

Welcome

Hello and Welcome to another edition of the New ERA newsletter.

In this edition we celebrate 10 years of the New ERA Voluntary Tutoring Scheme. UCD students have been volunteering consistently for 10 years, which means New ERA has been able to provide this valuable service to six of our schools for the last decade.

On December 3rd 2009, the Registrar Dr. Philip Nolan launched the SIF 1 funded 'Evaluation of the New ERA Widening Participation Initiative'.

The national rollout of the HEAR scheme is now completed; students apply online as part of their CAO application. On page 1, we outline what students need to do over the next few months in order to complete the application process.

Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) 2010

Leaving Cert. school pupils have been busy ensuring they have submitted their online applications for the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) 2010 by the closing date of February 1st 2010. This date marks an important milestone for HEAR applicants who have now completed the CAO application and the first phase of their HEAR application.

Submission of Supporting Documents – 1st April 2010

All HEAR applicants will now be gathering documents which will support their online application. The closing date for submission of these documents is 1st April 2010. Submitting supporting documents is an extremely important part of the HEAR application process. Here are some tips for students when gathering and submitting supporting documents;

1. Apply for your supporting documents as early as possible – it can take up to 8 weeks to get some documents.
2. When you receive your supporting documents in the post, make sure that they are correct. They must be for the correct year and have the correct contact details for you or your parent(s)/guardian(s).
3. Include ALL pages of your supporting documents. Some of the documents that you will be sending will have more than 3 or 4 pages so make sure you send every page to the CAO.
4. You can send a photocopy of your supporting documents to the CAO. Keep your originals and an extra photocopy of every document you send as you may need these for applying for the Higher Education Grant and also other access schemes.
5. Always get proof of postage for everything you send!
6. Make sure all your supporting documents for your HEAR application are delivered to the CAO, Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway by **5:15pm on 1st April 2010**. Supporting documents that are received later than 5:15pm on 1st April 2010 will not be accepted.

Here are the key dates for HEAR applicants to remember:

HEAR application closing date	1 February 2010
Supporting documentation closing date	1 April 2010
Notification of eligibility	Late June 2010
Application re-check	July 2010
HEAR offers to successful applicants	23 August 2010
Attend Mandatory Orientation	Late Aug./Sept. 2010

If you are unsure about any aspect of the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) scheme please contact Fiona or Anne in New ERA at (01) 716 1658/1653 or fiona.sweeney@ucd.ie / anne.lavelle@ucd.ie. Good luck!



Voluntary Tutoring

Caritas has been involved in the Voluntary Tutoring Scheme for the past 10 years and this ceremony has given me an opportunity to congratulate all involved in the programme, which for us has been a huge success. Ten years ago the statistics for Third Level entry from the Dublin 10 region were among the lowest in the country. By 2007, the entry from Caritas was nearly 25% higher than that figure and only last week in the Irish Times supplement on feeder schools, Caritas was rated at 55% entry.

A large part of this is due to our involvement with UCD and the New ERA Programme, with summer schools, shadowing days and Maths initiatives opening your doors to our students. However, the tutoring, on its 10th anniversary, needs special mention for a number of reasons. Apart from anything, I never cease to be amazed at the logistics involved and the work of the New ERA office in managing to get so many of your students to give up their free time, and then matching those students to subject needs.

As well as helping our students to achieve higher results by giving extra individual attention, it has also forged relationships with the local boys school (purely at academic level!) Above all however, the real secret of the tutoring success is, I believe, that it has brought college life to us, so that the students can gain personal insight to Third Level on their "home territory", in a completely unthreatening way.

Apart from the statistics that may measure success, perhaps just as telling are our "stories" - the fact that a new teacher joined our staff this year who is also a past pupil (she did the tutoring as a Second Level student both for Junior and Leaving Certificate) - while in the last three years past pupils who gained places in Arts, Medicine and Science have come back on Tuesday evenings as tutors, having appreciated the value of the programme.

It is in this spirit that we wish all in the New ERA office, Fiona and Róisín on this occasion, congratulations and thanks, and we look forward to a continued collaboration,

Adrienne Whelan, Principal, Caritas College, Dublin, speaking at the Voluntary Tutoring Student Awards, November 2009.

I first read about the Tutoring Scheme on a New ERA poster. I was impressed with the simplicity and practicality of the idea: an outreach scheme promoting UCD where the secondary school pupils would benefit from the extra help in exam subjects. As a PhD student in Meteorology I volunteered to tutor Leaving Certificate Maths, to a mix of Higher and Ordinary level pupils over the last three years.

