



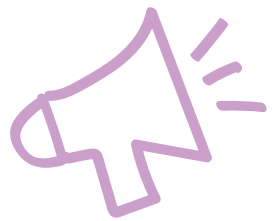
University College Dublin
Careers Network

Activity Report

AUGUST 2023 - JULY 2024







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WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR

I would like to thank the Careers Network team for their dedication, resilience and professionalism over the course of this reporting period. While nothing new, this amazing team makes a fantastic contribution to the student experience and to the success of UCD.

In addition to volume, the work of Careers Network is of very high quality and the contents of this activity report aim to highlight quantity and quality. In addition to the “day job”, team members engage in projects, initiatives and activities that add value to the student experience and to the success of the university, putting the UCD values into action. During this reporting period, team members worked on a series of initiatives which were often complex, of scale, and with impact beyond Careers Network. These include:

- **Career and Skills Statements.** Careers Network led the development of templates for use by programmes in drawing attention to relevant careers and skills related information for use by prospective students. Partnering with UCD Registry and UCD IT Services, these templates have been embedded into the UCD Curriculum Management System and are populated by programme managers.
- **Academic Internships Framework.** Careers Network was a leader in advocating for a review of the Academic Internships Framework and producing a large-scale report with recommendations at the implementation stage.
- **User Experience of Internships and Placements.** Partnering with colleagues at UCD, Careers Network led an exploration of students, staff, faculty and hosts and reported on the user experience with recommendations now at the implementation stage.
- **Data informed Practice.** Using data to identify trends, the staff has created new interventions and reshaped services to meet increased demand while maximising efficient use of resources.
- **Career Readiness.** Working with students who stated they have “No Plan” or “Some Plan”, the team has developed bespoke online and face to face programmes designed to transform career development and career planning as a pilot initiative.

- **Co-Curricular Programmes.** Careers Network continues to develop and deliver co-curricular programmes which enhance students’ sense of belonging while developing skills, competencies, attitudes and experiences, making students more employable and socially aware citizens in the process. With around 1000 students completing UCD Advantage Award, Alumni Career Mentoring and initiatives, this area continues to engage increasing numbers of students.

When QS World Rankings published annual Graduate Employability Ranking, UCD was ranked Number 1 in Ireland from 2018 until the ranking was retired in 2022. It is encouraging to see University College Dublin again ranked no 1. in Ireland and 77th in the world for employment outcomes (QS World University Rankings, 2025).

Central to all the unit does and will do in the future, is a solid commitment to the students, recent alumni, and Postdoctoral Research Fellows of UCD with professional practice grounded in integrity, independence, and impartiality. The team looks forward to the year ahead and to continued development and enhancement of work undertaken.

Kind regards,

Dr David Foster,

*UCD Director of Careers, Employability and Skills/ Associate Editor,
British Journal of Guidance and Counselling.*



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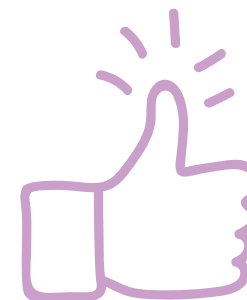
- DR DAVID FOSTER

WHO WE ARE





WHO WE ARE...



Senior Management Team

- **LOUISE CAMPBELL**
Senior Manager (Careers Network, Blackrock)
- **DR KEVIN DE GROOTE**
Senior Data & Operations Manager (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **SOPHIE CAREY**
Senior Careers and Skills Manager (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **DR DAVID FOSTER**
UCD Director of Careers, Employability and Skills,
Associate Editor at British Journal of Guidance and Counselling
and Director (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **SORCHA MULCAHY**
Deputy Director (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **CATHY SAVAGE**
Senior Internships and Engagement Manager
(Careers Network, Belfield)

Careers and Skills Team

- **LEONA BARRY**
Career and Skills Consultant (College of Social Sciences and Law)
- **TARA HUGHES**
Career & Skills Consultant (Graduate Research Students,
Belfield and Blackrock)
- **BERNADETTE BURKE**
Careers Manager (MBA students, Careers Network, Blackrock)
- **VACANT**
Career Consultant (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **EDEL CARAWAY**
Career & Skills Consultant (College of Science)
- **MICHAEL MCDONNELL**
Careers Manager (MSc students, Careers Network, Blackrock)
- **MICHELLE COEN**
Career & Skills Consultant (College of Arts and Humanities)
- **ARADHNA MATHUR**
Co-Curricular Project Officer (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **MARK CUMISKY**
Career & Skills Consultant (College of Health and
Agricultural Sciences)
- **DR ANDREA MAYNARD**
Co-Curricular Project Officer (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **NICOLA FORTUNE**
Career & Skills Consultant (College of Engineering and
Architecture)
- **NAOIMH O'CONNOR**
Research Careers Manager (Postdoctoral Researchers,
Belfield and Blackrock)
- **LEONIE PHIPPS**
Career & Skills Consultant (UCD College of Business, Innovation
Academy and Access & Lifelong Learning)
- **SARAH SHALLOE**
Career Consultant (Careers Network, Belfield)
- **KARINA SEPTORE**
Career & Skills Consultant (College of Engineering and
Architecture and College of Science)
- **ISOBEL TYNAN**
Career Consultant (Careers Network, Belfield)



Internships and Engagement



ISABEL BLANCO

Corporate Relations & Internships Officer
(Careers Network, Blackrock)



CAROLINE PIERCE

Business Development Manager
(Careers Network, Belfield)



OONAGH SWEENEY

University Internships Manager
(Careers Network, Belfield)

Data and Operations



BRUNA ALVES

Surveys & Data Analyst (Careers Network, Belfield)



