University College Dublin
University for All

UCD Widening Participation Committee
Annual Report 2021-23

UCD Widening Participation Committee Meeting September 2022 with Professor Barbara Dooley, Acting Registrar and Deputy President.

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Chair's Foreword

This report provides a review and consideration of the activities and achievements of the UCD Widening Participation Committee for 2021 to 2023. As such, it encompasses the final year of Professor Grace Mulcahy's term as chair, and the first year of my term as chair.

I would like to begin this report by paying tribute to two people who have provided leadership, vision, and much hard work to the mission to make UCD a University for All. Professor Grace Mulcahy chaired the Widening Participation Committee for six years (2016-2022), and in this role has made the committee a key vehicle for innovation and change in the University. Thanks to the efforts of Professor Mulcahy, the committee is well placed at institutional and programme level, to identify opportunities and implement actions for change.

The committee provides oversight of the activities and goals of the UCD Access & Lifelong Learning Centre, and it is with gratitude and pride that we honour Dr Anna Kelly, who retired from the position of Director of UCD Access & Lifelong Learning in 2023. Dr Kelly has provided exemplary leadership and dedication to the Unit, and her tenure as Director will be remembered for its achievement of moving access, lifelong learning, and widening participation into the mainstream of the University's mission. Thanks to her abilities to advocate, communicate and build relationships, the goal of making UCD an inclusive university is recognised as a common goal, shared by all units and schools within our community.

In 2023, UCD celebrated the tenth anniversary of the founding of the University Widening Participation Committee, an occasion which we used to reflect on the achievements of the committee, to thank all of the committee's members for their efforts and commitment over those years, and to dedicate ourselves to working to overcome the remaining obstacles to making UCD an inclusive, accessible university.

The successes of the Committee can be attributed to two factors. The first is the determination of its members, drawn from programmes and units across the University, to progress the mission of widening participation in every aspect of our work and community. The committee's members are both activists and advocates for widening participation. The second factor is the expertise, devotion, and leadership of the entire UCD Access & Lifelong Learning team. They provide the committee with excellent guidance, data, and support, and are professional and driven in all of their work.

Education should be a transformative and enabling experience, and should be accessible and inclusive to all. Much remains to be done in UCD to make this our reality. Inequalities of access and participation are still evident in many aspects of university life, from admissions to accommodation. Not all students feel equally welcomed, or equally enabled, by our academic structures or by our administrative and support systems. Overcoming these barriers requires a whole university approach, and it is the job of the Widening Participation Committee to ensure that the whole University is engaged in this task.

This report details some of the ways in which the committee and the UCD Access & Lifelong Learning team have been working to achieve this goal.

Professor John Brannigan
Chair
University Widening Participation Committee

Commentary

The Widening Participation committee, and its work, reflects the myriad and diverse activities, functions and ambitions of our UCD community. The UCD Widening Participation Committee is the formal mechanism to oversee, monitor, and promote the University's achievement of a diverse and inclusive scholarly community. But it is more than that. Oversight of University for All falls to this committee and brings with it a university-wide approach to access and inclusion. The appointment of a senior academic as Chair, and the representative nature of committee membership are important catalysts to action and to change. The leadership of Professor John Brannigan as Chair of our committee and the commitment and engagement of our WP representatives has progressed our ambition to be a University for All. The work of this Committee and my colleagues in UCD Access and Lifelong Learning, is captured in this bumper report encompassing two academic years.

This report can only capture a fraction of the work that is underway in UCD. In many ways, the concept of access being everyone's business is now so well internalised in so many aspects of our work, that we no longer celebrate or note aspects of inclusion - access has become part of the fabric of UCD, and the day to day work of our colleagues.

One of the emerging threads in this fabric is the institutional adoption of universal design in our teaching, learning and student supports. Through the innovative development of three complementary digital badges in universal design we have built and expanded our capacity and commitment to inclusion. We have also had a significant positive impact on the national work on promotion and adoption of Universal Design: Our University for All Toolkit has provided the structure for the Altitude Chater. This sectoral initiative aims to kickstart a national conversation about how the sector can adopt the Charter and over time, work towards embedding a universal design approach.

This report captures some of this work. The accompanying data offers us opportunities to note the progress UCD has made in widening participation. Critically, it also identifies the gaps and opportunities at programme, equity group and institutional level. The data prompts us not to become complacent and to recognise that our ambitions for an inclusive and accessible campus are evident but there's more work to be done.

Dr Bairbre Fleming
Director of UCD Access & Lifelong Learning

UCD Widening Participation Data
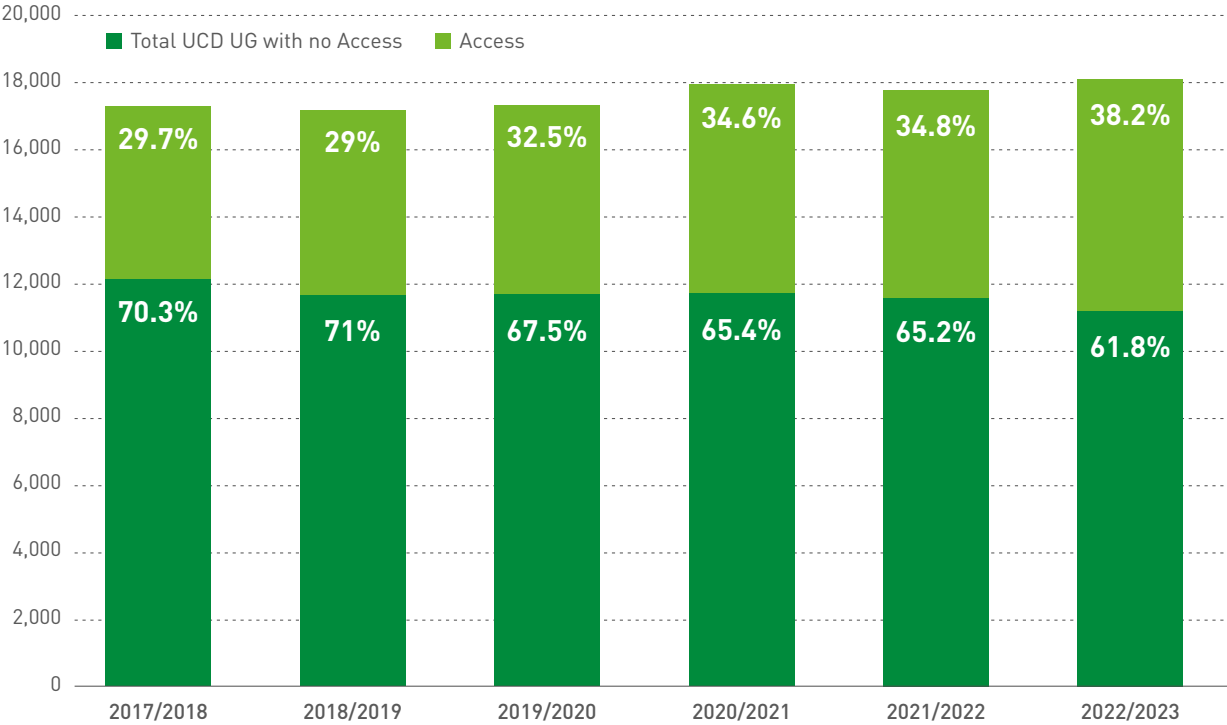
FIGURE 1: Access students as proportion of UCD undergraduate population 2017–2023.

The number of students entering UCD through access routes continues to increase. Critically, those entering through access routes are only a proportion of those students who have been identified by the National Access Plan as under-represented in our universities. In addition to the access routes, registered students can present to register with a disability or for additional financial or other supports.

In UCD we track our data annually and can see the continued increase in the numbers of access students in UCD. This increase may be attributed in some part due to the national trend of increasing numbers of students disclosing a disability and requesting Reasonable Accommodations. The trend in the growing numbers of students with a disability is being seen nationally (AHEAD, 2024) but the increase in UCD specifically has been marked and has caused a significant increase in the demands on the UCD Access & Lifelong Learning service for students with disabilities. There is also increasing pressure on other student support services, on module co-ordinators and other staff to accommodate and address the needs of our diversifying student population. Student requests are not only increasing in frequency but also in complexity. While the increasing diversity is welcome, it brings with it a need for an alternative system to support students. The obvious answer to accommodating increasing numbers of students looking for reasonable accommodations is to embrace Universal Design. The changes and accommodations that can be offered through Universal Design could incorporate many of the adjustments or accommodations, such as providing lecture slides or lecture recordings.

The data also illustrates an increase in the number of low-income students. This is due in large part to a change in how 'low income' is measured with the HEA now returning to our institution the coded Deprivation Index Score (DIS)[1] for our student population. This index replaces our use of the SUSI Special Rate as an indicator as this is no longer provided to UCD. Deprivation Index Scores (DIS) range from a scale of -40 (most disadvantaged) to +40 (most affluent).

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1   The Deprivation Index Scores measures the relative affluence or deprivation of a particular geographical area. This uses data from the 2016 Census, and is measured right down to street level, based on small-area statistics (on average, 80-100 households).
    Thus, showing the extent to which every neighbourhood, suburb, and village is affluent or deprived. Ten key indicators are included in this measure (e.g., the proportion of skilled professionals, employment levels, education levels).
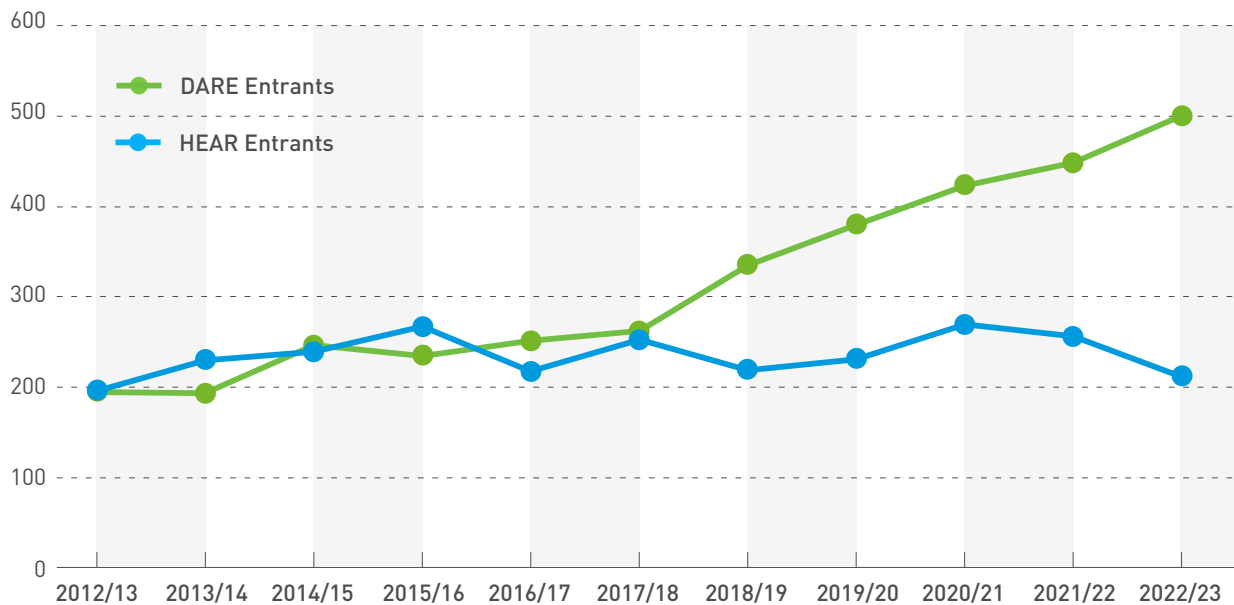
FIGURE 2: A decade of HEAR and DARE New Entrants to UCD.

While the number of low income students is recorded as being higher, the same pattern is not reflected in the admission pathways. As is evident in Figure 2, the low numbers applying, and being made eligible for, the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a source of concern both in UCD and across the sector. While the number of new entrants has risen in UCD in the last decade, the number of HEAR entrants has not increased. Conversely the numbers applying for, and being made eligible for, the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) continues to rise each year. Both HEAR and DARE schemes are scheduled for further review to establish how best to attract and support those cohorts in an equitable and accessible manner.

The other cohort that warrants monitoring is the part-time/flexible cohort. This is a group that is currently relatively small in UCD and has been the subject of an IUA sectoral review and also being considered as an area for enhancement in UCD.

	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23
Low Income students [1]	1,320	1,406	1,449	1,785	1,938	2,134	1,856	2,592
Students reporting disability [2]	1,546	1,623	2,002	2,176	2,381	2,743	2,941	3,386
Mature students [3]	1,857	1,821	1,717	1,717	1,638	1,714	1,455	1,354
Part-time and flexible learning [4]	1,062	981	980	965	1,199	1,254	936	869
QQI-FET [5]	289	329	345	449	565	707	792	812
Refugees and Asylum Seekers [6]		6	5	24	60	57	49	45
Multi Access Students	1,236	1,187	1,357	1,624	1,724	1,896	1,669	1,869
All UCD Access Students	4,818	4,979	5,141	5,492	5,625	6,223	6,184	6,920
Total UCD undergraduate students	**16,856**	**17,192**	**17,299**	**17,186**	**17,332**	**17,968**	**17,766**	**18,123**

TABLE 1: Numbers of under-represented students from each access cohort, compared with total numbers of UCD undergraduate students, from 2015/16 to 2022/23.

Low-Income Students: Students eligible for the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR), students in receipt of a means-tested UCD or Higher Education Authority scholarship, students who attended DEIS secondary schools, and students in receipt of Lone Parent financial supports, students with a DIS score between -40 to -10.

Disability: Students who were eligible for the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE), declare a disability on the Equal Access Survey, or avail of disability support through Access and Lifelong Learning.

Mature: Students over the age of 23 entering higher education for the first time (Data gathered from student registration information).

Part Time: Any student studying part time, including Open Learners. Some Open Learners are not represented (those studying in semester one only).

QQI-FET: Students who are studying fulltime and have entered UCD holding a FETAC/HETAC/QQI award.

Refugee/Asylum: Students who are refugees, asylum seekers, or those given leave to remain and who are availing of support from UCD Access & Lifelong Learning.