Overall I really enjoyed being part of the Tutoring Scheme. The pupils always responded to the teaching with remarkable enthusiasm and a willingness to learn that rarely weakened. All of them were grateful for the help and seemed to learn something from every session. From a tutor's point of view this meant that each week was relaxed, interesting and enjoyable. Given that I am also tutoring in UCD and will probably be teaching further in the future, I benefited greatly from the practical experience as well and was always happy to return each year.

**Colm Clancy,
PhD student in Meteorology**

Dr. Martin Butler, Vice-President for Students and Principal of Caritas College, Adrienne Whelan with a number of UCD tutors and their school pupils.

It's been almost eight years since my first experience with New ERA Voluntary Tutoring, when I was studying for my Junior Cert. It worked so well I did it again in 5th Year and 6th Year for the Leaving Cert. As a student, it allowed me the opportunity to brush up on those exam subjects and topics that I needed to work on. It also meant that I actually spent two hours each Tuesday evening doing productive study, rather than useless procrastination.

One of the great things about Voluntary Tutoring is that the tutors recently completed their Leaving Cert, which means they can tell you how the process actually works. The tutors can also offer great insights into student life, the different university courses available, how the CAO system works and the transition from school to college. All of this means that the scheme is about much more than simple tutoring.

As a UCD student, I went back to my old school to tutor there. Again, this was a great experience as I could help the students improve their exam skills with simple tips and talk about how much I enjoyed UCD. There is also a social aspect to the scheme, as you meet lots of other UCD students on the bus to the school and at the breaks. I'm still in touch with many of the tutors who took part at the same time I did.

New ERA Voluntary Tutoring has really helped me at various stages over the last few years. Since finishing a BComm and a MSc in Marketing Practice at UCD, I've gone on to work in Marketing at the Sky TV HQ in London. Over this time, my experience as a tutor has offered many further opportunities, including the drive to take part in other schemes and courses which help my development. It has also helped in job interviews as employers like to hear about college activities beyond the classes.

As a final point, the New ERA Voluntary Tutoring Scheme offers one more important benefit - great memories. From the evenings that I didn't mind spending in school because there were such great benefits to the good times I had as a tutor, and all the laughs along the way, I think back on those times with a smile because it was a Golden ERA.

**Stephen O'Boyle,
2008 Commerce graduate**



Scheme 1999 - 2009

98/99

UCD New ERA sets up the Voluntary Student Tutoring Scheme which begins in January 1999.

The first Voluntary Student Tutoring Sessions take place in 4 schools over a period of 7 weeks with students from Caritas College, Rosary College, St. Kevin's College and CBS Crumlin. There were a total of 64 pupils and 63 tutors involved.

An awards ceremony also began this year and has continued each year since then.

One pupil commented 'Before the tutoring I had great difficulty with Maths and French but as tutoring commenced I began to feel comfortable and confident in dealing with subjects. And amazingly I had begun to enjoy the rest of my Maths and French classes as I knew I was doing my best'.

99/00

The Voluntary Tutoring Scheme is continued - this time it begins in November and ends in February. Two schools join from Ballyfermot - St. Dominic's SS and Kylemore College. The Scheme is extended to 10 weeks starting in November.

There are 6 schools involved; Caritas College, St. Dominic's SS, St. Kevin's College, CBS Crumlin, Rosary College, and Kylemore College. There were a total of 89 pupils and 91 tutors involved.

One tutor commented that the scheme was a 'Fantastic opportunity to have had - It reaffirmed my belief that teaching is where I'd like to make a career'.

00/01

The Voluntary Tutoring Scheme runs for 10 weeks.

There are 6 schools involved; Caritas College, St. Dominic's SS, St. Kevin's College, CBS Crumlin, Rosary College, and Kylemore College.

There were a total of 112 pupils and 99 tutors involved

01/02

One school from Ballyfermot joins the Scheme - St. John's College. The Scheme ran for 9 weeks.

There are 7 schools Caritas College, St. Dominic's SS, St. Kevin's College, CBS Crumlin, Rosary College, Kylemore College, and St. John's College. 108 pupils participated and 67 UCD Tutors.

02/03

The Scheme ran for 10 weeks.
97 pupils took part and 91 tutors.

03/04

The Scheme ran for 8 weeks and has continued to do so since then.

115 pupils took part and 119 tutors.

04/05

124 pupils took part and 113 tutors took part.

05/06

107 pupils took part and 93 tutors took part. For the first time New ERA staff meet with Guidance Counsellors to discuss the Scheme to-date and to plan for the year ahead.

This was the last year CBS Crumlin participated in the Scheme as the remaining pupils completed their exams and the school closed at the end of the school year. Rosary College and CBS Crumlin amalgamated in 2005. Rosary College changes from being an all-girls school to a mixed school.

