Ireland Dr Patrick Hillery with the UCD Foundation Day Medal. In preparing my citation for the event, I was struck by the significance of Dr Hillery's historic contribution to Irish education over 40 years ago. In setting up the Commission on Higher Education in 1960, Dr Hillery paved the way for the later changes that shaped Irish education for the late 20th century. He is a remarkable man.

On other occasions during the year, we were pleased to award honorary degrees to a range of national and international figures who have contributed to the arts, business, science and human development.

### STAFF

I want to pay a special tribute to the excellence and commitment of our academic staff. UCD depends on them, and particularly on the quality of their research, for the maintenance of its high academic standards and the international recognition of its degrees. Particular recognition is due for the way all our staff, academic, administrative and technical alike, worked so hard and well to bed down our new Colleges and Schools successfully.

I am delighted that a key tenet of the Strategic Plan, development of a full suite of recruitment and reward mechanisms for academic staff is now in place. In the period of this Report, for the first time, there has been a procedure to promote to full Professor. It is also the first time that promotions to Associate Professor have not taken place under a quota system. I am also pleased to report that the Senior Lecturer promotions benchmarking system is working well and gives candidates clear targets to strive for.

### CONCLUSION

We have made enormous progress in this last year. I believe that we are now entering a much more creative, although no less demanding, phase.

This period of dramatic change has been guided and supported by our Governing Authority chaired by Kieran McGowan. He, and the Authority members, offer great support to me and my Senior Management Team for which we are very appreciative.

Space constraints do not allow this Report to fully do justice to the immense amount of work done by all the staff in UCD which makes it so successful. I hope, however, the Report conveys a sense of our immense shared undertaking.

HUGH BRADY  
*President*