KATE COMASKEY

Career Development Assistant (Careers Network, Belfield)



MARK JACKSON

Carer Development Assistant (Careers Network, Belfield)



AOIFE KILBANE

Digital and Communications Executive (Careers Network, Belfield)



HANNAH LAMONT

Team Leader (Careers Network, Belfield)



RITA TAAFE

Senior Careers & Skills Assistant (Careers Network, Blackrock)



ALESSIA TALARICO

Career Development Assistant (Careers Network, Belfield)



SAHAR UL HAQUE

Career Development Assistant (Careers Network, Belfield)



“

Central to all the unit does and will do in the future, is a solid commitment to the students, recent alumni, and Postdoctoral Research Fellows of UCD with professional practice grounded in integrity, independence, and impartiality

- DR DAVID FOSTER



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WHAT WE DO

Results

Líonra Gairmeacha
UCD Careers Network





WHAT WE DO...

UCD CAREERS NETWORK develops students and postdoctoral researchers, personally and professionally, enabling them to realise their career potential and transition into graduate study, the workplace and other options. In recent years, the team has invested in online provisions that explore areas such as resilience, health and wellbeing, managing emotions, adding value to existing expertise. Careers Network enables students and postdoctoral researchers to track their career development and is a catalyst in implementing the UCD Career Development & Employability Strategy 2015-2025 which comprises five priorities, each with associated actions:



Incorporate development and employability related activities in disciplinary appropriate ways within programmes.



Enhance and develop employability attributes in our students and graduates.



Establish and maintain excellent working relationships with our key stakeholders.



Provide opportunities for students who want to develop their creativity, innovation, enterprise and entrepreneurial interests.



Communicating our strategy to prospective students and key stakeholders.

UCD CAREERS NETWORK is a professional services unit comprising UCD Careers Network (Belfield) and UCD Careers Network (Blackrock). Services are offered to a range of key client groups, including:

- **Students and alumni (up to two years post programme completion)**
- **Postdoctoral Research Fellows**
- **Academics and professional staff**
- **Employers and organisations who recruit interns, volunteers, and graduates**





The CareerEdge Model of Employability:

A Theoretical Foundation of the work at Careers Network



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

2326

STUDENTS completed credit bearing careers education and development in 35 full and part modules.

6216

STUDENTS engaged with workshops and careers information non-credit bearing activities

14301

STUDENTS engaged AI tools to develop effective CV's and prepare for interview

2328

STUDENTS took part in one-to-one career guidance and coaching consultations face to face and online.

5410

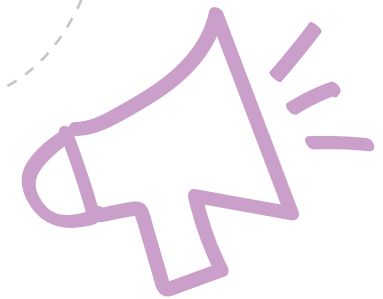
STUDENTS and 260 graduate recruiters attended 5 Recruitment Fairs on the Belfield and Smurfit campuses

308

STUDENTS completed other co-curricular awards in areas such as Alumni Career Mentoring, Skills for Working Life, Set for Success, Work-Related Learning and Micro-Internships.

797

STUDENTS were awarded the UCD Advantage Award



“Ensuring our students are well prepared for further academic study, for contributing to society and for career success in a global context and for a lifetime of continuing personal development.”

- UCD STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION & STUDENT SUCCESS 2020-2024

ADDED VALUE:

**DELIVERING IMPACT AND ENHANCING
THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE WITHIN
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

"Incorporate career development and employability related activities in disciplinary appropriate ways within programmes".

- UCD CAREER DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY 2015-2025

“Support students in identifying and tracking their progress against the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to complete their programmes and be world and work ready”.

UCD STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION AND STUDENT SUCCESS 2020-2024

UCD COLLEGE OF ARTS & HUMANITIES



CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

70 STUDENTS

participated in 40 classes as part of 4 credit bearing modules

682 STUDENTS

attended one of 27 non-credit bearing workshops or alumni panels

223 CAREER GUIDANCE

& coaching consultations delivered

37 STUDENTS

were awarded the UCD Advantage Award

168 STUDENTS

and 260 employers attended one of 5 recruitment fairs at UCD

919 STUDENTS

used CV360 or Interview360 on MyCareer



“The sequence of the lectures was great and really built up our career skills quite well. Overall great insights and preparation for entering the working world”

[HUMANITIES STUDENT, HUM20030, 2024]

37 STUDENTS COMPLETED CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

including matching with an Alumni Mentor (32), Skills for Working Life (4), Micro Internships (1)





UCD COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

(LOCHLANN QUINN UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS)



CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

779 STUDENTS

attended one of 14 workshops or information sessions

238 CAREER GUIDANCE

& coaching consultations delivered

81 STUDENTS

were awarded the UCD Advantage Award

736 STUDENTS

and 260 employers attended one of 5 recruitment fairs at UCD

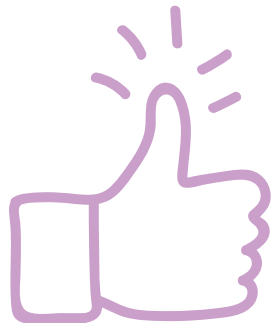
3089 STUDENTS

used CV360 or Interview360

20 STUDENTS

participated in the London Finance & Consulting Trip 2023

“Highly recommend Leonie to anyone needing career advice!”