The overall proportion of Access Students has increased to 38% in 2022/23

38%
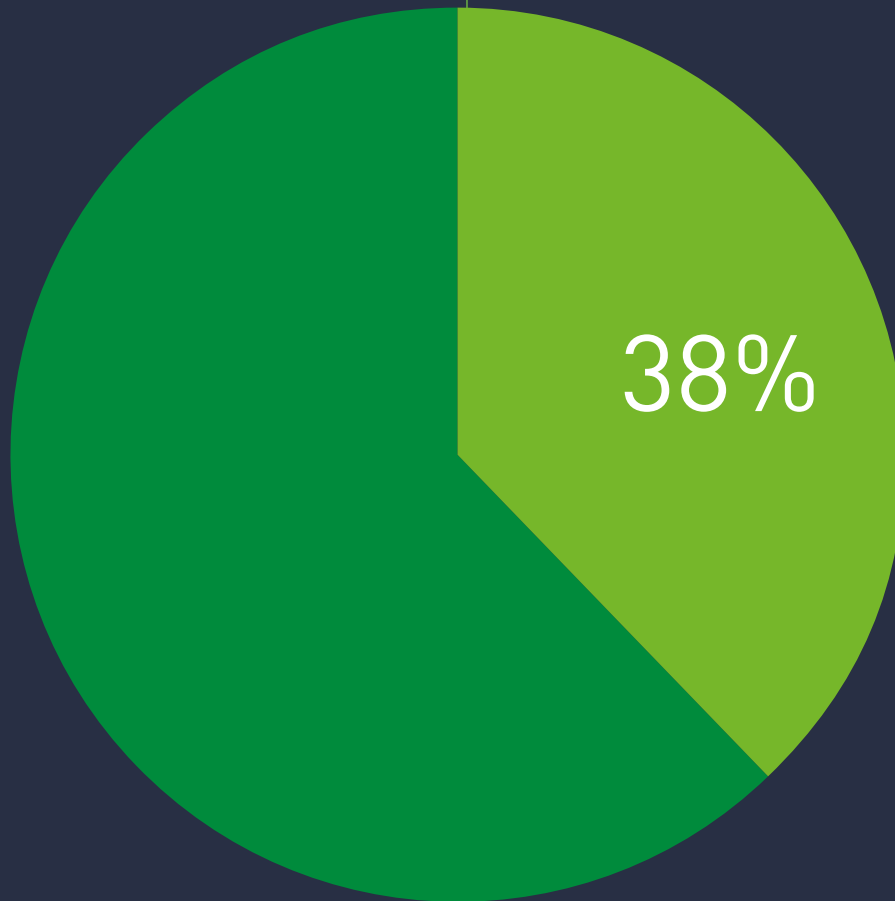
Entry Cohort	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23
Mature Entrants	360	323	288	258	248	242	254	258	259	208
DARE Entrants	193	246	235	251	262	335	380	423	448	500
HEAR Entrants	230	239	267	217	252	219	231	269	256	212
Other Progression Routes	72	73	98	98	104	185	229	285	242	216
All Access Student Entrants	722	775	763	740	741	887	985	1,116	1,097	1,021
Total UCD	**4,416**	**4,371**	**4,445**	**4,504**	**4,507**	**4,364**	**4,532**	**4,910**	**5,013**	**4,945**

TABLE 2: New entrants to UCD undergraduate programmes as a proportion of total UCD undergraduate students, from 2013/14 to 2022-23.

Table 2 captures the proportion of new entrants who enter UCD by a recognised access route. The figures do not represent all widening participation students as some students meet the criteria as defined in the National Access Plan as under-represented, but have not entered through a specific access route. The full picture of widening participation in UCD is captured in Table 1.

Legend:
- 2022/2023
- 2021/2022

Category	2022/2023	2021/2022
Mature	4.2	5.1
DARE	10.1	8.9
HEAR	4.2	5.1
Other Progression Routes	4.3	5.6
All Access Student Entrants	20.6	21.8
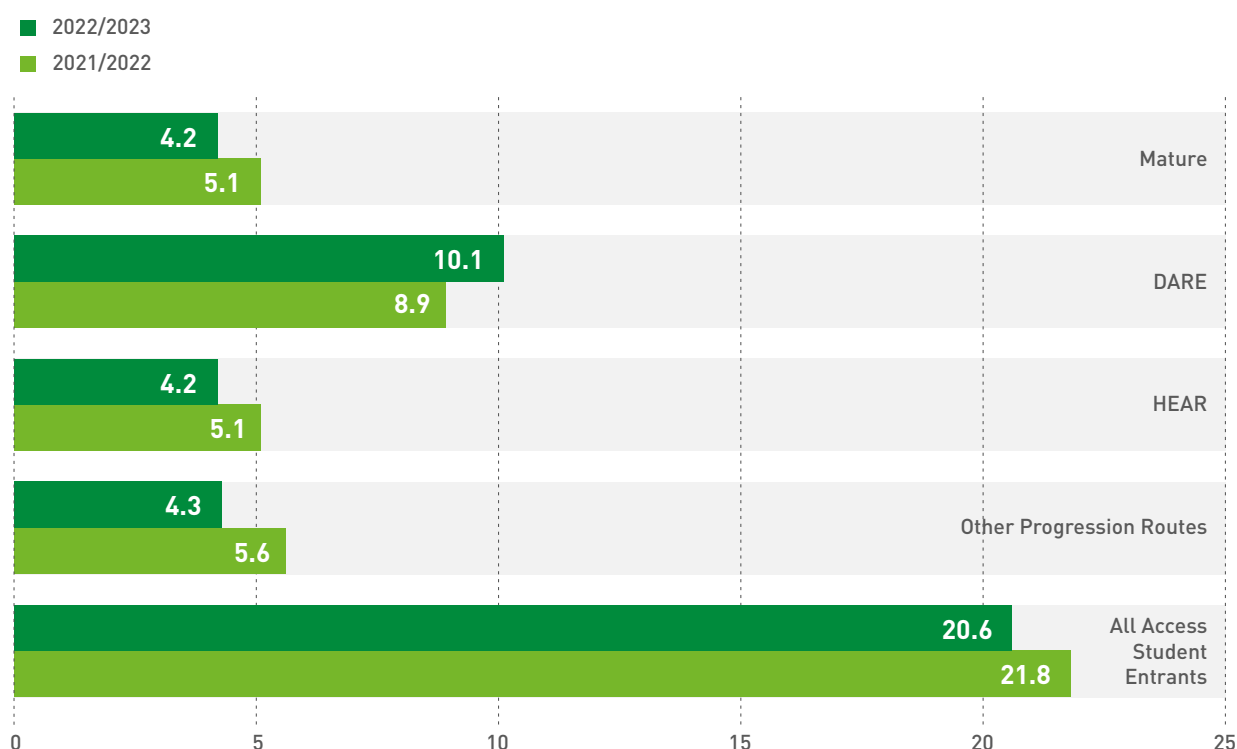
FIGURE 3: Proportion of new entrants by key categories of HEAR; DARE; Mature and other progression routes 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

New entrants to UCD are flagged by their access entry route and the proportion of those students entering through the main access routes has been increasing annually, with the exception of the HEAR cohort and the continuing national trend for lower mature student entrants. The WP picture is broader than the HEAR/DARE and mature and FE routes. As noted elsewhere, there are larger numbers of students identified as low income, who are not tagged as HEAR. There are also significant numbers of students who identify as having a disability or who are part-time/flexible. The data in Figure 4 reflects a more accurate picture of access students by equity group and these numbers have been growing over the last decade. The clear communication of access quotas and the work of colleagues across the University in promoting access and in attracting under-represented applicants is reflected in the increasing diversification of our student population.
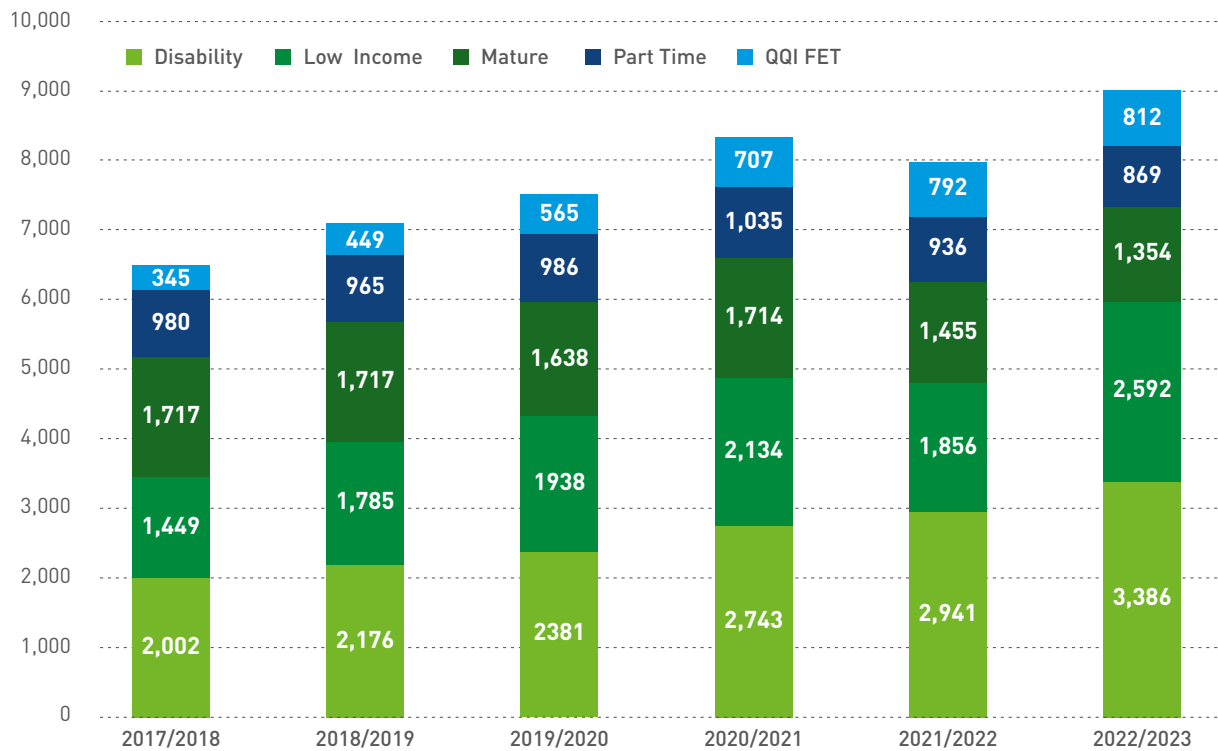
FIGURE 4: Proportion of all UCD undergraduate students by key categories 2017-2022.

The patterns of participation by key equity group are illustrated in Figure 5 and show the significant increase in students with a disability and the growing number of low income students, which is particularly marked by the change in methodology for identifying this cohort. The other cohort that is growing annually is students who have entered UCD through a QQI-FET pathway. The drop in mature students is particularly stark.
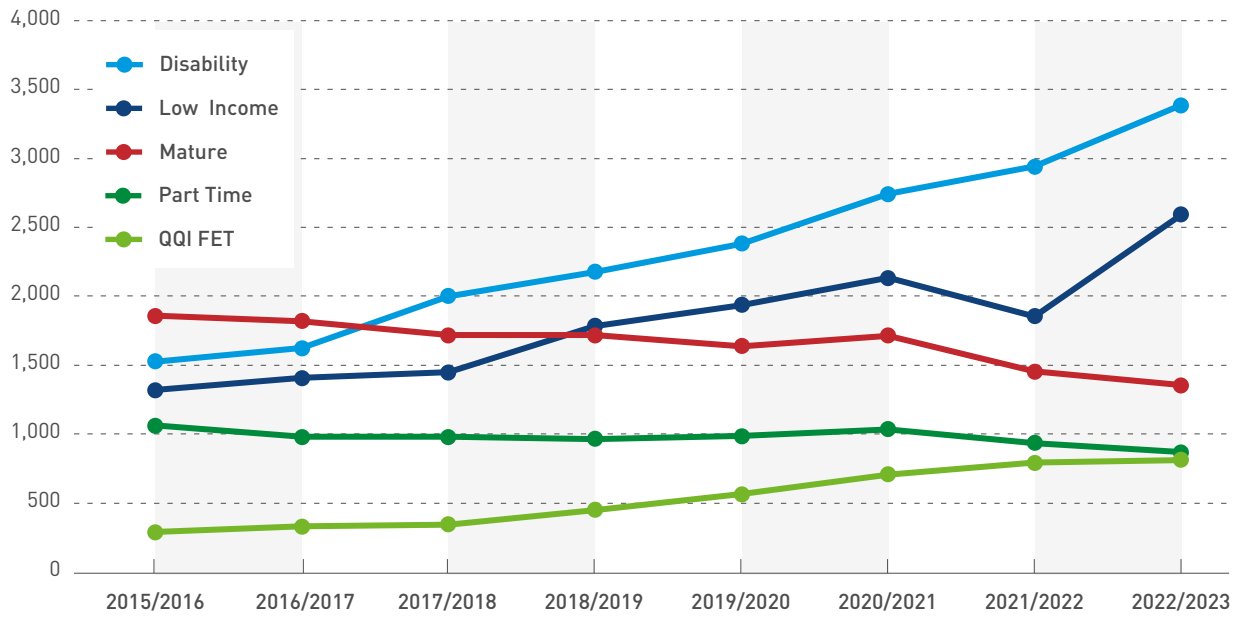
FIGURE 5: Participation patterns for access student cohorts 2015-2023.

Access Quotas

UCD Registry provides UCD Access & Lifelong Learning with data following the completion of the annual CAO (Central Applications Office) offers process. This data details the access quotas and admissions to full time undergraduate programmes. Quotas, of reserved places for access students, are established by programme boards seeking to target access students. Significant progress has been made to date, with a number of access pathways into undergraduate programmes and a quarter of all undergraduate places targeted for these pathways.