06/07

84 pupils took part and 72 tutors took part. Pupil evaluations from this year tell us that the Voluntary Student Tutoring Scheme helped their confidence in subjects and improved their grades.

UCD students said they found the Scheme rewarding, particularly seeing students progress.

07/08

65 tutors and 72 pupils took part. The scheme is advertised in UCD's student paper the University Observer.

The principal of Caritas College notes that the Scheme enables pupils to see 3rd level students and their work... (and)...highlights the importance of study to the whole school...(UCD Tutors)...are positive role models.

A Guidance Counsellor from St. Kevin's College notes that UCD students show that it is possible to go to Third Level.

08/09

89 tutors and 96 pupils took part. Due to UCD becoming semesterised (and due to the term in secondary schools), Voluntary Tutoring begins and ends in Semester 1.

One tutor commented '(I) learnt how to adapt tutoring and communication methods to teach my student...I enjoyed the satisfaction of tutoring...in an easy to understand way'. Another tutor commented 'The Scheme is brilliant. It was really nice to help the pupil with their homework problems and difficult parts of their course'.

09/10

81 tutors and 78 pupils took part.

A teacher in Caritas College commented 'It is an excellent scheme having completed it as a past pupil. I would strongly recommend that it continues.'

One pupil commented 'My work has improved... (and she) was very helpful in improving my work ethic and I want to go to college and experience college life'.

One tutor commented that it is his final year in UCD and 'I have really enjoyed Voluntary Tutoring. I have volunteered for the past three years and as ever this has been a good experience'.

1,146 Pupils & 1,043 UCD students
have taken part in the Voluntary Tutoring Scheme in total over the past 10 years

Access students do better!



Dr. Orla Doyle, Ms. Marie Hyland, Ms. Anna Kelly, Dr. Philip Nolan, Mr. Vincent O'Sullivan, Dr. Kevin Denny, Ms. Patricia O'Reilly, Prof. Susan Dynarski, Ms. Ann O'Brien, Ms. Fiona Sweeney

December 2009 saw the culmination of over two years of research work with the launch of the 'Evaluating the Impact of the UCD New ERA Widening Participation Initiative' report.

This innovative research was undertaken by the UCD Geary Institute. It marks the first time quantitative research methods have been used in evaluating an access programme in Ireland.

The study had found convincing evidence that the UCD New ERA programme has substantial benefits for students from lower socio-economic groups. That is, there are more students from disadvantaged backgrounds going to university and those that do, at least in the case of UCD, perform better on several fronts.

Dr. Philip Nolan UCD Registrar, Deputy President and Vice-President for Academic Affairs launched the final report at a conference held in the Stillorgan Park Hotel on December 3rd 2009.

The keynote address was delivered by Professor Susan Dynarski, from the National Bureau of Economic Research, Michigan, USA, who gave an insightful presentation entitled 'Expanding Access to College: What works?'

Dr. Kevin Denny, Principal Investigator and Dr. Orla Doyle, Senior Researcher from the UCD Geary Institute outlined the key findings of the study.

The project was funded through the Strategic Innovation Fund and was undertaken in collaboration with NUI Maynooth.

The conference presentations are available on www.ucd.ie/access

"Evaluating the Impact of the UCD New ERA Widening Participation Initiative"

is available on <http://geary.ucd.ie/newera/>



Current & Upcoming Events

HEAR/CAO closing date
February 1st 2010

New ERA Shadowing Days
February 23rd & March 2nd 2010

5th Year Summer School
June 8th – June 17th 2010

UNI4U Summer School
June 14th – June 18th 2010

Take 5 Summer School
June 9th – June 16th 2010

UCD Orientation
August 27th-30th 2010

Thanks a Million!

UCD New ERA could not operate without the support of private donors and State funders. Your contribution to UCD New ERA ensures that we can provide a high quality service to our link schools, as well as effective supports and financial assistance to our undergraduate students.

UCD New ERA receives significant State funding through the Higher Education Authority and the NDP/ESF Student Assistance Fund.

A number of key private donors also contribute to UCD New ERA. They include:

- * ARUP Consulting Engineers
- * UCD Alumni
(UCD/AIB Affinity Credit Card Scheme)
- * Citibank International (Citigroup Foundation)
- * Women Graduates' Association
- * Boylan Sisters Limited
- * AIB Bank
- * Irish Life and Permanent
- * UCD Alumni Arts and Science Scholarships
- * Phyllis Purcell (A New ERA scholarship in the name of her parents, James & Marie Purcell)

If you would like to support any element of UCD New ERA, please contact Fiona Sweeney, Co-ordinator of New ERA, at 01 716 1658.

Contact Us!

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We look forward to hearing from you and to seeing you in the office!

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