UCD COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND ARCHITECTURE



CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

798 STUDENTS

participated in 21 classes as part of 10 credit bearing modules

957 STUDENTS

attended one of 17 non-credit bearing workshops or alumni panels

84 STUDENTS

were awarded the UCD Advantage Award

859 STUDENTS

and 260 employers attended one of 5 recruitment fairs at UCD

346 CAREER GUIDANCE

& coaching consultations delivered

2,611 STUDENTS

used CV360 or Interview360



“Very informative, clear strategies to put into practice”

(3RD YR. ELECTRONIC ENGINEERING STUDENT)

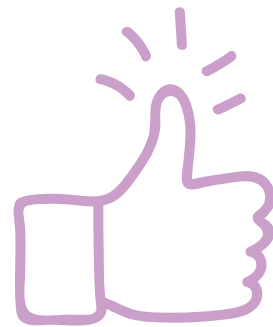
26 STUDENTS COMPLETED CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

including matching with an Alumni Mentor (19), Skills for Working Life (4), Micro Internships (3)



“I really enjoyed your talk today ... [It was a truly inspirational and motivational presentation”

PGT - CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH STUDENT



UCD COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

443 STUDENTS

participated in 44 classes as part of 9 credit bearing modules

944 STUDENTS

attended one of 29 non-credit bearing workshops or alumni panels

227 CAREER GUIDANCE

& coaching consultations delivered

107 STUDENTS

were awarded the UCD Advantage Award

267 STUDENTS

and 207 employers attended one of 5 recruitment fairs at UCD

1,932 STUDENTS

used CV360 or Interview360

WHILE THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS

completing the co-curricular Advantage award grew by 46% this year there is scope to promote other co-curricular activities such as the Future Skills Programme.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my experience of completing Prepare for Your Future Career and will highly recommend it to my siblings and friends coming up through the university”

(STAGE 3 PHYSICS STUDENT)



UCD COLLEGE OF SCIENCE



CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

349 STUDENTS

participated in 60 classes as part of 8 credit bearing modules

2,011 STUDENTS

attended 23 non-credit bearing workshops or alumni panels

622 CAREER GUIDANCE

& coaching consultations delivered

110 STUDENTS

were awarded the UCD Advantage Award

1696 STUDENTS

and 260 employers attended one of 5 recruitment fairs at UCD

1,776 STUDENTS

used CV360 or Interview360

146 STUDENTS COMPLETED

co-curricular activities, including the Advantage Award (110), matching with an Alumni Mentor (29) and Skills for Working Life (7)



UCD COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LAW



CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

918 STUDENTS

participated in 39 classes as part of 9 credit bearing modules

793 STUDENTS

attended one of 20 non-credit bearing workshops or alumni panels

627 CAREER GUIDANCE

& coaching consultations delivered

167 STUDENTS

were awarded the UCD Advantage Award

1,684 STUDENTS

and 260 employers attended one of 5 recruitment fairs at UCD

3,974 STUDENTS

used CV360 or Interview360

99 STUDENTS COMPLETED

co-curricular activities including matching with an Alumni Mentor (57), Skills for Working Life (10), Micro Internships (1), Set for Success (13), The Corporate & Commercial Law Study Trip (18)

“

“The careers module helped me gain valuable skills, guidance, and insights”

FINAL YEAR CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT



CAREERS NETWORK, BLACKROCK

(UCD MICHAEL
SMURFIT GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS)



CAREERS NETWORK, BLACKROCK

(UCD MICHAEL SMURFIT GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS)

The UCD Smurfit Careers Network, Blackrock supports students through group class work, employer engagement activities, personalised career advice, support from specialist subject area experts and active promotion of all resources available to students.

An excellent relationship exists between the UCD Smurfit Careers Network, Blackrock and the UCD Careers Network, Belfield. For students and postdoctoral researchers based at Blackrock, a blended approach to the delivery of personal and professional/ career development exists along these lines of responsibility:

- MBA/MSc Programmes - UCD Smurfit Careers Network, Blackrock team
- PhD students- UCD Careers Network, Belfield team
- Postdoctoral Researchers- UCD Careers Network, Belfield team



CAREERS NETWORK, BLACKROCK KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

22

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Workshops attended by 1015 students were delivered during Orientation with 62 alumni from UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School sharing their stories.

958

STUDENTS ATTENDED one or more of the UCD on-campus recruitment Fairs that includes 365 who attended the UCD Smurfit Careers and Internships Fair in Trimester two.

1,621

STUDENTS ENGAGED WITH online personal and professional resources and development tools using the UCD MyCareer online Platform.

7,402

CV UPLOADS were reviewed using the online CV360 tool, with 6837 job postings accessed and 5811 visits to the ELearning Hub.

384

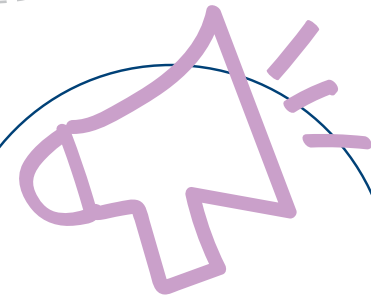
STUDENTS REGISTERED for UCD Smurfit Employers' Days in Trimester 1

40

STUDENTS ATTENDED Global Virtual Fairs

1,785

ONE TO ONE MSc Consultations



Delivery and co-lead of three for credit LEAP modules: Global MBA (1 year), EMBA Year 1 and EMBA Year 2.



Academic Internships

The internship module is an optional module for the following student cohorts: MSc Strategic Management, MSc International Business, MSc Management Consultancy, MSc Finance, MSc Quantitative Finance, MSc Sustainable Finance, MSc Financial Data Science, MSc Aviation Finance and MSc International Management CEMS MIM. Academic internships are completed annually between June and August with 181 students undertaking an internship in the Summer of 2024. These students received 2 sessions during the academic year: an information session in trimester 1, and preparatory session before the internship in trimester 2.