Both Figures 6(a) and 6(b) show the quotas for the two years covered in the Widening Participation report.
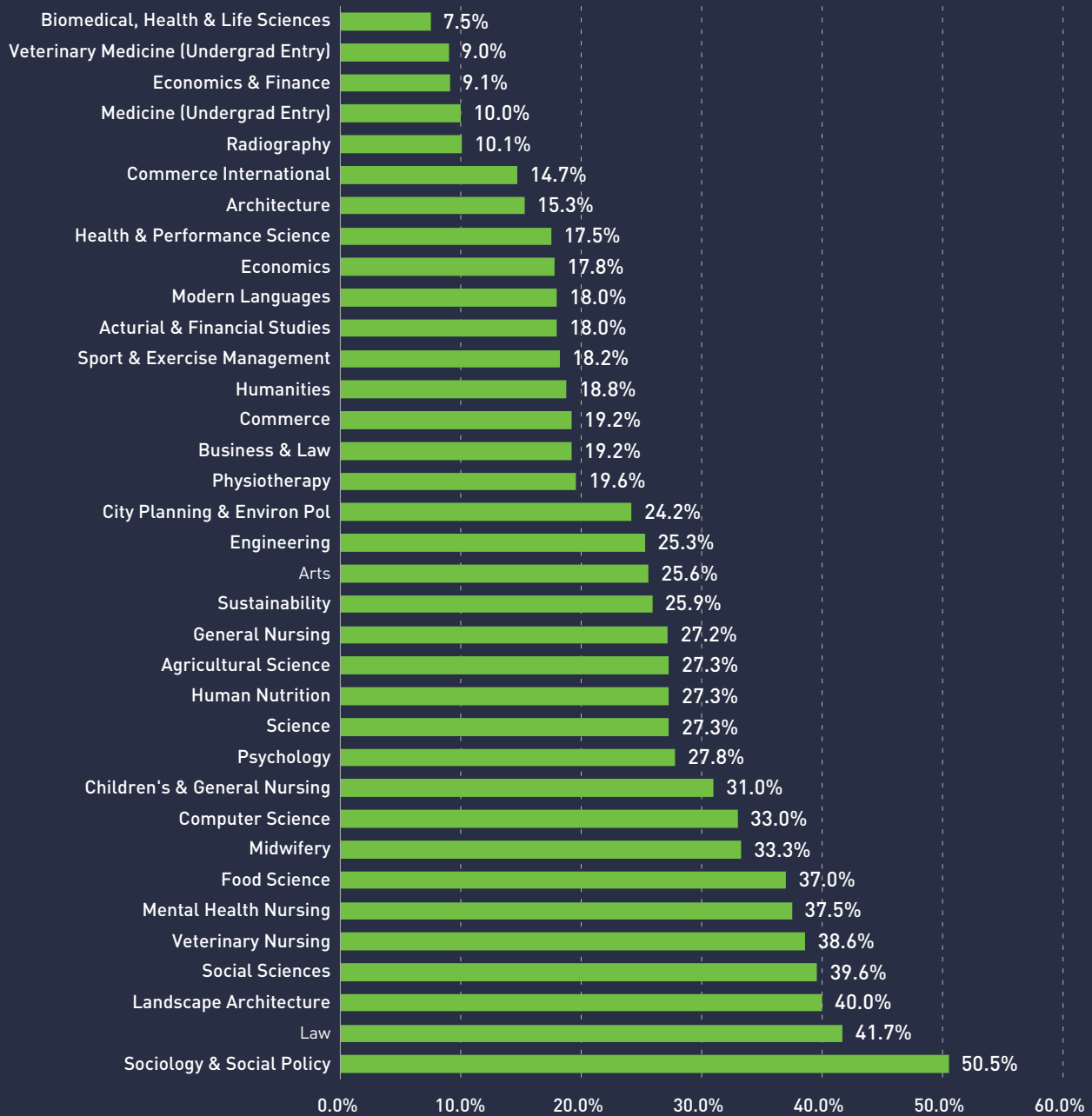
FIGURE 6(A). Quotas for admission for Access students, as determined by each programme area in 2021/22.
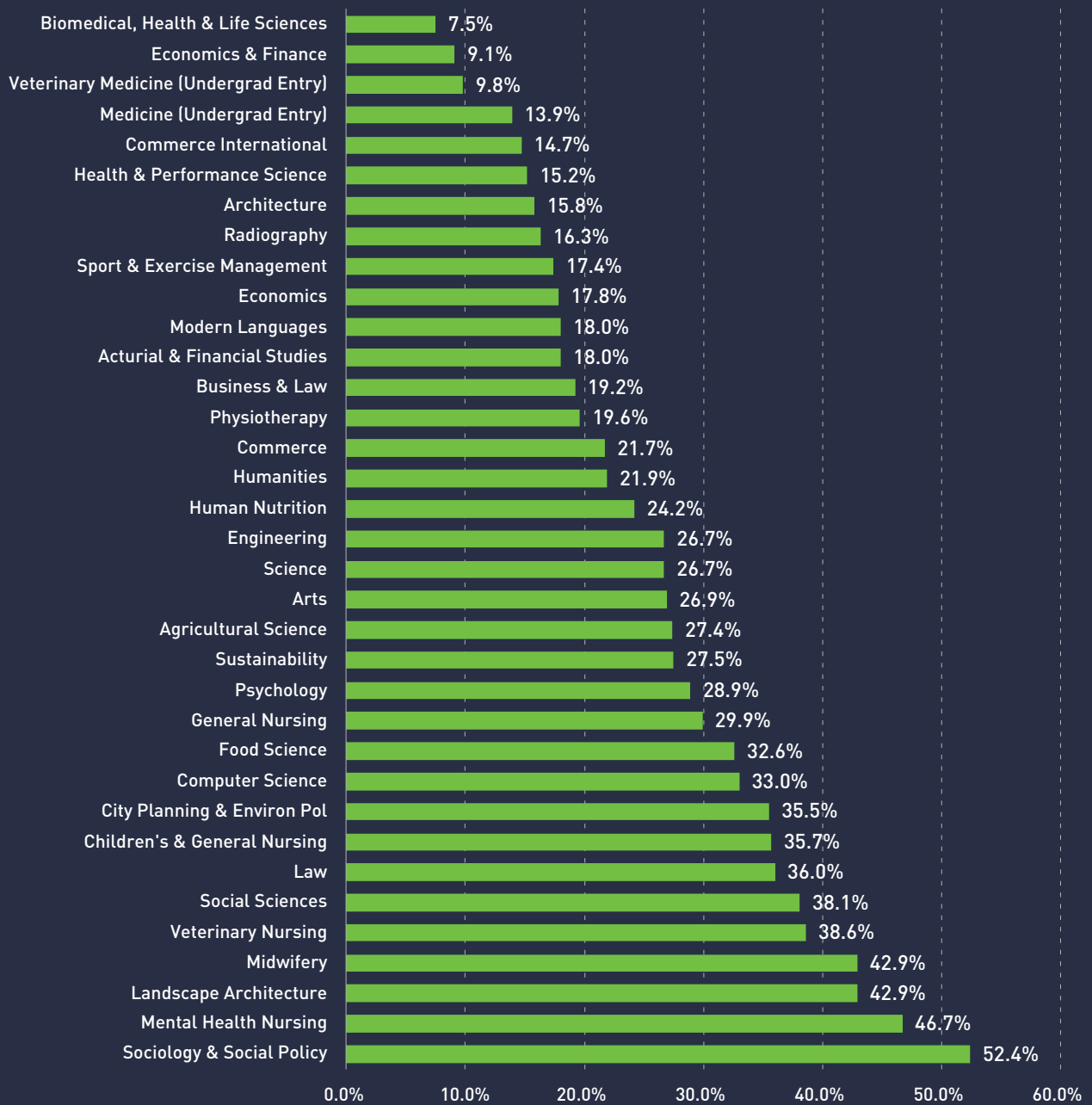
FIGURE 6(B). Quotas for admission for Access students, as determined by each programme area in 2022/23.

While the overall quota of places in UCD is substantial it does vary from programme to programme being as high as 52.4% in Sociology and Social Policy and as low as 7.5% in Biomedical, Health and Life Sciences. These discrepancies are substantial and in many cases those programmes with the lower quotas are those with the highest CAO points requirements. UCD's Widening Participation Representatives continue to address these disparities. In particular, Widening Participation Representatives have identified those programmes which do not offer all alternative admission pathways including QQI-FET or Open Learning.

Participation patterns by Programme

Participation data is made available to UCD Access & Lifelong Learning by the Director of Institutional Research in UCD. We have provided this data in disaggregated format and this has been a significant lever for change in our University for All implementation. Participation data includes all students enrolled on a programme while admissions data only refers to new entrants through designated access pathways. Again we report on full-time undergraduate programme participation. Disaggregated data for programmes is only provided where there are more than 50 students enrolled on the programme but all undergraduate students are represented in the institutional figures. The groups reported here align with those identified as underrepresented in Higher Education in the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education.

The figures below capture the proportion of access students per programme and can present a different picture to those depicting access quota by programme.
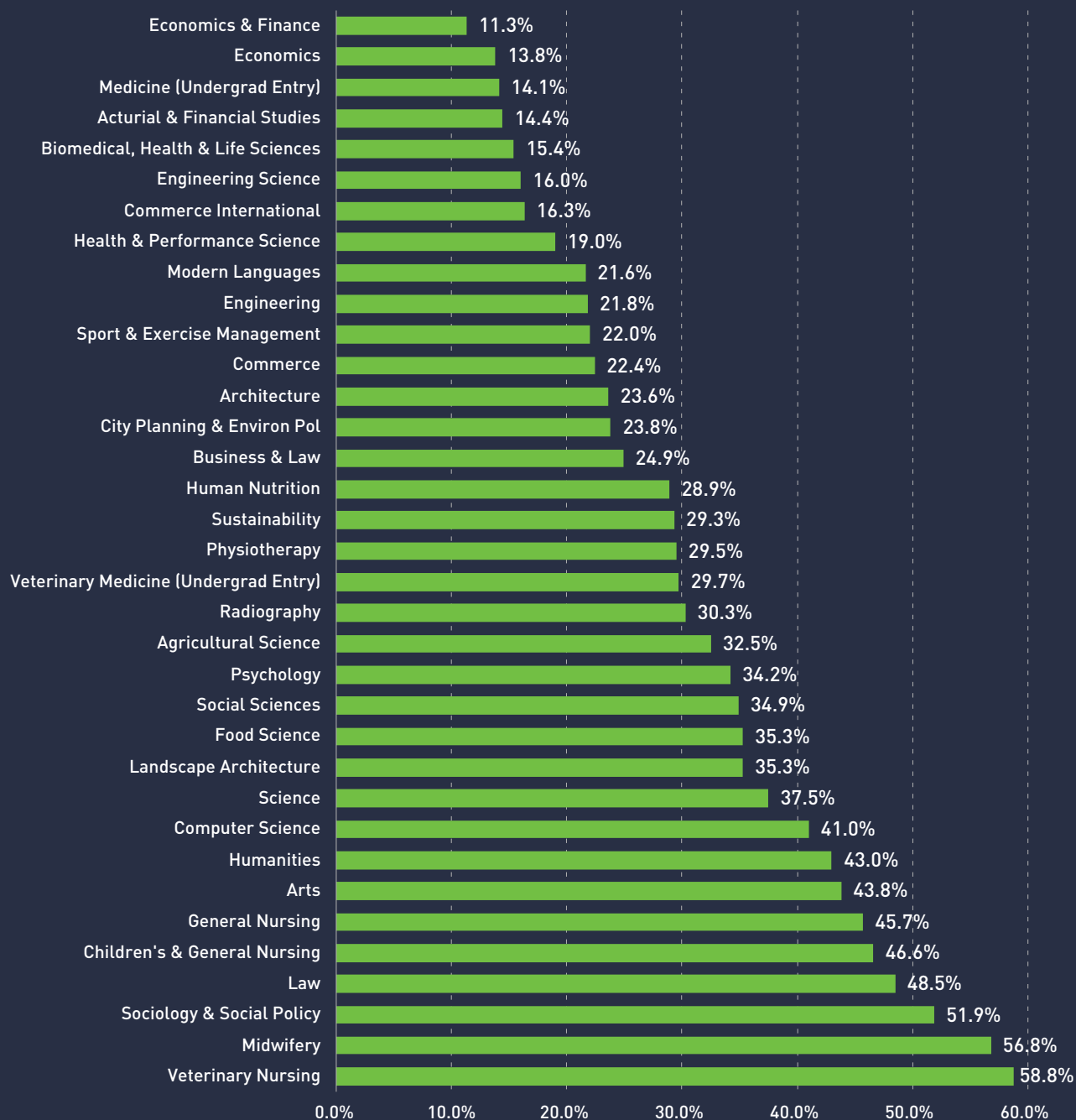
FIGURE 7(A): Percentage of Access students in each of UCD's undergraduate programme areas 2021/22.

Programme	Percentage
Economics & Finance	11.3%
Economics	13.8%
Medicine (Undergrad Entry)	14.1%
Acturial & Financial Studies	14.4%
Biomedical, Health & Life Sciences	15.4%
Engineering Science	16.0%
Commerce International	16.3%
Health & Performance Science	19.0%
Modern Languages	21.6%
Engineering	21.8%
Sport & Exercise Management	22.0%
Commerce	22.4%
Architecture	23.6%
City Planning & Environ Pol	23.8%
Business & Law	24.9%
Human Nutrition	28.9%
Sustainability	29.3%
Physiotherapy	29.5%
Veterinary Medicine (Undergrad Entry)	29.7%
Radiography	30.3%
Agricultural Science	32.5%
Psychology	34.2%
Social Sciences	34.9%
Food Science	35.3%
Landscape Architecture	35.3%
Science	37.5%
Computer Science	41.0%
Humanities	43.0%
Arts	43.8%
General Nursing	45.7%
Children's & General Nursing	46.6%
Law	48.5%
Sociology & Social Policy	51.9%
Midwifery	56.8%
Veterinary Nursing	58.8%

FIGURE 7(B): Percentage of Access students in each of UCD's undergraduate programme areas 2022/23.

