

**WE'RE LOOKING FOR
EXCEPTIONAL TALENT
THROUGH YOUR EYES**



**UCD AD ASTRA
ACADEMY**

ASPIRE. ACHIEVE. EXCEL.





Welcome from the Director of the UCD Ad Astra Academy

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2025 UCD Ad Astra Academy Prospectus. The Academy was created in 2011 and is UCD's flagship scholarship programme. It is an expression of the mission of UCD as a whole; to provide a community in which students of the University displaying exceptional potential in academic pursuits, elite sports or performing arts are encouraged and supported to develop their talent further.

We believe in creating an environment where students with exceptional ability, creativity and drive will be motivated, challenged and inspired. The Ad Astra Academy nurtures exceptional students by offering them unique supports and opportunities to further develop their talents and allowing them to achieve at the highest levels. Our scholars benefit from a bursary, mentoring and discipline-specific supports, as well as personal and professional development opportunities.

The scholars in turn are expected to make a significant contribution to the Academy, the University and when they graduate, to society at large. The Academy is supported by alumni and friends of the University through donations to UCD Foundation. On behalf of the University, I would like to express my deep appreciation for their generosity and support.

As Director of the Academy, I am delighted to witness these remarkable scholars develop their potential during their time at UCD and as they progress with their careers and become our Ad Astra Alumni.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Dooley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Professor Barbara Dooley
Director Ad Astra Academy
Dean of Graduate Studies & Deputy Registrar



Scholars' Room

At the UCD Ad Astra Academy we are proud to have helped some of Ireland's greatest talents from all across the country to excel. We are currently looking for exceptional students to join our programme for 2025 and reach new heights. We need your help to find them.



**Ad Astra Elite Sports Alumna
Ciara Magean in the Academy's
High Performance Gym**



**Ad Astra Performing Arts Scholars
rehearsing in the Academy's
Performing Arts Studio with our Artistic
and Theatre Director, Kellie Hughes**

**Applications for Elite Sports Scholars and Performing Arts Scholars
will be accepted 1st November 2024 - 31st January 2025.**

**Applications for Academic Scholars will be accepted
1st February - 18th August 2025.**



Josh van der Flier, Wicklow, Sports & Exercise Management Alumnus

Josh is tackled by Damian de Allende of South Africa during the 2023 Rugby World Cup Pool B match between South Africa and Ireland at Stade de France in Paris.

Josh has been named the 2022 World Rugby Men's 15s Player of the Year, the 2022 EPCR European Player of the Year, the 2021-22 Guinness Rugby Writers of Ireland Men's Player of the Year. Josh was part of the Irish squad that won the 2023 and 2024 Six Nations Championship.



Sarah Lavin, Limerick, Physiotherapy Alumna

Sarah crosses the line in sixth place during the women's 100m hurdles semi-final at the Stade de France during the 2024 Paris Summer Olympic Games in Paris. She is also the fastest Irish female hurdler in history, coming 5th in the 100m semi-final at the 2023 World Championships in Budapest.

UCD Ad Astra Elite Sports Scholars

The UCD Ad Astra Elite Sports programme supports students who are competing and succeeding at the highest sporting levels. Athletes in the Academy compete at international level. In the case of GAA, they compete at inter-county level. At any one time, there are 60 Elite Sports Scholars in the programme with an average intake of 15 each year.

Students must apply online via the Academy website before 31st January 2025. The applications are reviewed by a selection panel and suitable candidates are selected for interview.


Following the interview stage, placement offers will be made to successful applicants subject to an offer and acceptance of a course in UCD. Points concessions can be made for successful candidates who can show evidence of ability to undertake their chosen course.

Please visit ucd.ie/adastraacademy for full details of eligibility and application process.