UCD Smurfit MBA Programmes

Career development and employability support is provided to UCD’s Global and Executive MBA Programmes through a for-credit module that is integrated into the core curriculum.

Known as LEAP (Leadership & Employability Advancement Programme), the module was developed following a co-creation model, in partnership with the MBA Programme, leading Global Smurfit Employers and MBA students. The module was also developed in adherence to the principles of Universal Design for Learning and is underpinned by a multi-level employability behavioural framework. The Careers Network team in Blackrock continues to provide one-to-one careers support to current MBA students and Alumni in scope, a cohort of 400 students.

In April 2024 UCD Careers Network won the AHECS ‘Research Informed Practice’ Employability Award for LEAP. The LEAP module also won an ‘Excellence in Learning Development’ award at the ABP (Association of Business Psychology) Awards in London in November 2024 for the application of business psychology to develop the employability of a global MBA class. LEAP was shortlisted as a finalist in the ‘Best Innovation Strategy’ category at the AMBA (Association of MBAs) awards, to take place in London in January 2025.



WORKING WITH GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS



WORKING WITH GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

Early-stage researchers play a vital role at university and a class leading, dedicated support service facilitates career progression. A full-time Career and Skills Consultant for graduate research students supports students across the Belfield and Blackrock campuses. A strong working partnership has been established with the students and Graduate Research alumni and UCD Graduate Studies, the Graduate Research Student Advisor, Principal Investigators and PhD supervisors across schools and institutes.

KEY TAKEAWAYS from the 2023-2024 reporting year may be summarised as:

- **Graduate Research graduates** have a very positive employment outcome, with 92% going directly into employment. (GOS survey, 2024)
- **An increase to 30% of PhD graduates** (+12% increase from 2022) moved into Postdoctoral Researcher positions, with the majority (58.9%) entering 'Professional Occupations' (including medical). 46% report as working in the Education sector.
- **Take up of one-to-one career** coaching services was high as always and the feedback very positive
- **Careers Network continues** to explore how best to position Career Registration with doctoral candidates given multiple registration periods throughout the academic year.

ACTIVITY SNAPSHOT: GRADUATE RESEARCH STUDENTS

UCD GRADUATE RESEARCHERS



CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

160 CAREER GUIDANCE

and consultations
delivered

22 GR BESPOKE BULLETINS

sent with curated jobs and
events listings

OVER 200 GR STUDENTS

attended the CN ECR
Employer event and/or the
UCD Recruitment fairs

614 STUDENTS

used CV360 or
Interview360 on
My Career ECR pages

*“She gave me useful advice regarding not only my CV,
but also the approach I was taking in my job search;
I’m really grateful to her for that!”*



SUPPORTING GRADUATE RESEARCHERS CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career coaching

Within the period covered by this report over 130 individual Career Coaching conversations were delivered. These confidential, individual meetings covered topics such as career planning, interview skills, applications, negotiation skills and more.

This year a new 30 minute "Application and Interview" one-to-one service commenced in June 2024 with positive feedback apparent to date.

Feedback from students was extremely positive with 100% of students indicating they felt more confident and 100% of students indicating they would recommend other students make an appointment.

"I did a one-to-one session with you about my CV, interview, and job applications. I wanted to share the good news with you that I landed the job. I believe that session with you helped me get here"

(GR STUDENT COMPUTER SCIENCE, 2024)



Development Workshops

The UCD Careers Network engaged in a range of seminars and workshops tailored to support students in different discipline areas. These were most successful when the Career and Skills Consultant is invited into the student experience to present at School or College level. Examples include the School of Computer Science, Conway Institute, School of Philosophy, School of English, Drama & Film. Working together, faculty and the career practitioner designed relevant sessions for each group.

"I heard some great feedback! The activities, the reminder of all you do... all ideal. Thank you!"

In June 2023, a new interactive initiative called "Careers Masterclass" was introduced. This year seven sessions were held, with one online.

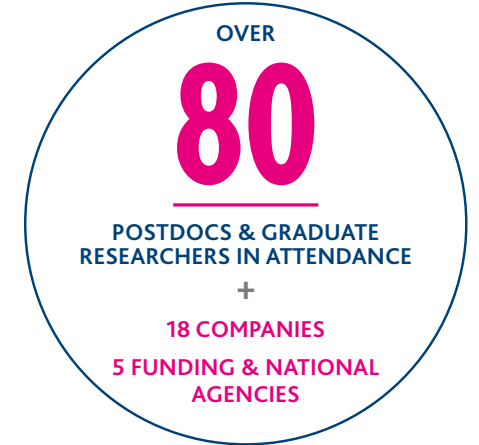
"It was good doing the interactive sessions and great to see how other people approach the same problem" - Masterclass Attendee. In addition, shorter, bite sized sessions ran in parallel, focussing on specific topics, such as Effective CVs, Cover letters, LinkedIn Profiles and, Career Planning.





Researcher- Employer Interface: Synergies between talent and the workplace

The UCD Research Careers team hosted its annual Early Career Researcher (ECR) Company Networking event in May 2024. This event showcased companies and organisations who presented to and networked with Graduate Researchers and Postdocs of all disciplines. The new Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact (VPRII), Professor Kate Robson Brown, opened the event with over eighty early career researchers (45% Postdocs, 29% Graduate Researcher, 26% other) in attendance on the day.



“I think it’s a great idea and UCD are doing well by its students in organising this”

- EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

Inspiring stories: The Power of Alumni

One of the best ways for graduate researchers to visualise, explore and learn about possibilities for their future careers is through alumni connections. Often students have worked hard to establish great networks for themselves but also there are many challenges to creating and maintaining a network. To support this important dimension of the graduate research experience, students and alumni are connected.