Programme Area	Percentage
Economics & Finance	12.3%
Medicine (Undergrad Entry)	16.4%
Engineering Science	17.4%
Biomedical, Health & Life Sciences	19.5%
Economics	21.1%
Acturial & Financial Studies	22.0%
Commerce International	22.0%
Health & Performance Science	22.0%
Commerce	24.2%
Engineering	25.9%
Architecture	26.9%
City Planning & Environ Pol	27.5%
Human Nutrition	29.2%
Modern Languages	29.3%
Business & Law	29.5%
Radiography	29.7%
Sport & Exercise Management	31.0%
Veterinary Medicine (Undergrad Entry)	31.3%
Physiotherapy	31.7%
Sustainability	32.2%
Landscape Architecture	36.1%
Agricultural Science	36.4%
Social Sciences	36.9%
Food Science	39.1%
Science	40.0%
Psychology	43.4%
Computer Science	43.8%
Humanities	47.3%
Children's & General Nursing	49.7%
Arts	49.8%
General Nursing	50.6%
Law	53.9%
Midwifery	57.1%
Veterinary Nursing	60.1%
Sociology & Social Policy	61.1%

FIGURE 8(A): Comparison of access quotas vs participation rates by undergraduate programme in 2021/2022.
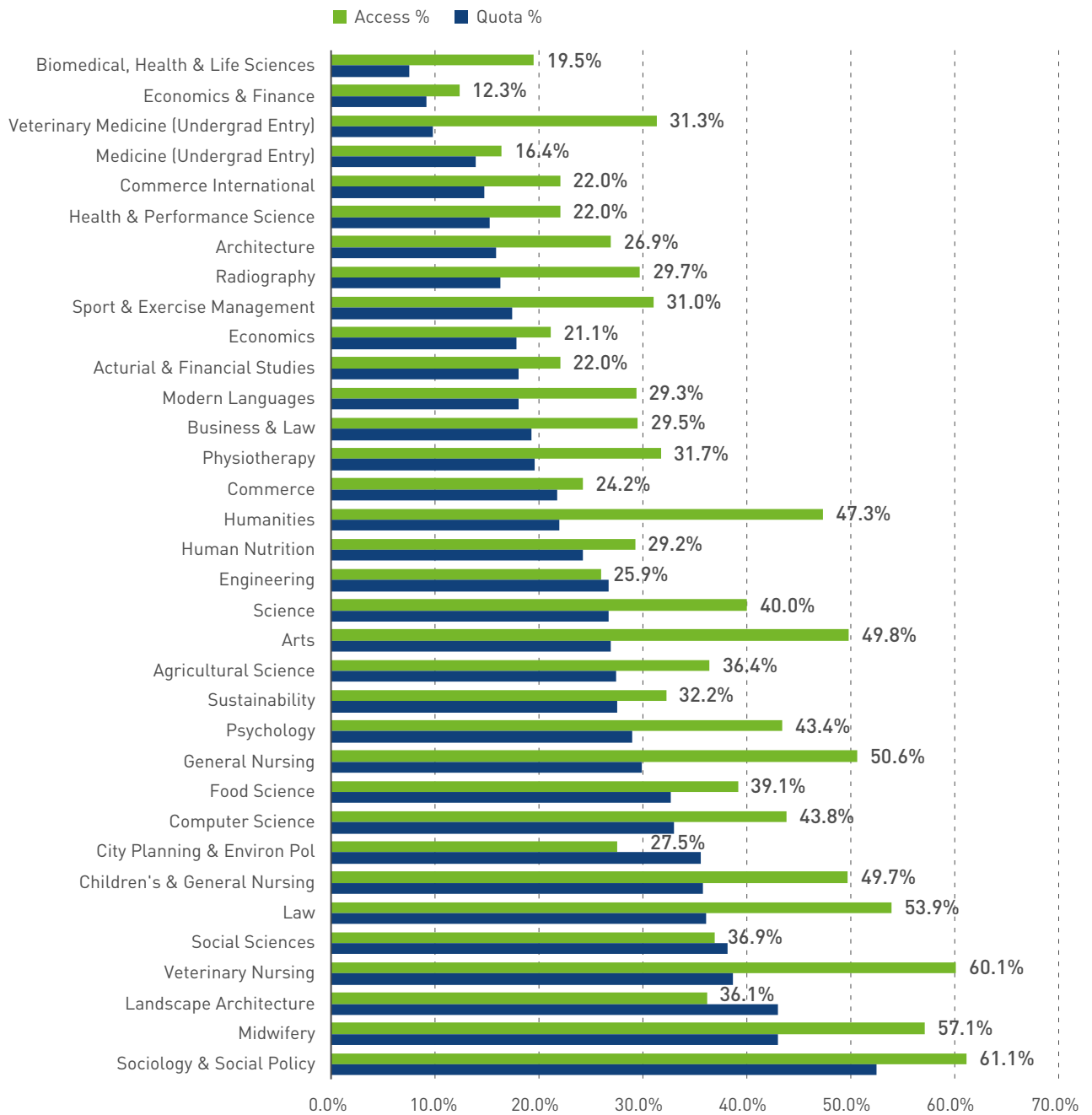
FIGURE 8(B): Comparison of access quotas vs participation rates by undergraduate programme in 2022/2023.

As outlined above, each year as part of UCD's enrolment planning process, programmes allocate places for the access admission pathways. This process provides an opportunity for our Widening Participation Representatives to advocate for an increase in pathways and/or an adjustment of the quota of places to respond to trends within the programmes. You'll see from this data that programmes such as Social Sciences and Engineering programmes have well aligned quotas and admission rates. In other programme areas the quota, and subsequent participation rate, is relatively low compared to our institutional target of 35% participation. The average quota for the past number of years has been 25% so we would like to see this as the minimum across all programmes in the coming years.

Access and Outward Mobility

Outward mobility is defined as any Erasmus or study abroad programme with a duration of one trimester or more. Undergraduate data only is provided here. It should be noted that other intercultural learning experiences or programmes are on offer to students but only those that require travel to another country and enrolment in another university for the duration stated are currently captured in this data. The issue of Outward Mobility is central to the focus of the WP committee on maximising the opportunities for access students to have the same student experience as their peers in UCD.

Year	Total	Access	Access%	Low Income	LI %	Disability	Dis %	Mature	Mat %	QQI-FET	QQI%	Multi Access
22/23	909	250	27.5%	103	11.3%	153	16.8%	11	1.2%	15	1.7%	29
21/22	682	143	20.9%	47	6.9%	88	12.9%	1	0.1%	17	2%	13
20/21	211	44	20.9%	17	8.1%	25	11.8%	2	0.9%	4	1.9%	
19/20	567	104	18.3%	30	5.3%	72	12.7%	9	1.6%	1	0.2%	7
18/19	661	119	18%	56	8.5%	71	10.7%	2	0.3%	1	0.2%	11
17/18	492	73	14.8%	34	6.9%	39	7.9%	1	0.2%	2	0.4%	4
16/17	572	82	14.3%	36	6.3%	39	6.8%	7	1.2%	4	0.7%	4
15/16	545	91	16.7%	43	7.9%	41	7.5%	11	2.0%	1	0.2%	5

TABLE 3: Participation of Access Student Cohorts in Outward Mobility 2015-2023.

The number of access students engaging with outward mobility in the past year has increased significantly. This is in no small part due to the work of our colleagues in UCD Global and in the programmes which offer Erasmus and Study Abroad opportunities. The increases are mainly in the areas of disability and low-income although we do see a small increase in mature students. UCD Global is continuing to work with colleagues across the university to provide a variety of opportunities in this area including short term exchanges. We will work with colleagues to examine the possibility of capturing these types of outward mobility in our data sets going forward.

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Progression

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. The undergraduate degree entering cohort is full-time undergraduate degree students entering first year for the first time.
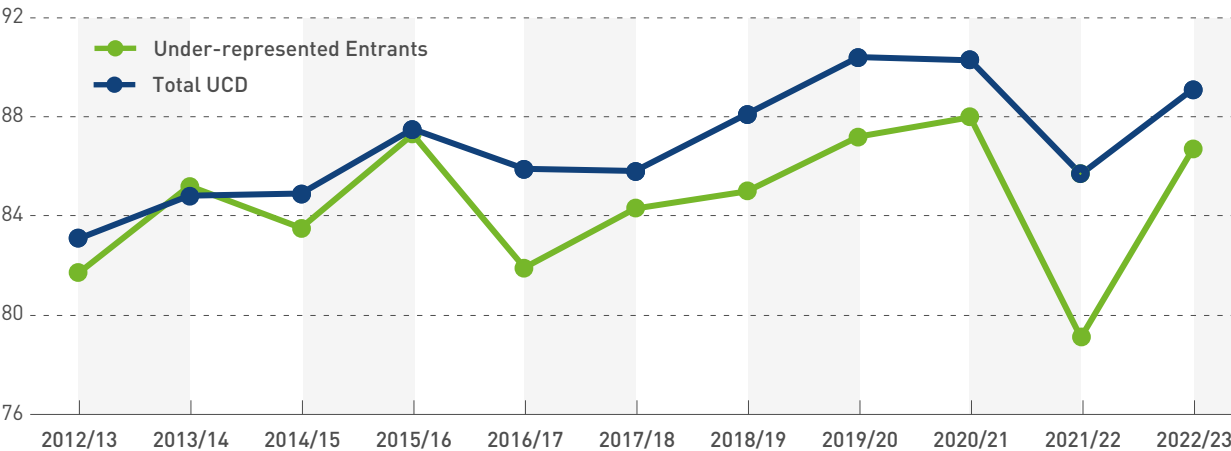
FIGURE 9: Progression of total UCD cohort and pattern of progression for full access cohort.

The progression rates show that those entering through access routes are progressing at close to the same rates as the total UCD population. Looking at the figures in Table 4, there is data that illustrate that some cohorts perform higher than the total UCD population, but this data varies and is therefore not generalisable. However, as a general observation, the data certainly addresses any concern about access student's progression as a measure of their academic performance.

Progression Rate (per 100 new entrants)

Entry Cohort	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Under-represented Entrants	81.7	85.2	83.5	87.3	81.9	84.3	85.0	87.2	88.0	79.1	86.7
Mature Entrants	81.5	84.4	85.8	89.6	84.9	83.1	88.0	79.9	87.2	79.9	90.9
DARE Entrants	83.1	89.1	85.0	86.4	84.1	84.0	87.2	90.8	89.6	80.8	85.4
HEAR Entrants	87.2	89.1	82.4	90.3	81.1	88.5	84.9	93.5	91.1	82.8	91.0
Other Progression Routes*	77.4	80.6	83.6	85.7	80.6	80.8	81.1	87.3	87.4	76.0	86.6
Total UCD	**83.1**	**84.8**	**84.9**	**87.5**	**85.9**	**85.8**	**88.1**	**90.4**	**90.3**	**85.7**	**89.1**

TABLE 4: First Year Progression Rates Disaggregated by Target Group, from 2012/13 to 2022/23.

Reporting on progression rates can be less reliable than some other metrics at times as the figures are constantly changing and being updated. It should be noted though that there was a drop in access cohort progression rates in 2021-22 but this is seen also in the general student population. It is more pronounced in our access groups and this is likely because the impact of the pandemic was more sharply felt by those who may be more marginalised in society with the impact lasting longer than for some other groups. For 2022-23 the progression rates have returned to be more in line broadly with the years before the shift.

*Other progression routes include Open Learners and QQI-FET.

Student Retention

We define Student Retention as the total number of a full-time undergraduate degree entering cohort in a given year that remains in study in the following year. Retention rates of students entering through access admissions pathways are broadly in line with the general UCD population. The trends are encouraging and demonstrate the success of access students in undergraduate programmes. While the year 2021-22 shows a lower rate of retention, as can be expected due to the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic. The rates for 2022-23 are in line with the general UCD retention rates.
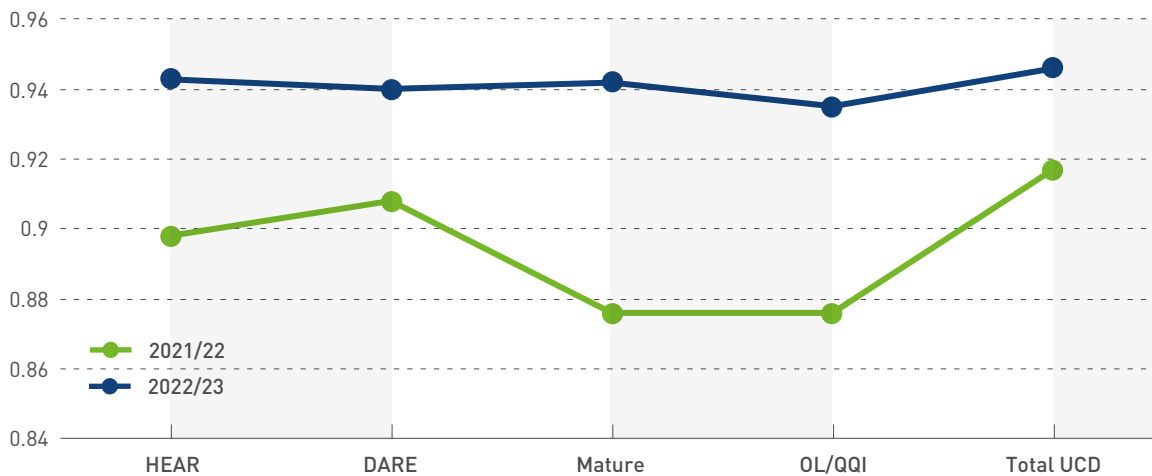
FIGURE 10: Patterns of retention for total UCD cohort and the patterns for four of the key equity groups for 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Entry Route	2012 /13	2013 /14	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23
HEAR	92.9%	92.2%	86.2%	92.1%	85.3%	92.1%	88.6%	94.8%	92.6%	89.8%	94.3%
DARE	91.3%	91.7%	91.9%	91.9%	88.8%	90.1%	91%	92.9%	92.7%	90.8%	94%
Mature	85.3%	86.1%	89.5%	91.7%	87.2%	89.1%	90.9%	82.3%	89.9%	87.6%	94.2%
OL/QQI	81.1%	81.9%	86.3%	87.8%	90.8%	87.5%	88.1%	90.4%	90.2%	87.6%	93.5%
Total UCD	**88.9%**	**88.5%**	**88.8%**	**91%**	**89.8%**	**90.9%**	**91.6%**	**93.2%**	**93.3%**	**91.7%**	**94.6%**

TABLE 5: Retention Rate of undergraduate students by entry route and year of entry.