Benefits


- €3,000 scholarship allowance each year a scholar is in the Academy
- The support of an academic mentor to help scholars excel in both academia and their chosen sport
- Access to a high performance gym with expert training and coaching
- Physiotherapy and medical assistance, nutritional and fitness monitoring, and sports psychology
- Guaranteed on-campus accommodation, the cost of which may be offset by the scholarship allowance
- Networking and team building events with all strands of the Academy
- Access to the Ad Astra Scholars' Room

Applications Open	Applications Close	Interviews
1st November 2024	31st January 2025	March/April 2025



**Ciara Coughlan, Offaly
Business & Law Alumna**

The Ad Astra Academy Director, Professor Barbara Dooley with Ciara at the 2023 Academy's Graduation Evening. Ciara was shortlisted for the 2023 GradIreland Undergraduate of the Year Award for Innovative Sustainable Thinking. She has gone on to receive a George Moore Scholarship to pursue an MSc in Environmental Sustainability at the University of Edinburgh. The University is ranked 15th in the world and 3rd in the UK in the QS World University Rankings for Sustainability 2024.



Matthew Coffey and Katie Farrell, Dublin, Mechanical Engineering Alumni

Matthew and Katie, Co-founders and CEO and COO of SQUID speaking with Academy Director, Professor Barbara Dooley about setting up their company SQUID in 2019 at the Annual Academy Breakfast.

SQUID currently has over 300,000 loyalty customers. It operates in over 1,750 retailers throughout Ireland, UK, Canada and has recently launched in the Middle East.

UCD Ad Astra Academic Scholars

The UCD Ad Astra Academic programme is looking for students who have a proven track record of academic excellence, leadership and a desire to continue to achieve at the highest level. Up to 15 scholarships are awarded to incoming students each year.

Scholarships for school leavers entering UCD in September 2025 will be awarded based on a combination of the academic criteria of 6 H1s, an online application via the Ad Astra Academy website and an interview.

Applicants with 6 H1s will be called for interview based solely on their application, with a 60% weighting on extra-curricular achievements and a 40% weighting on the personal statement.

Please visit ucd.ie/adastraacademy for full details of eligibility and application process.

Benefits

- A €3,000 scholarship allowance each year a scholar is in the Academy
- Guaranteed on-campus accommodation, the cost of which may be offset by the scholarship allowance
- The support of a dedicated academic mentor in the scholar's area of study
- Workshops and seminars to develop the scholar's academic and personal potential
- Networking opportunities and team building events with all strands of the Academy
- Access to the Ad Astra Scholars' Room
- The opportunity to undertake the Ad Astra Academy Academic elective module *Ad Astra Professional and Personal Development* in Stage two

Applications Open	Applications Close	Interviews
1st February 2025	18th August 2025	After CAO offers

Performing Arts Scholars

UCD Ad Astra Performing Arts Scholars

The UCD Ad Astra Performing Arts programme offers opportunities to students who excel in theatre performance (actor, playwright, director, designer etc.)/classical music and wish to develop their performance talents while pursuing a degree in UCD. At any one time, there are 20 Performing Arts Scholars in the programme with an average intake of 5 each year.

Students must apply online via the Academy website before 31st January 2025. Candidates will be chosen for audition on the basis of the information provided on the application form, covering their musical or dramatic studies, past experiences and any information that might support the application.

Successful candidates will be offered a place in the Academy subject to an offer and acceptance of a course in UCD. Points concessions can be made for successful audition candidates who can show evidence of ability to undertake their chosen course.

Please visit ucd.ie/adastraacademy for full details of eligibility and application process.

Benefits

- €3,000 scholarship allowance each year a scholar is in the Academy
- Access to the new Performing Arts Building which features a state-of-the-art studio with sprung floor, a grand piano and an area for alumni and current members to rehearse and create.
- Guaranteed on-campus accommodation, the cost of which may be offset by the scholarship allowance
- The opportunity to work with experienced professionals in seminar and workshop settings
- The opportunity to perform in concerts, recitals and theatre productions
- Access to the Ad Astra Scholars' Room

Applications Open	Applications Close	Interviews
1st November 2024	31st January 2025	April/May 2025



UCD AD ASTRA ACADEMY

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Visit ucd.ie/adastraacademy for more details