This year, a series of “Fireside Fridays” was delivered. These online events were recorded and posted to the Early Career Researcher pages of MyCareer. They are career chats with graduate research alumni covering career journeys, useful employability skills acquired during graduate research and tips for current students. We source speakers who work in a range of sectors.

In trimester two, face to face events took place with the support of the UCD Alumni Relations team. UCD Alumni Relations team provided the venue and refreshments, and Careers Network sourced the alumni. The event was a very positive experience for those in attendance, including our alumni with Prof. Barbara Dooley, UCD Dean of Graduate Studies, attending. Direct industry/alumni/student relationships were formed.

Making Connections: Communicating our key messages

The bulletin

The 'Graduate Researcher Careers Bulletin' is emailed directly to all Graduate Research students from the MyCareersystem every second Wednesday. Each bulletin contains a specifically curated selection of around 50 current vacancies from across sectors, as well as any vacancies we are specifically notified about from our employer network, along with notices on relevant training and events. In 2023/2024, twenty-two bespoke bulletins were sent to approx. 2,000 students with an open rate of approx. 73%.

Targeted emails (Career Registration)

Whilst always mindful of the number of emails we send, once or twice a year we send targeted emails to specific groups of graduate research students using Career Registration data. eg a specific email for students who have indicated they have "no career plan", in the fourth year of study.



Leveraging Online Tools & Technology

MyCareer is an important resource for all Early Career Researchers. A separate space for ECRs has been designed. Within the period covered by this report 654 unique users visited the ECR site, this includes both Postdocs and GR students, a slight increase from last year.

Developing through Engagement in Co-curricular activities

Twelve graduate research students completed the UCD Advantage Award. This university level co-curricular award is designed to enhance students' employability by encouraging them to participate in co-curricular activities, reflect on what they have learned and articulate this learning. Participation in this award rose significantly last year.



Graduate Recruitment Fairs

One hundred and thirty-one graduate research students attended, an increase from 90 the previous year.

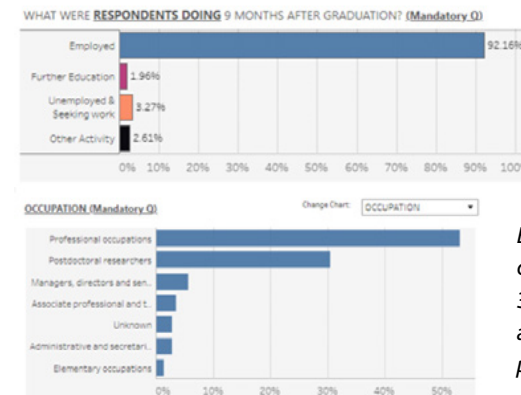
Science, Engineering & Technology Fair	79
Business, Finance & Management Fair	22
Law Recruitment Fair	13
Internship Fair	17
Total	131

How we use Data to Guide our Work

To most efficiently leverage the resources of the Careers Network and develop interventions of most impact to our students, the UCD Careers Networks uses a variety of data. The two most important sources of such data - the "Graduate Outcome Survey" and "Career Registration" are outlined below.

The Graduate Outcomes Survey - What do UCD graduates do next?

Data is used in a range of ways, from determining where additional interventions would be most useful, to identifying key employers, as well as better understanding students' experience post-graduation. For more information on the Graduate Outcomes Survey, including the questions asked, see the [HEA website](#). The graduate researcher response rate was 45% (153 graduate research student respondents). Nine months post-graduation, graduate research alumni have a very positive employment outcome, with 92.16% going directly into employment (91.79% previous year).



Employers vary widely across disciplines; however, we know that 30% of graduates selected Postdoc as their occupation, in 2022 that percentage was 18%.

UCD RESEARCH CAREERS FRAMEWORK:

ENGAGING
POSTDOCTORAL
RESEARCHERS IN
CAREER DEVELOPMENT



UCD RESEARCH CAREERS FRAMEWORK: ENGAGING POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The UCD Research Careers Framework (RCF) establishes a structured early career development model for Postdoctoral Fellows (Postdocs) at UCD. The framework represents a joint initiative between UCD Careers Network and UCD HR People & Organisation Development (POD) and working closely with UCD Research, Innovation and Impact in support of Postdocs. The cross-functional team of 2 members is committed to building innovative and practical supports to better embed the framework within the university and refine the delivery of its activities and systems aligned with the needs of our early career researcher community.

Our mission is to enhance the mobility of researchers across a variety of careers, in all sectors. We aim to enable Postdocs to take a constructive approach to their ongoing personal and professional development. We support them to focus on skills and competencies that are most relevant in the context of their research area, experience, and longer-term career aspirations. UCD continues as the sector leader in nurturing Postdocs in their career development.

We provide a range of tailored career and professional development support, delivered within a structured model across four professional competency areas. The bespoke programme includes technical and transferable skills training, such as Grant Writing and Project Management, as well as career coaching, interview preparation and career exploration. The population is diverse and spread across UCD:



386
POSTDOCS

47% female
 49% male
 4% unspecified

POSTDOCS

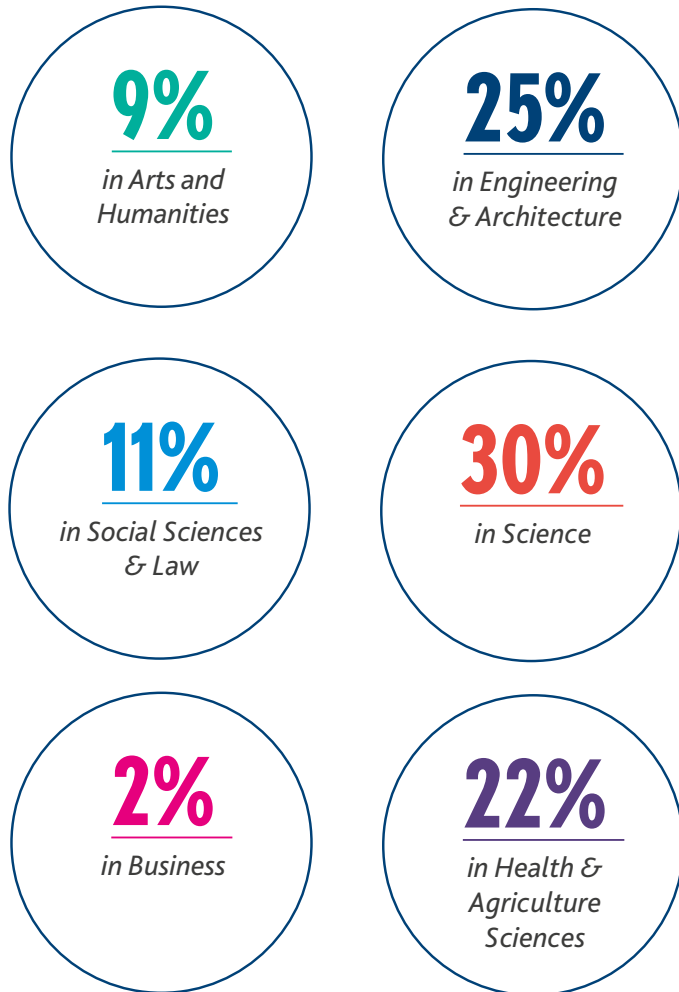
74% PD1
 19% PD2
 7% Other

64
NATIONALITIES

40% within EU
 60% outside
 of EU

26
RESEARCH FELLOWS

46% female
 54% male



1% in Office of Vice-President for Research Innovation and Impact

UCD POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

CAREERS NETWORK REPORT 2023/24

943 POSTDOCS participated in 64 Career and Professional Development Events

189 INTRODUCTORY and Career Development Consultations delivered

80+ EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS attended the 2024 Researcher Company Networking Event

100+ POSTDOCS attended 10 Roundtables with 24 UCD Postdoc Alumni

94% OF POSTDOCS WOULD RECOMMEND

Research Careers training and development activities and 97% would recommend the career consultations

32 BESPOKE POSTDOC Career e-Newsletters produced

13 POSTDOCS availed of Academic and non-Academic Mock Interviews

"I am immensely grateful for the outstanding support provided by UCD Research Careers for Postdoctoral Researchers. The array of workshops, alumni roundtables, and one-on-one sessions they offer has been invaluable in shaping my professional trajectory"



Developing researcher talent and enabling the higher education sector to retain talent is critical to success, as is enabling all sectors of the economy to recognise the talent apparent in early-stage researchers and to attract, retain and develop researcher talent.

At UCD we have an effective programme which is well supported by the Postdoctoral Researcher population:

41%

have attended orientation

33%

attended more than 3 events

26%

attended between 1 and 3 events

27%

have 1 or more career meetings recorded

1%

*have 1 or more PI meetings recorded**

** Refers to the number of career development meetings recorded in the system and approved by PIs. It does not include those recorded by Postdocs which have not yet been approved.*

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a silver pen and writing in a notebook. The notebook is open and lies on a desk. In the background, a laptop is partially visible, and there are several documents with charts and graphs scattered on the desk. The lighting is warm and soft, suggesting an indoor setting with natural light. The overall scene conveys a sense of focused work and learning.

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING:

**PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE WORKPLACE
(CREDIT BEARING INTERNSHIPS)**

WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING:

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE WORKPLACE (CREDIT BEARING INTERNSHIPS)

Academic internships (internships that carry ECTS credits) are embedded within the curriculum across all six UCD Colleges as represented in the table below.

With around 15 Internship Coordinators and Managers across UCD in Schools and Colleges, UCD Careers Network provides a degree of oversight and understanding of the internships landscape across the university. The UCD Internships Manager based at the Careers Network organises networking opportunities and an Internship Manager Forum at which matters of interest, best practice, systems and processes that support the student experience and internship administration and other operational matters are discussed. Through professional associations, Careers Network connects UCD Internship Managers locally, nationally and internationally to colleagues across borders.

UCD COLLEGE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON ACADEMIC INTERNSHIPS 2023/24
Arts & Humanities	50
Business- Lochlann Quinn Undergraduate School of Business	343
Business- Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School	181
Engineering & Architecture	282
Health and Agricultural Science (excludes clinical placements)	380
Science	348
Social Sciences & Law	158
Total	1742

Since 2022/23, Careers Network has been involved in several projects of scale around the Academic Internships Framework and User Experience of Placements and Internships. Both projects are complete and a Work Integrated Learning Implementation Group, Chaired by Professor Jason Last, Dean of Students has been established to implement recommendations.

BELONGING, PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



“Enhance the employability of our students by offering a wide variety of opportunities to enhance their options in the world of work through internships, placements, entrepreneurial activities, volunteering, as active members of student societies, as student union representatives and through the development of co-curricular skills awards: the UCD Advantage Award”.

- UCD CAREER DEVELOPMENT & EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY 2015-2025, P12

BELONGING, PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The student experience and learning take place both within programmes and around programmes as students engage and explore what UCD and wider society has to offer.