Non-Completion Rate - % who have not completed by year of entry

Entry Cohort	2012/13 Entrants	2013/14 Entrants	2014/15 Entrants	2015/16 Entrants	2016/17 Entrants	2017/18 Entrants	2018/19 Entrants	2019/20 Entrants
Under-represented Entrants	23.9	22.4	20.3	18.9	22.6	15.2	15.8	17.9
Mature Entrants	25.1	20.3	19.2	15.6	22.1	16.5	15.7	25.6
DARE Entrants	14.4	16.1	15.9	14.9	19.5	14.5	12.8	14.2
HEAR Entrants	21.4	21.7	21.3	15.7	20.7	11.9	15.1	11.7
Other Progression Routes	32.1	30.6	21.9	29.6	21.4	23.1	18.9	16.2
Total UCD	**18.1**	**18.2**	**17.3**	**15.3**	**16.3**	**13.8**	**12.6**	**13.1**

TABLE 6: Non-Completion rates for Access Student cohorts disaggregated by target group from 2012/13 to 2019/20.

The non-completion rates offer some interesting insights into a potential gap for our mature students. Non-completion seems to be a more significant issue for mature students than any other access cohort. There are many potential reasons for this and it should be noted that students may still be on track to complete their programme at this point as this data is frequently updated. There have been significant changes to the socio-economic landscape since the pandemic. While the Irish economy is currently enjoying full employment we are seeing a cost of living crisis meaning that making the decision to invest time in education rather than working full time is likely becoming increasingly difficult. The lack of funding for part time education is increasingly creating barriers for many along with the insufficient rate of grant on offer through SUSI. All of these factors are likely contributing to the increased time spent by mature students completing their degrees.

Graduate Outcomes

FIGURE 11: Graduate Outcomes Survey – Access Students Responses 2018-2022.

Graduation Year	In Employment	In Further Study or Training	Seeking Employment	Other Activities
2022	363	91	23	14
2021	573	159	49	16
2020	262	95	22	26
2018	404	126	27	20

The Graduate Outcomes Survey is a national survey distributed to all graduates of HEA higher education institutions, nine months after graduation. In UCD, the results of this survey show that access students are more likely to be in further study or training than their peers. One reason for this may be that upon graduation, students in access cohorts do not have the same types of opportunities as those afforded with greater social and cultural capital. The percentage seeking employment has returned in line with 2018 levels and is now closer to that of students who are not from access groups. However, there is still a disparity in the numbers in employment for access students vs non-access. Further work needs to be done to ascertain the differences in degree dividend and in graduate employee experiences for access students. Data from the 2022 survey is still being collected.
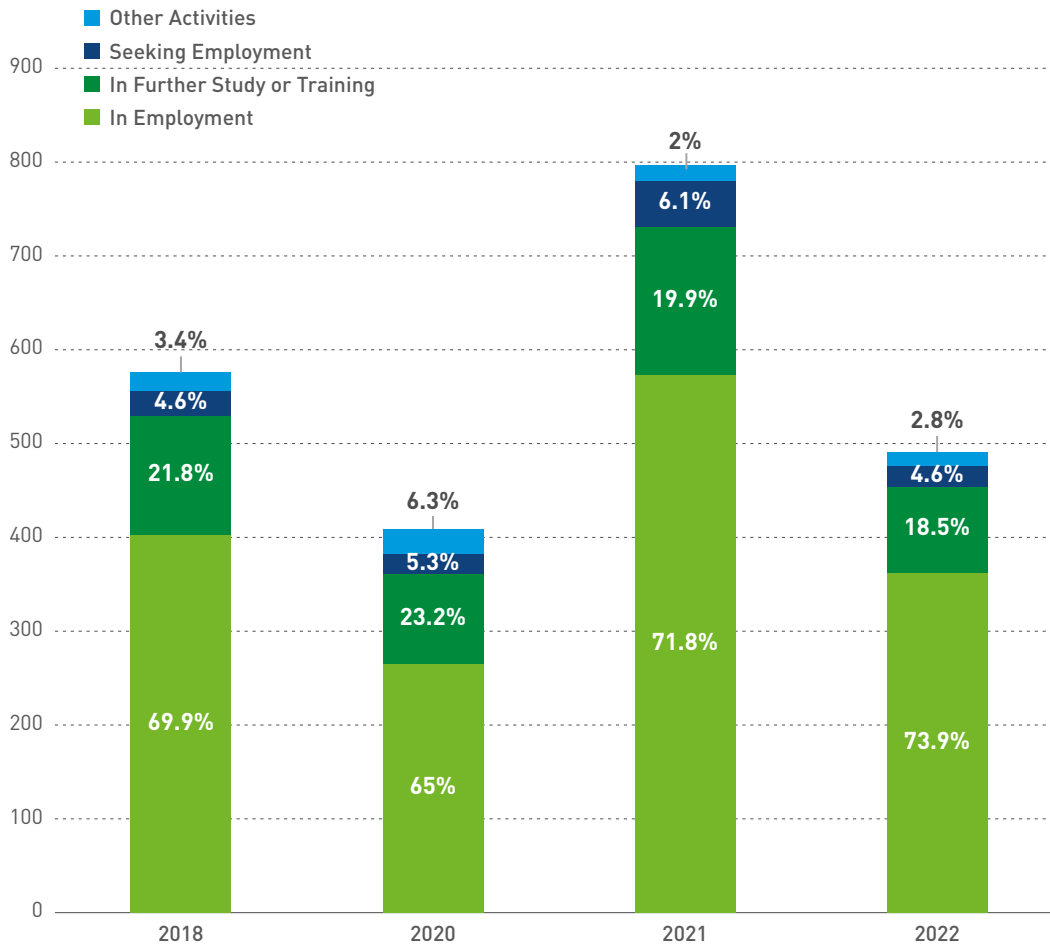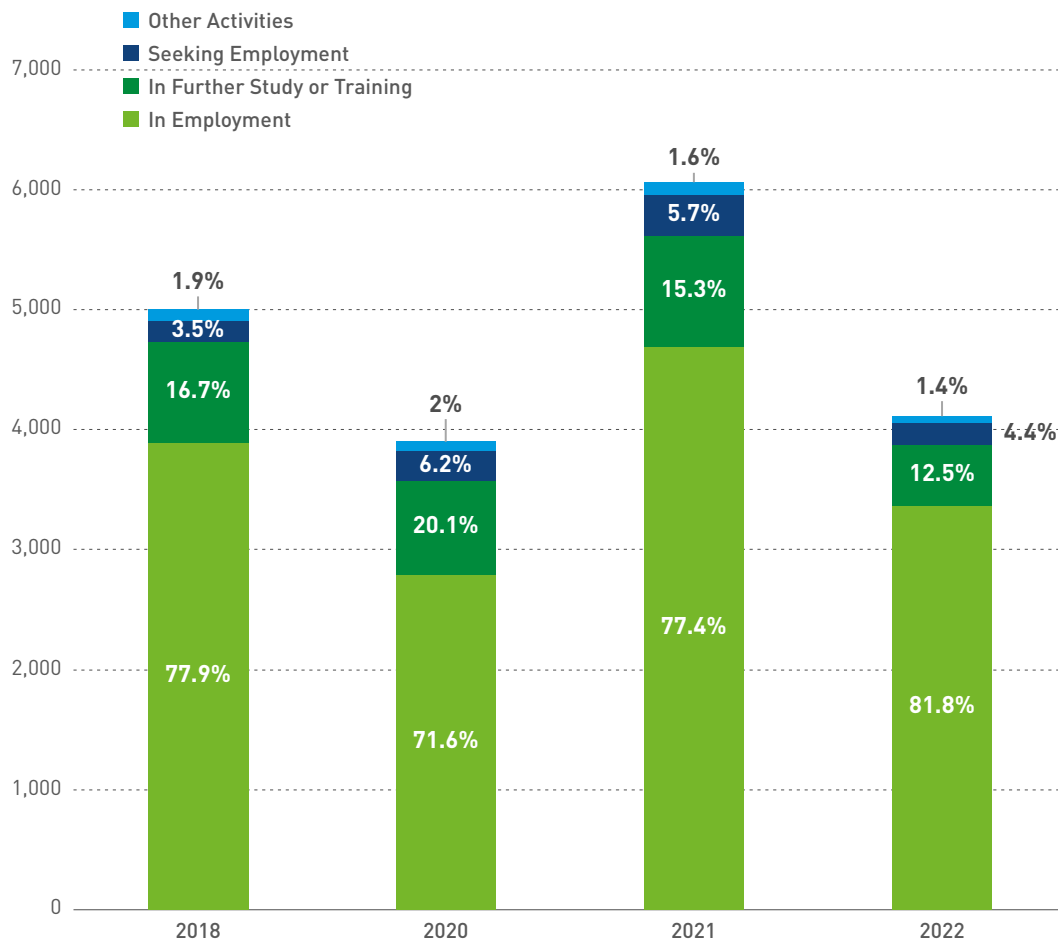
FIGURE 12: Graduate Outcomes Survey - Non-Access Students Responses 2018-2022.

Graduation Year	In Employment	In Further Study or Training	Seeking Employment	Other Activities
2022	3,363	513	179	57
2021	4,690	924	345	99
2020	2,794	783	243	79
2018	3,895	835	177	96

Intersectionality

1869 Access Students in more than one group	Low Income	Disability	Mature	Part Time	QQI-FET	Sanctuary
Low Income	2,592	510	308	87	246	9
Disability	510	3,386	278	55	213	10
Mature	308	278	1,354	592	60	34
Part Time	87	55	592	869	3	6
QQI-FET	246	213	60	3	812	6
Sanctuary	9	10	34	6	6	45

TABLE 7: Intersectionality of Access Student Groups 2022-23.

As noted above our students are now presenting with increasingly complex needs and frequently are in more than one access cohort. This requires a shift in mindset in how we support students and is assisted in Access & Lifelong Learning by a collaborative approach to student support between colleagues. Looking at the intersectionality of the groups brings to light the groups who likely require more support e.g. those who are low income and disclose a disability and also helps to dispel some myths e.g. many assume those entering with Further Education and Training awards are mature - this is actually seldom the case. However, we can see that 30% of these students are low-income meaning they may have significant financial challenges during their programme. More than ever, it is important we don't make assumptions about our student cohort and we work to create an environment where any student can thrive without the need to raise their hand and request something additional in order to survive in their programme. We intend to explore the impact of intersectionality on the student experience when we publish an updated version of the 'Who Counts?' data publication in 2026.

UCD Scholarships – Cothrom na Feinne

UCD offers a range of scholarships and bursaries to access students. The largest of these are the Cothrom na Féinne scholarships. These scholarship awards are made to support students who experience significant financial, social, and educational barriers. Under the umbrella of Cothrom na Féinne, the Think Again scholarship was launched, targeting low-income mature women accessing higher education. These scholarships are valued up to €14,000 and also include pre-entry and post-entry supports. As a demonstration project, it will challenge and propose solutions to some of the structural barriers that impact low-income women accessing higher education.

— 141 Cothrom na Féinne Scholarships were awarded in academic year 2021/2022.

— There was also an increase in the number of PATH 2 1916 Bursaries available with the introduction of the Tier 2 and Tier 3 awards. 42 Students in UCD were successful in receiving a Path 2 1916 Bursary; 9 Tier 1; 6 Tier 2 and 27 Tier 3.

— There were 8 graduate fee waivers awarded in the College of Science and College of Social Sciences and Law.

— 8 students received National University of Ireland (NUI) Grants: 6 in receipt of the NUI Grant Scheme for Students with Disabilities and 2 in receipt of the Equal Educational Opportunities Scheme.

As of academic year 2022/2023, UCD's Cothrom na Féinne Scholarship programme is recognised as the largest needs-based scholarship programme for access students in Ireland. The highlight this year was the progress made in overcoming a structural barrier for low-income students on scholarships, where scholarship income is considered reckonable household income for SUSI. After an in-depth process with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research innovation and Science, the Cothrom na Féinne scholarships were granted income disregard for the purpose of SUSI.

— 155 Cothrom na Féinne Scholarships were awarded in academic year 2022/2023.

— 83 Path 2 1916 Bursaries were awarded to UCD students; 10 Tier 1, 6 Tier 2 and 67 Tier 3.

— 7 graduate fee waivers in the College of Science and College of Social Sciences and Law.

— 11 students received National University of Ireland (NUI) Grants: 8 in receipt of the NUI Grant Scheme for Students with Disabilities and 3 in receipt of the Equal Educational Opportunities Scheme.

Outreach Coordination Network

The WP Outreach Coordination Network continued to drive its agenda of achieving a university wide, coherent approach to WP outreach activity over the course of the 2022/23 academic year. Working with UCD partners in communities with low levels of progression to higher education, the WP outreach network strives to promote UCD as a University for All and helps ensure a diverse UCD student population. Associate Professor Caitríona Cunningham chairs the network, with representatives drawn from Programme boards and University units (e.g. Student Recruitment UCD Library, Careers Network and Registry Admissions). For the academic year 2022-2023, the network met in November 2022, February 2023 and May 2023, providing a forum for idea sharing and enhancing internal UCD communications, with discussion of a wide range of issues relevant to the network's remit. To highlight the ongoing challenge of widening participation and enhance understanding of the broader context of required WP outreach activity, Dr Lisa Padden presented a profile of the feeder school data for UCD programmes at the May 2023 network meeting. Of note, there are 727 Secondary schools including 235 DEIS Schools in Ireland and data regarding numbers of UCD programme entrants from these were discussed by the WP outreach network, alongside other outreach target audiences, including colleges of further education and specific community groups.

Network members are developing collaborative relationships with UCD WP Committee representatives, Faculty Partners and other local leaders (e.g. EDI, Teaching and Learning leads), alongside their outreach network relationships to optimise knowledge sharing and drive efficiencies. In addition, over the past year network members were facilitated to capture and report on current WP outreach initiatives in their local programme areas/units by way of a standardised 'WP outreach' activity template and with related individual presentations at the network meetings. WP outreach officers from UCD Access and Lifelong Learning held meetings with individual network members, supporting them in completing this task of defining, categorising (student experience, student mentoring, information and guidance) and reporting the various WP outreach activities. A philosophy of reflecting on when and how WP messaging and information can be incorporated in broader school/ unit or University activities (e.g. Open Days, UCD Festival, Public engagement events) was part of this process.

Such an approach was adopted with a view to having a common understanding of what constitutes WP Outreach activity and to report and present such activity in a clear and cohesive manner at both internal and external University fora and across school and University websites. A widening participation checklist, developed by this outreach network, has been incorporated in the Toolkit for Inclusive Higher Education Institutions and network members are drawing on this to clarify their outreach work agendas and are being encouraged to use the Toolkit as the basis for local facilitated workshops. Prioritising WP outreach activity projects and collaborating on these via the network with leveraging of UCD Access & Lifelong Learning support is underway with the development of a WP Outreach toolkit proposed.

University of Sanctuary

UCD, as a University of Sanctuary, continues to provide a welcoming and supportive environment to students of refugee background. University of Sanctuary status was first achieved in 2018. In December 2021, UCD successfully renewed its University of Sanctuary status following a re-accreditation process. With this status we commit, as a University, to the principles of "learn", "embed" and "share": Learning what seeking sanctuary means; embedding concepts of welcome and inclusion within the university and beyond; and sharing what we have learnt and achieved in relation to sanctuary. Increasing access to the university to students of refugee background is a key pillar of having University of Sanctuary Status.

The Sanctuary Scholarship programme is part of UCD's University for All initiative, where supports are universally designed to match and meet the needs of a diverse range of scholars. Since 2018 UCD has offered Sanctuary scholarships to 69 students. During the 2022-23 academic year there were 26 Sanctuary scholars in total, comprising 4 open learners, 3 access students, 15 undergraduate students and 4 postgraduate students. The Sanctuary Scholarship Programme provides financial support (fee waiver & maintenance payment equivalent to SUSI) until such time that scholars are eligible to move to State support. Students are supported by UCD Access & Lifelong Learning to make the application to access state support and to facilitate this have developed an information book: State Supports: What are my options & how do I apply? As well as financial support, those in receipt of a sanctuary scholarship are provided with a range of other supports from UCD Access & Lifelong Learning and from the wider university, including key worker support, academic supports, and social events. For many students of refugee background, financially excluded from accessing third level grants and living in precarious situations, sanctuary scholarships give them an important focus during an uncertain and challenging time. They offer an important educational opportunity which allows them to move towards their career goals.

Precious Matumba, a Sanctuary Scholar who graduated from the UCD Professional Masters in Social Work in 2022, described the receipt of the Sanctuary scholarship as a "truly life changing experience" and as a "turning point in my life which breathed life back into me". She said "It gave me hope in a seemingly hopeless situation... It allowed me to pursue my dream career, which seemed an insurmountable task at the time as I was an asylum seeker living in direct provision. I became a part of the UCD community which supported me in building lasting networks and enduring friendships".

In addition to offering sanctuary scholarships, UCD advances the University of Sanctuary agenda in a number of other ways. These include the organisation of seminars and events by different members of the UCD community, the provision of modules in relation to refugee issues, as well as fundraising, outreach, research and media contributions. For example, during the 2021-2023 period, events included the screening of the film Direct Division in conjunction with UCDVO and the Office of the Ombudsman for Children, and the organisation of a seminar on Borders and Rights: Migrant Journeys with contributions from Sinéad Gibney, Sally Hayden, Bulelani Mfaco and Jack Pope. In addition, in response to the war in Ukraine, English language classes were organised for people who had fled Ukraine and UCD Global organised weekly supportive meet ups for Ukrainian students. In March 2023, to mark International Women's Day, UCD staff in the School of Agriculture and Food Science held a coffee and cake sale to fundraise for the Irish Refugee Council's Women's Employment Project.

In summary, the above provides a flavour of some of the many initiatives and projects undertaken in UCD, all of which contribute to its University of Sanctuary ethos. The University looks forward to building on the work done to date and to continuing to develop a culture of welcome and inclusion for people of a refugee background within UCD and within society more generally.

University for All

Over the past ten years UCD has reconfigured our approach to access and inclusion, moving from the University margins to mainstream. Characterised as University for All – this is UCD's unique response to the HEA's national access policy, which envisions the student population as reflecting the diversity of Ireland's population. The National Access Plan 2022-2028 notes that "It is clear that our student population is still unrepresentative of wider Irish society" and part of national policy highlights the need "to prioritise universal design in all aspects of higher education" (HEA, 2022, p.200).

University for All addresses this policy imperative and offers a roadmap to its realisation. It ensures that changed practice percolates through the entire University community: designing of our campus and buildings, systems and processes, and teaching approaches around the needs of all students and not on any perception of a "traditional" student. In so doing, it moves the focus from entry and admissions to ensuring that all students experience and thrive in an inclusive education environment. Most importantly, University for All addresses the question of how to make inclusion a collective responsibility, ensuring that pockets of good practice become implemented system-wide – making access and inclusion everyone's business.

UCD leads the way in this regard and is the first university to develop this whole-institution approach: the University is influencing national policy: in particular, the UCD Submission to the HEA National Access Plan 2022-2028 Public Consultation Process, is highly regarded. This approach is grounded in the EDI Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 2020 - 2025, and the Education and Student Success Strategy (UCD, 2020).

University for All is overseen by the Registrar/Deputy President and UMT Education Group, (it also has a 'dotted' line to the UMT EDI Group) and is directed by the Widening Participation Committee. UCD Access & Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020-2024: Enabling a University for All, sets out the associated work programme to build capacity across campus, engage with stakeholders, and ensure that all students feel welcome and belong in UCD.

Implementation of University for All

The implementation of University for All continued within Programme Board areas. All areas submitted implementation plans in July 2021 which outlined the key actions and areas of focus for 2021/22. Toolkit workshops have now been held for all Programme Boards with the following occurring during the 2021/22 academic year:

— Architecture, Planning & Environmental Policy, led by Associate Professor Brendan Williams (6 September 2021, 28 in attendance)

— Social Sciences & Law, led by Dr Graham Finlay (24 November 2021, 45 in attendance)

— Veterinary Medicine, led by Dr Arun Kumar (6 December 2021, 5 in attendance)

— Medicine, led by Associate Professor Suzanne Donnelly (21 January 2022, 50 in attendance)

And in the 2022/23 academic year:

— Business, led by Dr Darren Baker (5 September 2022, 14 in attendance)

The workshops provide an opportunity for staff and faculty to reflect on the areas of good practice currently in place to support all students, and crucially what is lacking and needs to be improved, enhanced and developed further. In addition to this, a variety of student focus groups, panels and workshops were held. A Universal Design lunch & learn workshop was organised by Dean of Students, Professor Jason Last in October 2022. Focusing on Universal Design for student support and engagement, colleagues from UCD Health, Counselling, Student Advisers and UCD Student Centre were invited.

A number of programme-specific focus groups provided students with a platform to share their experiences of inclusion and addressed specific questions agreed by WP Leads following on from University for All Toolkit workshops where issues are raised and warranted further discussion. The results of the focus groups were shared with the WP Leads and their local change teams. All output is anonymised to ensure students feel fully comfortable sharing their experiences. The output is used in the planning and development of various projects including provision of supports and development of programmes. We have found a high level of enthusiasm among students to participate, and an openness in the groups to share experiences which can help to shape future actions.

A very successful access student panel was held in the UCD Sutherland School of Law in February 2023. A panel of six students were asked the following questions in front of an audience of Law faculty and staff:

— From a student perspective, what does inclusive teaching mean and how important is inclusive teaching and learning practice for access students?

— What have been some positive inclusive experiences you've had in UCD?

— When it comes to assessment, are there ways inclusion could be improved?

— Have you ever felt excluded?

—   What advice would you give to academic or professional staff from an access student's perspective?

Panels like these provide an important opportunity for dialogue between UCD staff, faculty and students by creating a safe environment for open discussion - they offer colleagues a valuable insight into the experiences of access students and a chance to reflect on areas that need to be improved and enhanced.

Making Inclusive Higher Education a Reality

In May 2023, the University for All Project Team was delighted to launch the publication of their new book "Making Inclusive Higher Education a Reality: Creating a University for All". The team had been commissioned by Routledge to produce this publication which was written, compiled and edited during the course of 2021 and 2022. Edited by Anna M. Kelly, Lisa Padden and Bairbre Fleming, it is based on research, evidence and practice in the field of access and inclusion in higher education.

This book provides a whole-institution perspective of student access and inclusion, citing case studies from within UCD including Arts & Humanities, IT Services, Estates Services, Engineering, and Social Sciences, and sharing real world experience internationally from a number of universities in order to highlight approaches to developing a culture of access and inclusion. It shares detailed information on how to transform institutional commitment to access and diversity into systemic change and, ultimately, the creation of a university for all. Professor Barbara Dooley, Acting Registrar and Deputy President, and alumna Joy-Tendai Kangere BL launched the book with many friends, family, supporters and colleagues in attendance in UCD Access & Lifelong Learning Centre.

Dr Lisa Padden, & Dr Bairbre Fleming at the launch of 'Making Inclusive Higher Education a Reality' cutting the book cake!

Student Engagement

Orientation Module

In 2020 with orientation moving online, UCD Access & Lifelong Learning were invited to be part of an introductory Brightspace module for all incoming students. Our 'Welcome to Inclusive UCD' module uses interactive scenario-based learning materials to enable students to learn more about our inclusive university, and what their role is in a University for All. The module has since been refined in collaboration with UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to create content which reflects both University for All and the wider UCD EDI values, practices and policies. In addition, two versions of the module were produced as graduate students were enrolled in a bespoke Introduction to UCD module. The module receives excellent engagement from incoming students with almost 2,000 incoming undergraduate students and almost 1,700 graduate students completing it in 2021.

Roadshows

The first University for All Roadshow was held in February 2022 as a means to increase student awareness about the initiative, understanding what it involves and the efforts to make UCD an inclusive university. While many access students have an idea of what University for All is, the wider student body was relatively unaware as evidenced in the University for All student survey conducted in 2020. The Roadshow went to eight locations across campus over two weeks with students hearing directly from Access Leaders and WP Leads about University for All and receiving branded merchandise. The Roadshow's message was simple: UCD is open to all students, from all different backgrounds. Every student has earned their place to be here in UCD. Students also came away with an understanding of their role within University for All.

The second expanded iteration of the Roadshow was held in February 2023 in 12 locations, increasing the reach of the initiative. In order to increase student interaction and feedback, we asked students the simple question: how can the University be more inclusive? Students provided hundreds of suggestions; some relating to campus accessibility, changes lecturers could make to create a more inclusive learning experience for students, better communication of and increased access to various supports, and increasing awareness around different cultures. The Roadshow provides a great opportunity for students to use their voice and to be an active member of the UCD community. WP Leads valued the opportunity to speak to students directly outside of the classroom.
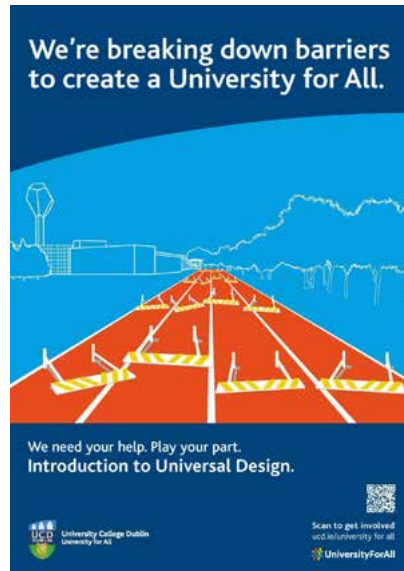
Students at the University for All Roadshow in the Student Village February 2023.

Student Interns & Access Leaders

Student Access Leaders have a vital role in supporting the activities of University for All. Frequently they will engage actively on student panels and in focus groups. They are involved in the planning and organisation of events such as the annual UCD Access 7 Lifelong Learning Welcome and University for All Symposium. Importantly Access Leaders provide feedback on events and activities which is incorporated into the event planning process going forward. Access Leaders are often the face of University for All for their fellow students as well as UCD colleagues, particularly while assisting with the Roadshows and poster campaigns.

In the Spring Trimester 2023, UCD Access & Lifelong Learning was joined by two students on academic internship from the College of Social Sciences & Law. The interns made a big impact; increasing student engagement through management of social media channels and running a student focused campaign in April 2023 which led to increased awareness of University for All. The student interns were invaluable in running the University for All Roadshow. Having student interns directly involved is hugely beneficial to the work of University for All and the internship programme will be offered each trimester.

Introduction to Universal Design in UCD

Poster for 'Introduction to Universal Design in UCD'.

Towards the end of 2021, the University for All Project Team began work on 'Introduction to Universal Design in UCD' to provide baseline training for all colleagues in UCD to complete regardless of their role within the University. The training equips personnel with baseline competencies and knowledge to ensure that students experience an inclusive educational environment. It introduces all colleagues to the University for All initiative, Universal Design, the diversity of the student population, accessibility and inclusion, and relevant legislation. The goal was to create something that would take roughly an hour for personnel to complete and to which all colleagues would be automatically enrolled on Brightspace.

It was important for colleagues to see themselves represented in the training and understand their role within University for All. To that end, a steering group was established in early 2022 with representation from across the University to advise on the content, development and communication of this training. The steering group was made up of the following, as well as representatives from UCD Access & Lifelong Learning and students. Content was developed in consultation with this group throughout 2022. The training includes visual, video and interactive components as well as an exercise where colleagues reflect on their work and proactively address accessibility and inclusion in their own roles. Upon completion, colleagues receive a digital badge in recognition. The training was launched in February 2023 by the Acting Registrar and Deputy President, Professor Barbara Dooley. A promotions campaign is ongoing to encourage uptake of the course.

Faculty Partnership Programme

The Faculty Partnership Programme is designed to support and accelerate the implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) throughout the University. It offers a structured opportunity to undertake the Digital Badge for Universal Design in Teaching & Learning training, to qualify as a UDL Facilitator, and become a role model who will persuade and influence others as to the merits of inclusion for all students. Participation enables faculty to become recognised leaders in the field of access and inclusion and the implementation of Universal Design. Following the appointment of 17 Faculty Partners in June 2021, they were joined by 9 additional faculty members in November of that year:

Arts & Humanities

— Dr Annette Clancy

— Dr Mary Farrelly

— Associate Professor Naomi McAreavey

— Dr Fionnuala Walsh

Business

— Dr Linda Dowling-Hetherington

— Allen Higgins

— Joe Houghton

Engineering & Architecture

— Alice Clancy

— Dr John Healy

— Dr Jennifer Keenahan

— Associate Professor Vikram Pakrashi

Health & Agricultural Sciences

— Dr Freda Browne

— Professor Deirdre Campion

— Associate Professor Caitriona Cunningham

— Dr Tom Flanagan

— Dr John Gilmore

— Dr Phil Halligan

— Dr Karen Keaveney

— Dr Deirdre O'Connor

Science

— Dr Anthony Cronin

— Dr Jennifer Mitchell

— Dr Gavin Stewart

Social Sciences & Law

— Dr Kevin Costello

— Dr Rachel Farrell

— Associate Professor Muireann Ní Raghallaigh

— Dr Ernesto Vasquez Del Aguila

Faculty Partnership Programme February 2023.