As such, UCD Careers Network delivers a range of co-curricular programmes that enhance students’ connections, enhance the educational experience and deliver personal and professional development. These programmes include:

Careers Network Co-Curricular Programmes 2023-2024:

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME	NUMBER OF AWARDS
UCD Advantage Award	797
Certificate in Skills for Working Life	46
Set for Success Programme	17
Certificate in Work Related Learning - Finance Trip to London	18
Certificate in Work Related Learning - Law Trip to London	11
Commercial Awareness Challenge	5
Total number of Award Achievers	894

Careers Network works to provide information to Schools and Colleges around student engagement with co-curricular programmes.

Alumni Career Mentoring Programme

Operated In partnership with UCD Alumni Relations, in 2023/24:

UCD COLLEGE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS MATCHED WITH A MENTOR
Arts and Humanities	32
Engineering and Architecture	19
Science	29
Social Sciences and Law	57
Total	137

Alumni-Career Mentoring continues to be popular with 413 registrations recorded in the first instance. Unfortunately, not every student with an expressed interest received a mentor and the team is working to create new ways of meeting unmet requests.



“The most impactful part of the programme was gaining clarity on my next career steps, thanks to my mentor’s firsthand experience. Hearing about his journey, including the challenges and decisions he faced, gave me a clearer idea of the steps I should take. He also shared useful contacts and information about companies and research groups in my field, along with tips on how to contact researchers and write effective cover letters. With his guidance, I successfully secured a summer internship.”



“I would absolutely recommend this programme to other students. Thinking about your future as you finish college can feel overwhelming, but having someone from your field who has been through it can make a significant difference. The chance to ask questions, hear about real experiences, and receive advice makes this programme an incredible opportunity for any student looking to define their career path in a practical, informed way.”

The UCD Advantage Award 2023-2024

Advantage is the University’s official qualification that recognises student development through engagement in co-curricular activities. The award facilitates students in reflecting upon their interests and activities to evidence personal and professional development, contribution to UCD and the wider community, health and wellbeing and culture and engagement. The award is well established and is growing in popularity with students on the UCD Singapore Campus.



Universitas 21 Micro Internships & Virtual Internships

In recent years, there has been significant growth in the depth and range of co-curricular activities delivered by Careers Network and recognised through the UCD Advantage Award, UCD’S official award that recognises development and contribution outside the classroom. I am pleased to report that UCD Careers Network has established an effective Co-Curricular Community of Practice, sponsored by the Deputy President, Registrar and Vice President of Academic Affairs which brings coordination, sharing of expertise and ideation to this increasingly important area.

UCD COLLEGE	NUMBER OF AWARDS
Arts and Humanities	37
Business (inc. Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School and UCD Singapore campus)	291
Engineering and Architecture	84
Health and Agricultural Sciences	107
Science	110
Social Sciences and Law	167
Vice President for Global Engagement	1
Total completions	797

COLLEGE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
College of Arts and Humanities Social Sciences and Law	2
College of Business	12
College of Engineering & Architecture	3
College of Science	2
College of Health & Agricultural Science	1
College of Social Sciences and Law	18
Total Number of Students	38

MAKING CAREERS MORE ACCESSIBLE

ONLINE CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY



MAKING CAREERS MORE ACCESSIBLE

ONLINE CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY



UCD Careers Network has responded quickly to changing needs of students and has been a sector leader in making services and interventions widely accessible and easy to engage with. This includes developing and maintaining a strong social media presence and virtual offering. During this reporting period, Careers Network had:

- **158174** Unique website users with 226966 views
- **15200** followers on Facebook with a reach of 20871
- **14649** LinkedIn followers
- **8121** Instagram followers
- **7492** X followers
- **1016** YouTube subscribers and 20900 channel views

In September 2021, Careers Network launched MyCareer, a partnership with the Access Group that has transformed the career offering, putting in place a full virtual career centre 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

With everything from online learning programmes in areas such as Resilience at Work, Teamwork, Emotional intelligence, AI assisted CV development and interview preparation, this tool is truly extensive and engaging. Some highlights include:

- **83955** student logins to the MyCareer Platform
- **9284** students engaged with CV360- AI assisted CV development tool
- **1441** vacancies posted by employers to the MyCareer vacancy portal
- **5193** job applications made by UCD students
- **1736** students undertook AI assisted mock interviews

MAKING LINKS

CREATING CAREER
OPPORTUNITIES



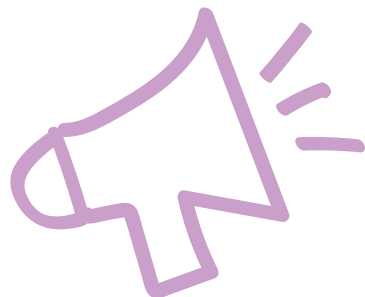
MAKING LINKS; CREATING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Facilitating programme outcomes and student progression is at the heart of the work of Careers Network, supporting students in their transition into graduate study, graduate jobs and internships.

This year saw a return to face-to-face Recruitment Fairs on both campuses. Competition amongst exhibitors for space at the Fairs was intense with the available space in O'Reilly Hall unable to fully meet demand for the Science, Engineering and Technology Recruitment Fair. While social media and various online platforms and communication channels are used by employers in promoting their opportunities, face-to-face Recruitment Fairs remain most popular with recruiting employers and organisations seeking to develop relationships with students.

UCD Recruitment Fairs 2023- 2024

	SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY	BUSINESS, FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT	LAW AND RELATED CAREERS	INTERNSHIPS	SPRING FAIR-SMURFIT	TOTALS
Student attendance	2043	1925	728	1867	400	6963
Exhibitor Numbers	87	80	41	53	29	290



“We will continue to work with strategic partners, employers, professional, voluntary and public service bodies to input into future strategy development”.