Early on, a series of milestones were agreed, designed to assist Faculty Partners to achieve the outcomes of the programme. Regular meetings with the group were held throughout the academic year, to track their progress and to offer advice and encouragement. This community of practice facilitated conversations, collaboration, idea, resource and solution sharing for shared challenges. It has been a key driver of success of the programme and an invaluable source of peer support.

One key performance indicator has been the increase in the number of participants from UCD undertaking the Digital Badge for Universal Design in Teaching & Learning. Since the programme started there have been an additional 250 recipients of the UDL Badge within UCD. These are the highest number of participants for any HEI or ETB. Faculty Partners organised local Spring rollouts of the Badge in addition to the national rollout each Autumn - this has allowed a greater number of UCD colleagues to complete the Badge.

As well as facilitating the Badge, Faculty Partners have been embedding UDL within their modules, classrooms and learning environments. This fantastic work was captured at the University for All Symposium in May 2022 (see below for more information) and in the publication of the case studies collection launched in February 2023, which is titled Learning from UDL Leaders: UCD University for All Faculty Partner Case Studies. Featuring a case study from each Faculty Partner, it represents a rich body of knowledge, learning and advice on embedding Universal Design across a wide variety of disciplines and contexts. It serves as an excellent practical guide for those seeking to develop Universal Design capacity both within UCD and the wider tertiary sector.

An extension of the Programme led to the appointment of 5 additional Partners in April 2023:

— Dr Andrew Hines, School of Computer Science

— Dr Tom McCormack, School of Physics

— Dr Leila Leila Negahdar, School of Chemistry

— Dr Sharon O'Rourke, School of Biosystems and Food Engineering

— Professor Graeme Warren, School of Archaeology

This has been funded by the HEA's PATH 4 Universal Design Fund. It seeks to embed Universal Design further by supporting Faculty to develop and implement projects that will audit UD and inclusive practices and measure their impact on students.

Symposia

Symposium 2022

In May 2022, the first University for All Symposium was held on campus since 2019. Building on the seminar series launched during the pandemic, this was a hybrid event catering for colleagues across the country and further afield. Entitled 'Enhancing student engagement in a COVID world – is Universal Design the answer?', Acting President Professor Mark Rogers opened the event stating that "the use of Universal Design eliminates the need for student labels and turns 'deficit' thinking on its head". We were delighted to welcome Dr Thomas J Tobin, University of Wisconsin-Madison, global UDL expert, to give the keynote address. Dr Tobin gave practical tips and advice on how to embed UDL within wider EDI initiatives and strategies and how to define areas in interactions with students that are good starting points for more-inclusive design efforts. He explained how to adopt Plus 1 thinking in UDL implementation and how to effect change with limited time and resources as well as how to influence leadership colleagues. Central to this was the importance of trusting and listening to students.

Faculty Partners from all six UCD Colleges presented their own work to embed UDL in their contexts and disciplines in a lightning round of presentations. These explored transferable and practical UDL interventions including how to:
—   Persuade colleagues to undertake the Digital Badge
—   Adopt and utilise new technologies for creating accessible learning materials
—   Empower students and tutors through rubrics and templates
—   Create resources to raise awareness and adoption of UDL among colleagues
—   Develop UDL methodologies in studio work
—   Embed UDL into the design of new programmes and modules
—   Present learning materials in alternative formats and offer diverse assessments

Symposium 2023

To mark the ten year anniversary of the UCD Widening Participation Committee, the 2023 Symposium examined how the access and inclusion landscape has evolved over the last decade and explored what the future of inclusive education might look like. It was also an opportunity to celebrate UCD's successes in this area to date.

Dr Anna Kelly, former Director of UCD Access & Lifelong Learning introduced a series of keynote presentations. Firstly, Professor Tom Collins gave an historical overview of inclusive education, charting the origins of universal and university education in Ireland both before and after independence. Amy Hassett, PhD student, disability advocate and co-chairperson of Disabled Women Ireland (DWI) spoke to the topic of students as change makers. She reminded us of the importance of including student voice, particularly access students, in university decision making processes. In order to empower students, university leaders would be required to cede some power and to trust in students knowing what they want and need. In outlining what inclusive education would look like in the next 10 years, Jim Breslin, Secretary General of the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, provided an overview of the HEA's National Access Plan as well as the Department's ambitions for equal access to education and an equitable student experience for all.

These keynote presentations provided context for the turn & talk discussion hosted by Professor John Brannigan, Chair of the WPC. Symposium attendees were asked to reflect on and discuss three big questions:

— What are the key lessons from the past?

— What are the priorities for the next decade?

— What do we want to celebrate in 2032?

Responses ranged from the reduction of reliance on the points system and broadening pathways to university to valuing the student voice both in teaching and policy making and embedding access and inclusion in the curriculum so that students with access backgrounds do not experience exclusion amongst peers. Professor Brannigan launched the Symposium's publication: "A Decade of Action Shaping a University for All - Celebrating Ten Years of UCD Widening Participation". This publication chronicles how the Committee steered this institutional change and transformation over the last ten years, showcasing actions and approaches to embedding and mainstreaming student access, diversity, and inclusion featuring a range of institution-wide examples of inclusive practice.

Finally, the event concluded with a performance from students of the UCD Creative Futures Academy introduced by Professor PJ Mathews, UCD CFA Director. Faith Olasogba gave a powerful poetry reading exploring racism and discrimination and her experience of being black in modern Ireland. Jill Nellis presented a drama performance she had written and directed with fellow students. We would sincerely like to thank the CFA for partnering with University for All.

Attendees at the University for All Symposium May 2022.

Professor Colin Scott, Dr Bairbre Fleming, Amy Hassett, Professor John Brannigan, Professor Barbara Dooley, Jim Breslin and Dr Anna Kelly at the University for All Symposium 2023.

John Kelly Awards

In 2022, UCD Access & Lifelong Learning and AHEAD redeveloped and expanded the John Kelly Awards for Universal Design in Tertiary Education. The awards celebrate and recognise excellence and innovation in embedding Universal Design in both individual practice, and more systematically through strategic collaborative action in Ireland. A new application and review process was piloted, with new rubrics drawn up following consultation with the national Universal Design community. Following review by an international panel of experts, six individual and four collaborative applications were selected to present their work in front of a live audience and judging panel at the final in UCD O'Reilly Hall on Monday 17 October 2022.

Shortlisted Finalists Individual Award:

— Tara O'Halloran Cronin - Kerry College

— Elaine Wallace - University of Galway

— Cormac Flynn - Atlantic Technological University

— Lucia Cloonan - Atlantic Technological University

— Treasa Campbell - Mary Immaculate College

— Anita Byrne - Dundalk Institute of Technology

Shortlisted Finalists Collaborative Award:

— Atlantic Technological University

— National Learning Network

— University College Cork

— University of Limerick

The judging panel consisted of:

— (Chair) Dr Mark Glynn - Consultant, EY

— Dr Tracy Galvin - Senior Lecturer in Academic Practice Senior Lecturer in Academic Practice, Glasgow Caledonian University

— Dr Mustapha Aabi - Horizon Europe NCP for Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society / Civil Security for Society, Ibn Zohr University

— Dr Frederic Fovet - Assistant Professor, Thompson Rivers University & Founder, Implement UDL

Keith Moynes, Head of Higher Education Policy Division, Assistant Secretary DFHERIS opened the event. Citing the 'whole of education' approach and the first student centred goal of 'Inclusivity' in the new National Access Plan, he emphasised the crucial role of Universal Design in removing stigmatising labels and those concepts used in the past to ensure that all students have a positive experience and have a sense of belonging.

We were delighted to have former UCD Registrar, Professor Emeritus John Kelly present the awards. In the Individual category, the overall winner was Anita Byrne, Dundalk Institute of Technology and the winner of the Collaborative award was Atlantic Technological University.

Dara Ryder, Dr Anna Kelly, Professor Emeritus John Kelly, and Dr Mark Glynn presenting the Collaborative Award to ATU's Dr Niamh Plunkett and
Dr Maureen Haran.

Pathways to Professions

The Pathways to the Professions (P2P) project was conceived as a strategic response to mitigating the barriers to the professions for students from underrepresented groups. On completion of the literature review and through consultations with professional programmes a project framework was developed, set within the context of the University for All initiative. This framework includes - foundations, pre- entry, target post entry supports, early career progression and inclusive workplaces. Under this framework a number of work strands were prioritised this year. Highlights included development and roll out of the Moot Court and informal networking:

Over a period of five weeks in trimester two, UCD Law students in their final year ran a series of workshops in four DEIS schools (Scoil Cholmcille Senior NS, Good Shepherd NS, Francis Street, and St Audeons) as part of the Law module: Law in the Classroom run by Dr Suzanne Egan, UCD Sutherland School of Law. The overall goal of the module is to prepare law students to act as role models and active participants in demystifying the law and the legal profession for children in DEIS schools, whilst developing their confidence and raising young people's aspiration.

In collaboration with UCD Careers Network and UCD Alumni – the informal mentoring pilot was organised over the course of two phases. The first phase set the background to mentorship and provided students with information on supports and services that UCD Careers and Alumni offer. The second phase was a more practical engagement on how students can use the Alumni platform. Students had the opportunity to register on the platform and explore the extensive repository of UCD Alumni mentors readily available and across the different professions. They also learn how to best use the platform to find the right mentor for their career development. At each phase, students were given the opportunity to share their experiences.

The project has really gained momentum in 2022/2023, a stock take was undertaken to map the developing initiatives to the framework, which enabled the project team to clearly define the work strands of the project which are contributing to the overall P2P model development. Progress was also made on the Pathway to the Professions toolkit, which will be published and available for another higher education institution to use to develop similar initiatives in their institutions.

This year also saw a focus on the early career progression and Inclusive workplaces; highlights included the Access Leadership Challenges with Mason Hayes Curran. Students were invited to demonstrate outstanding leadership by championing diversity solutions to the legal questions. The best submissions are awarded paid internships, mentoring, and bursaries for reading materials. Colleagues from Mason Hayes and Curran joined UCD Access & Lifelong Learning on 19 April 2023 to award the prizes to the winners.

Inclusive workplaces: Rethink Ireland are very interested in this work strand and have committed extra funding, in the form of a consultant – Mantra Leadership to work with us on developing the model and facilitating the workshops with legal firms. The inaugural workshop was held with Mason Hayes Curran on 26 July. The workshop was well received by MHC and the learning will contribute to rolling it out to 5 top legal firms in Dublin. The learning from this work strand will be developed into a community of practices and a toolkit publication.

Colleagues from Mason Hayes and Curran, UCD staff and students at the Access Leadership Challenge in April 2023.

Part-time, open, flexible education

Lifelong Learning

UCD has a long tradition of recognising the transformative effects of adult learning and the value and wider benefits of learning. More than 130,000 students have participated in the UCD Lifelong Learning Programme to date. Classes are offered on the University campus and in partnership with a range of Cultural Institutions, including the dlr LexIcon, National Library of Ireland, Hugh Lane Gallery, and Pearse Library. Our purpose remains to provide opportunities for continued education and personal development, by catering for a wide range of interests, such as art appreciation, literature, history, languages and creative writing. These classes also act as a starting point for those tentative about formal education or who have been distant from Higher Education. In addition to providing community, personal and cultural enrichment.

UCD is also designated an Age Friendly University (AFU), aiming to create an inclusive, accessible, and supportive environment for learners of all ages. The Age Friendly initiatives we most closely engage with are the promotion of Lifelong Learning, enhanced intergenerational collaboration (through both Lifelong Learning and Open Learning), encouraging social engagement and well-being and promoting inclusivity and accessibility.

2021/2022

In 2021/2022, 113 courses including taster lectures were offered.

809 students took part in Lifelong Learning courses and 586 students attended online taster lectures for August & January Taster Week, AONTAS Festival and Dublin Learning City.

Classes took place predominantly online to accommodate students during the pandemic while some took place on the Belfield campus and the Hugh Lane Gallery.

2022/2023

In 2022/2023, 75 courses including taster lectures were offered. 836 students took part in Lifelong Learning courses and 188 students took part in Taster Lectures during August & January Taster Week, AONTAS festival and Dublin Learning City. Tasters were offered in-person, welcoming students back onto the campus.

Though some classes took place online, we began to reintroduce face-to-face class on the Belfield Campus and across Dublin in collaboration with our cultural partners in the Lexicon in Dun Laoghaire, Pearse Street Library, Hugh Lane Gallery and Mounttown Community Facility.

PATH Programme

Since 2017, UCD has led the PATH six-college Cluster, comprising, the Institute of Art and Design (IADT), Marino Institute of Education (MIE), National College of Art and Design (NCAD), Trinity College Dublin (TCD), and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). Following the successful implementation of the first HEA funding tranche (2018-2021), the Cluster received extended funding for the period 2021-2024. The overarching mission of the Cluster remains - to promote access to higher education for under-represented groups by building a clearer 'picture of possibilities' and pathways. This mission will be enabled through four innovative projects: Creative Arts Summer School (CASS), Open Learning (OL), Dublin Learning City (DLC) and Community Mentoring (CM).

From 2021 a Cluster strategic approach was adopted to enable enhanced planning and strategic delivery of the PATH 3 commitments and key priorities for the second phase. The Steering Committee met five times over the academic year.

During the 2022/23 academic year, there was an expansive range of informal and local collaborations between the Higher Education (HE) and Further Education and Training (FET) institutions. In this context, the Cluster will establish a formal partnership arrangement with Dublin and Dun Laoghaire ETB (DDLETB), to identify and address strategic issues to enable a seamless continuum of education opportunities for under-represented students, as identified in the National Access Plan, particularly for mature students.

Poster for the 2023 Creative Arts Summer School

Key achievements and figures per project strand below:

Open Learning

2022/23:	
404	modules
528	module registrations
191	students
17	bursaries allocated

Progression Pathways expanded - there are now 14 available routes for students looking to move into full-time undergraduate studies.

2021/22:	
190	student registrations
432	module registrations
172	students
25	bursaries allocated

A Readiness Checker was developed to ensure students are aware of commitment and potential challenges in Open Learning. Open Learning retention is up to 83% since the introduction of our Readiness Checker.

Creative Arts Summer School

2022-23:
The network expanded to include MTU Crawford College of Art and Cork School of Music. TU Dublin joined Dublin CASS. Development of a toolkit has commenced.

2021-22:
CASS Programme developed to include in-person and virtual programme: 35 creative arts workshops with MTU Cork School of Music joining the summer school.

Creative Futures Academy careers seminar delivered online.

Community Mentoring

2022-23:
260 Mentors; +2500 Mentees; 44 Host Organisations
College Awareness Week - November 2022
CM Training repository was expanded

2021-22:
255 Mentors, +2000 Mentees; 36 Host Institutions, 16 Additional Schools
College Awareness Week - November 2021
Mentoring toolkit developed

Dublin Learning City

2022-23:
Dublin Learning City Festival 2023: over 150 events both online and in person
DLC Stand at the Family Multicultural Day St. Pats Soccer Club on 10th June
New Learning Neighbourhood is in the planning stage for South Dublin.

2021-22:
Positioning Dublin Learning City as a UNESCO Learning City awardee – achieved 2021. Dublin Learning City Festival 2022: 214 events - 94 live/in-person events and 120 online events – live/pre-recorded. The flagship event of the festival was the launch of Dublin's North Inner City Learning Neighbourhood. Memorandum of understanding signed to develop the Irish Network of Learning Cities.

Inclusion & Integration Week 2022: Dublin City's Inclusion & Integration Week features more than 100 events online and in person from walking tours, talks, workshops, exhibitions, music and much more. This year Dublin Learning City facilitated two events on behalf of Inclusion & Integration Week 2022.

1916 Bursary recipients

University Widening Participation Committee Membership

Chair, University Widening Participation Committee
Professor John Brannigan

Programme Board Leads

Agriculture & Food Sciences
Professor Olaf Schmidt

Architecture, Planning & Environmental Policy
Dr Ellen Rowley

Arts & Humanities
Dr Fionnuala Walsh

Engineering
Professor Mark Flanagan

Law
Professor Gavin Barrett

Medicine
Associate Professor Suzanne Donnelly

Nursing, Midwifery & Health Systems
Dr Freda Browne

Public Health, Physiotherapy & Sports Science
Associate Professor Caitriona Cunningham

Science
Associate Professor Siobhán McClean

Social Sciences
Dr Graham Finlay

Veterinary Medicine & Veterinary Nursing
Dr Arun Kumar

Policy & Support Leads

UCD Access & Lifelong Learning
Dr Bairbre Fleming

Admissions
Jill O'Mahony

Career Development & Skills
Dr David Foster

Communications & Marketing
Mary Staunton

Finance
Gráinne Keane

Estates Services
PJ Barron

IT Services
Genevieve Dalton

Library
Philip Russell

Recruitment
Anne-Marie Harvey

Student Advisors
Aisling O'Grady

Teaching & Learning
Dr Sheena Hyland

Co-opted Members

Human Resources
Rory Carey

UMT EDI Committee
Marcellina Fogarty

Joint Chairs - EDI Sub-Committee on Sanctuary
**Dr Muireann Ní Raghallaigh
& Associate Professor Liam Thornton**

UCD Global
Deirdre Healy

Terms of Reference

Role and Purpose

The role and purpose of the University Widening Participation Committee is to provide a formal mechanism to oversee, monitor, and promote the University's achievement of a diverse and inclusive scholarly community, characterised as a 'University for All'. The Committee reports to the UMT Education Group (UMTEG) and has a dotted line reporting link to the UMT Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Group (UMTEDI) and the UMT Student Experience Group (UMTSEG), respectively. The Committee has an independent Chair and expertise and operational support is provided by UCD Access & Lifelong Learning.

Membership

Programme Governing Boards – members will be nominated by the Dean/College Principal for:

— Agriculture and Food Science

— Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Nursing

— Medicine

— Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

— Public Health, Physiotherapy, Performance and Sports Sciences

— Architecture, Landscape, Planning and Environmental Policy

— Business Undergraduate

— Law

— Social Science

— Science Taught

— Arts and Humanities

— Academic Affairs Board of Studies.

Policy & Support Units – members will be nominated by each Head of Unit for:

— Student Advisers;

— Estate Services

— Library

— Careers Network

— Teaching & Learning

— Admissions

— Recruitment

— Administrative Services

— IT Services

— Bursar's Office

— Communications

— Access & Lifelong Learning.

Student representatives:

— Access students, nominated by Senior Access Leaders

— Student Union President or nominee.

Co-options

The Chair will nominate co-opted members as necessary. Currently nominated are:

— HR representative

— UMT EDI Committee

— EDI Sub-Committee on Sanctuary

— UCD Global

Terms of Reference

— Provide a formal mechanism to oversee, monitor and promote the University's achievement of a diverse and inclusive scholarly community, where all students feel welcome, and their experience, perspective and opinions are respected and valued

— Oversee the communication and promotion of a 'whole-institution', mainstreamed approach to access, widening participation and inclusion, characterised as "University for All"

— Develop and monitor the implementation of a framework for communicating, internally and externally, UCD's actions and policies, in respect of widening participation

— Identify and promote good practice approaches and activities, which enable underrepresented students to participate and successfully complete their studies

— Review University policies as they relate to access, widening participation and inclusion

— Recommend relevant data for collection to University Programmes Board to assist with monitoring widening participation data and trends, with respect to Admission, Progression, Continuation, and Completion

— Advocate for quality enhancement and assurance processes to reflect the widening participation agenda

— Ensure widening participation aims are reflected in UCD's Education Strategy

— Contribute to reviews of student advisory and support services and make recommendations for improvement

— Promote the implementation of the principles of Universal Design in the University's built, and technological environments, and in pedagogical approaches used in the student learning environment

— Consider student recruitment processes and make recommendations which enable and facilitate participation by under-represented students, and alignment with the principles of inclusion and mainstreaming

— Oversee the development and implementation of a coherent institution-wide outreach strategy targeting under-represented population cohorts

— Develop and oversee a plan to improve the visibility and enhance the reputation of the University as an inclusive educational environment

— Recommend representatives of the Committee for inclusion on other university committees, working groups and boards.

Glossary

Access student
Any student from one or more of the following target equity groups, socio-economically disadvantaged students, students reporting a disability, mature students, part-time or flexible students, QQI-FET award holders, and refugees and asylum seekers.

ALL
UCD Access & Lifelong Learning. The mission of UCD ALL is to enable the University to realise its ambition to be a University for All, where access and inclusion is everyone's business. This mainstreaming vision ensures that all students are treated equitably and that the learning experience is universally designed and configured to meet the needs and aspirations of all students. UCD ALL has developed a range of responses to widen access, to ensure equitable participation by diverse student cohorts (UCD Access & Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020-2024 - Enabling a University for All, 2021).

DARE
The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) is a higher education admissions scheme for students with disabilities. Eligibility for this scheme is determined through a national application process, aligned with CAO, and is based on evidence of disability and educational impact. CAO offers are typically made in late August/Early September. Eligible students, and all those who disclose a disability before or during their studies in UCD, are offered a Needs Assessment, where support and accommodations to remove barriers to education are agreed.

DEIS
Delivering Equality of Opportunity In Schools. This is an initiative of the Department of Education and Skills aimed at lessening educational disadvantage and bringing about social inclusion in primary and second level education. Eligible primary and secondary schools in Ireland are designated as DEIS schools and, as such, are provided with a set of resources and targeted support. UCD ALL's Outreach & Mentoring programme is run in collaboration with 17 'linked' DEIS secondary schools

Cothrom na Féinne
Cothrom na Féinne and Ad Astra are the UCD mottos. Cothrom na Féinne means justice and equality and is used as the name of UCD's access scholarship programmes

EAS   The Equal Access Survey is an annual voluntary survey of first year full-time and part-time undergraduate new entrants to Higher Education Authority funded Universities. With Information obtained from the Equal Access Survey, the HEA can measure equality of access to higher education and allocate the resources needed to support students of all backgrounds and abilities. The EAS is conducted by UCD on behalf of the HEA as part of the registration process.

EDI   UCD Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

HEA   Higher Education Authority

HEAR   The Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) is a higher education admissions scheme for students, resident in the Republic of Ireland, and who are underrepresented at Higher Education due to their socio-economic background. Eligibility for this scheme is determined through a national application process, aligned with CAO, and is based on evidence of family income, and specified indicators of disadvantage. Eligible students are provided with targeted financial, academic, and personal support to remove barriers to their education.

FET   Further Education and Training

IUA   Irish Universities Association

KPI   Key Performance Indicator. A University-agreed target of 35%, which acts as a quantifiable measure of widening participation performance over 3 years (2024).

Mature Entrants   Students who are at least 23 years of age on the 1st of January of the year of entry. Application on such grounds varies depending on the UCD programme, and may include provision of a personal statement, completion of MSAP (Mature Students Admissions Pathway (MSAP), HPAT (Health Professions Admissions Test), or the Nursing Written Assessment. Instead of MSAP, Mature Students can also opt to take any Open Learning module for credit. Application via the mature entry pathway is made through the CAO and offers are usually made in July each year.

Open Learning	Open Learning is a flexible study option, which enables students to choose from a wide range of modules, and take either a Certificate (30 ECTS), or Diploma (60ECTs) level 9 award. There are currently 12 progression pathways to undergraduate degrees. Students can also take Open Learning for audit, meaning there is no associated assessment.
P2P	Pathways to the Professions is a project to promote an inclusive workplace for all, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic, sexual orientation, disability, and age. It fosters systemic and cultural transformation within the workplace, and is particularly focused on early career progression in the professions. Using the Law profession as a test bed, this project is developing a model of best practice, which is applicable to a range of professions, including Archaeology, Architecture, Engineering, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Social Work etc. P2P is using a holistic approach to support students' aspirations, enable a universally designed educational experience, and address barriers to early career progression (https://www.ucd.ie/universityforall/resourcehub/pathwaystotheprofessions/)
Part-time	Any student studying part time, such as Open Learning, Diploma and Bachelor of Business Studies, Safety and Health at Work, University Access Courses, etc.
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
QQI-FET	Students who are studying full time and have entered UCD holding a FETAC/HETAC/QQI award. Students with relevant and appropriate QQI-FET (formerly known as FETAC) Level 5/6 major awards and components, with a minimum of Distinction in five components, may be admitted on a competitive basis to a range of UCD programmes. Application via the QQI-FET entry pathway is made through the CAO and offers on the basis of QQI-FET qualifications are usually made in early August each year.

SEG   Socio-economic group. Using Central Statistics Office data gathered via the Census, the entire population is classified into one of ten categories based on the level of skill and educational attainment of their occupation (those at work, unemployed, or retired). All other people are classified to the socio-economic group of the person in the family on whom they are deemed to be dependent. Research clearly shows that participation in higher education is not evenly spread across the socio-economic groups.

SUSI Special Rate   A special rate of grant available for eligible students through Student Universal Support Ireland. Students in receipt of SUSI Special Rate denoting a household income not exceeding €24,000 to include eligible long-term Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection payment or its EU equivalent.

Targeted places   As part of enrolment planning, every UCD undergraduate programme creates targeted places for students entering through designated access routes (HEAR, DARE, Mature, QQI-FET, Open Learning). These places, sometimes also referred to as reserved places, assist in widening participation to undergraduate programmes enabling equitable access to UCD. These targets are transferable across access groups to allow for maximum diversity of admissions.

WPC   UCD Widening Participation Committee. The Committee is chaired by Professor John Brannigan, reports to the UMT Education Group (UMTEG), and has a 'dotted line' to the Vice President for EDI. Membership is drawn from all Academic Programme Boards, Policy and Support Services, in addition to Student Access Leaders, the UCD Student Union and relevant co-options. The Committee is provided with policy advice, expertise, and operational support by UCD Access & Lifelong Learning (ALL). The Committee has a three-year term, meets five times per year, and has a range of subgroups, including the WP Outreach Coordination Network (https://www.ucd.ie/universityforall/)

Universal Design   Universal Design is the design of an environment, product, service or experience so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. Universal Design does not attempt to provide a 'one size fits all' solution but rather requires that the design considers the needs of all potential uses avoiding the need, where possible, for retrofitting or alternative solutions. Universal Design is fundamentally good design and is to the benefit of all people.

UDL   Universal Design for Learning. UDL is a framework to improve the learning experience of all students within the mainstream teaching environment. The UDL principles espouse flexibility for students with the aim of removing educational barriers which may be put in place inadvertently through adherence to rigid or singular delivery, engagement and assessment strategies.

UfA   University for All. Launched in 2017, UCD is pioneering University for All - a whole-institution, evidence-based approach to mainstreaming inclusion, ensuring that all students feel welcome, belong and are valued. Grounded in the UCD Strategy 2020-2024: Rising to the Future, and the EDI Strategy and Action Plan 2018 - 2020 - 2025, and the Education and Student Success Strategy (UCD, 2021), University for All recognises, promotes and values the breadth of talent, experience and contribution of all students, and creates an inclusive educational experience for all. This initiative embeds inclusion across the University further developing UCD's capacity to attract, retain, and develop our diverse student population. University for All Implementation Plans are developed 'locally' by Widening Participation leads, and available to all UCD Faculty and Staff on the Registrar's Intranet. (https://www.ucd.ie/universityforall/)

University Access   UCD offers two University Access Programmes. These are one-year, part-time diplomas, and prepare mature students, who may not have formal qualifications, for successful study at university. University Access has two streams - Access to Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Law (AHSSL); and Access to Science, Engineering, Agricultural Science and Medicine (SEAM). These lead to Special Purpose Awards Level 6 awards, which provide pathways to study selected UCD undergraduate degrees.

UCD for All Our Twitter and Instagram handles are @UCDforAll

UMTEG   University Management Team Education Group

UCD Access and Lifelong Learning contact information

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⊡ @ucdforall

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in UCD Access and Lifelong Learning (ALL)

#UniversityforAll

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Thank you

Thank you to the staff of UCD Access and Lifelong Learning whose expertise and insights informed the work of the Committee

University College Dublin
University for All

UCD Widening Participation Committee
Annual Report 2021-23

Thank you
Go raibh maith agat

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UCD Widening
Participation Committee
Annual Report 2021-23