- UCD CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY 2015-2025

Outreach and Direct Contacts

The Business Development Manager fulfils an important role at Careers Network. Central to success is a detailed understanding of the market and how it is responding to developments such as the use of Artificial Intelligence in recruitment and selection. It is important to maintain well established relationships with employers and organisations and make connections to new and emerging employers and sectors. During this period, Careers Network contacted organisations, over a broad range of activities as summarised below:

CAREERS NETWORK EMPLOYER STATS 23/24		
Student-to-employer engagement activities		24
of which:	Presentations	9
	Pop ups	10
	Instagram / webinar	5
CN employer-led skills programmes		22
of which:	Set for success	14
	Skills for working life	8
Offsite student company visits		13
of which	London Finance & consulting	7
	London Law	6
1-1 CN Employer relationship meetings		75

Making Links.... Employer "Take Overs"

	PRESENTATIONS ON CAMPUS	INSTAGRAM TAKEOVERS	INFO STAND DISPLAYS	TOTALS
Number of events/interactions	26	5	10	41
Student Attendance	2192	2000	120	4312

UCD DUBLIN
University College Dublin
Careers Network

GIVE
yourself the
UCD
Advantage

- DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS**
and gain experience through involvement in co-curricular activities
- GET RECOGNITION**
for your development and set yourself apart from the crowd
- SHOWCASE YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS**
and skills to potential employers

To find out more and register go to:
WWW.UCD.IE/CAREERS

UCD Advantage
follow us @ucdcareers



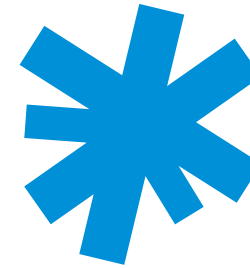
123



A blurred photograph of a server room aisle. The aisle is lined with server racks on both sides, illuminated by blue light. Two people are walking away from the camera down the aisle. The text "DATA INFORMED PRACTICE & THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE" is overlaid in large, bold, white capital letters on the left side of the image.

DATA INFORMED PRACTICE & THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

DATA INFORMED PRACTICE & THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



Careers Network continues to build expertise in using data to ensure the work we do is grounded in an evidence base and designed to respond to what the data is telling us. Two important surveys are:

- **Career Registration and**
- **Graduate Outcomes Survey**

Career Registration is a methodology gaining global traction currently. The survey is undertaken by students at the point of registration each year. The survey comprises three questions on career readiness, employability experiences and employment sectors of interest. The results are used to plan interventions and engagement and to develop services tailored to the needs of students. Data is used by members of the UMT and by the Director of Institutional Research in annual planning and review activities. 15873 responses were collected in September - October 2023

Overview of results at university level

QUESTION 1:

CAREER READINESS OF UCD STUDENTS. This question comprises a number of statements which feed into the following categories. Results are distributed across UCD and used by professional career and skills practitioners to inform direction of travel with regards to career guidance and employability

- **30.3% No Plan**
- **44.3% Some Plan**
- **6.6% Clear Plan**
- **18.8% Sorted**



QUESTION 2:

EMPLOYABILITY EXPERIENCES OF UCD STUDENTS. In this question, the aim is to capture the experiences students engage in that broadly map to their career and professional development. This information allows Careers Network to target activities and to bridge any apparent gaps.

- **36.58% Paid work alongside my studies**
- **21.35% Full time work prior to my course**
- **32.31% Holiday job**
- **13.77% Internship/ placement of less than 3 months**
- **11.93% Internship/ placement more than 3 months**
- **12.32% No work experience in the last 12 months**
- **12.68% Unpaid work/ employability activity**
- **4.68% Study Abroad**
- **2.89% Other**

QUESTION 3:

SECTORS OF INTEREST TO UCD STUDENTS: Top 10. Understanding the economic areas students wish to work in enables Careers Network to target new employers and sustain valuable relationships developed across the economy.

- **Medical and Healthcare - 23.00%**
- **Business Consulting and Management - 17.72%**
- **Banking, Investment Banking and Management - 13.07%**
- **Research and Development - 12.22%**
- **Teaching and Education - 11.54%**
- **Marketing, Advertising and PR - 11.15%**
- **Accountancy and Financial Management - 10.99%**
- **Information Technology - 10.34%**
- **Engineering - 9.67%**
- **Media and Publishing - 9.48%**



“Utilise targeted approaches to data analysis and conduct institutional research using longitudinal graduate data to inform strategic planning of career provision, both centrally and within schools and units across the university”

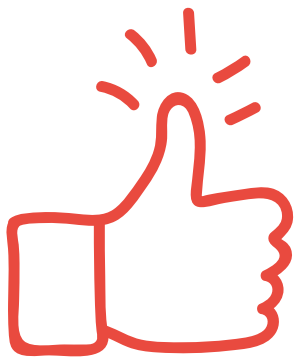
- UCD CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYABILITY STRATEGY 2015-2025, ACTION 3.2)

Graduate Outcomes Survey 2023

There is a statutory obligation for higher education providers in Ireland to carry out an annual survey of graduates and to submit collated data to the Higher Education Authority. UCD Careers Network carries out the survey on behalf of the university. The census date is 31 March, which is, 9 months after programme completion. In addition to submission to the HEA, data is made available to staff across UCD via Tableau dashboards and used by organisations such as QS in determining university rankings around graduate outcomes.

OVERVIEW OF RESPONDENTS

- **4,645 responses were collected from a survey population of 9153 graduates.**
- **Response rate 51%**
- **In Employment: 79.03%**
- **In Further study or training: 13.0%**
- **Unemployed & Seeking Employment: 6.14%**
- **Other Activities: 1.8%**





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Please connect with us on social media

