University College Dublin
Research
Staff
Association

Welcome Booklet

2024 Edition

Welcome

The UCD Research Staff Association (RSA) is delighted to welcome you to UCD and we would like to congratulate you on your position.

The information in this document is based on the personal experiences and opinions of RSA members and was updated and edited by the current RSA committee in July 2024.

The booklet is not exhaustive, so if you have questions and would like clarification on any of the information covered in this document, you can contact us at rsa@ucd.ie.

The RSA encourages contacting the UCD Human Resources (HR) team directly for all official HR information.

To get you started we recommend you:

- Contact **Euraxess** if you are coming from outside the EU.

- Collect your paperwork for the **PPS number** if you are not Irish, click here for info

- Begin looking for new accommodation!

- Contact us at the RSA to introduce yourself and begin your UCD network!

- Look at the **New To UCD** webpage with helpful information for all staff including postdocs

- Visit http://www.ucd.ie/hr/

- Check when the next **Postdoc Orientation Event** is being held here, or contact researchcareers@ucd.ie

EURAXESS

The [EURAXESS office in Ireland](#) provides support to incoming researchers and their families. They provide valuable resources online and personal advice especially for non-EU researchers relocating to Ireland regarding, for example, immigration and contracts of employment. You can contact them at:

EURAXESS Ireland/National Coordination Point and Service Centre

Irish Universities Association, 48 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.

Telephone: +353 1 6764948

Email: mobility@iua.ie

Website: [euraxess.ie](#)

Contact: Dr Magda Wislocka, EURAXESS Ireland Manager (magda@iua.ie) or Mr Fernandos Ongolly, EURAXESS Ireland Officer (fernandos@iua.ie)

You can book a personal information session with EURAXESS Ireland [here](#).

Accommodation

The Dublin property market takes some effort to crack. The end of August to early September are especially difficult months, as this is the time when students are looking for accommodation, and you might end up waiting in big queues or your inquiries not answered. Long term accommodation might require a deposit (two months in advance) and recommendations/references (in English) by previous landlords and/or flatmates. A recommendation/reference from your employer/PI can also help. Our advice is that it is best to start the search early, armed with patience, references, and some cash.

University Accommodation

UCD has a limited number of academic staff accommodations available to rent for between one week and six months. These options are usually in high demand and book out a long time in advance. More information on academic staff accommodations can be find by emailing the Accommodation Support & Booking Office at roombookingsupport@ucd.ie.

UCD operates an Accommodation Website on which landlords advertise accommodation, which is mostly targeted at students and mainly includes rooms in shared houses. Access to this website is restricted so request a login by emailing the Accommodation Support & Booking Office at roombookingsupport@ucd.ie. They can also send you a list of house owners close to UCD who rent out spare rooms on a short-term basis to UCD staff. This might be slightly pricey but could work for the short term.

Flat Search Websites

The Daft website is everyone in Dublin's first call for accommodation. You should create a profile and setup email alerts for certain neighbourhoods/price range/property types etc. (see below). You need to be very fast as many ads are taken down in a matter of hours after they appear due to the high number of responses. When you inquire, make sure you include a brief description of yourself (i.e. who you are, what you do and what date you would be looking to move in). Unfortunately, your email may be one of hundreds that the flatmate/landlord receives; the key is to be clear and concise with your messages. Calling the landlord can improve your chances of getting a viewing, if calls are permitted.

Other sites for sublets with a more international profile include:

- craigslist - best known to Americans
- A German website, which has some adds for European cities including Dublin

- [Room Go](#) for flat shares
- [Gumtree](#) - mostly advertises flat shares
- [Reddit Message Boards](#)

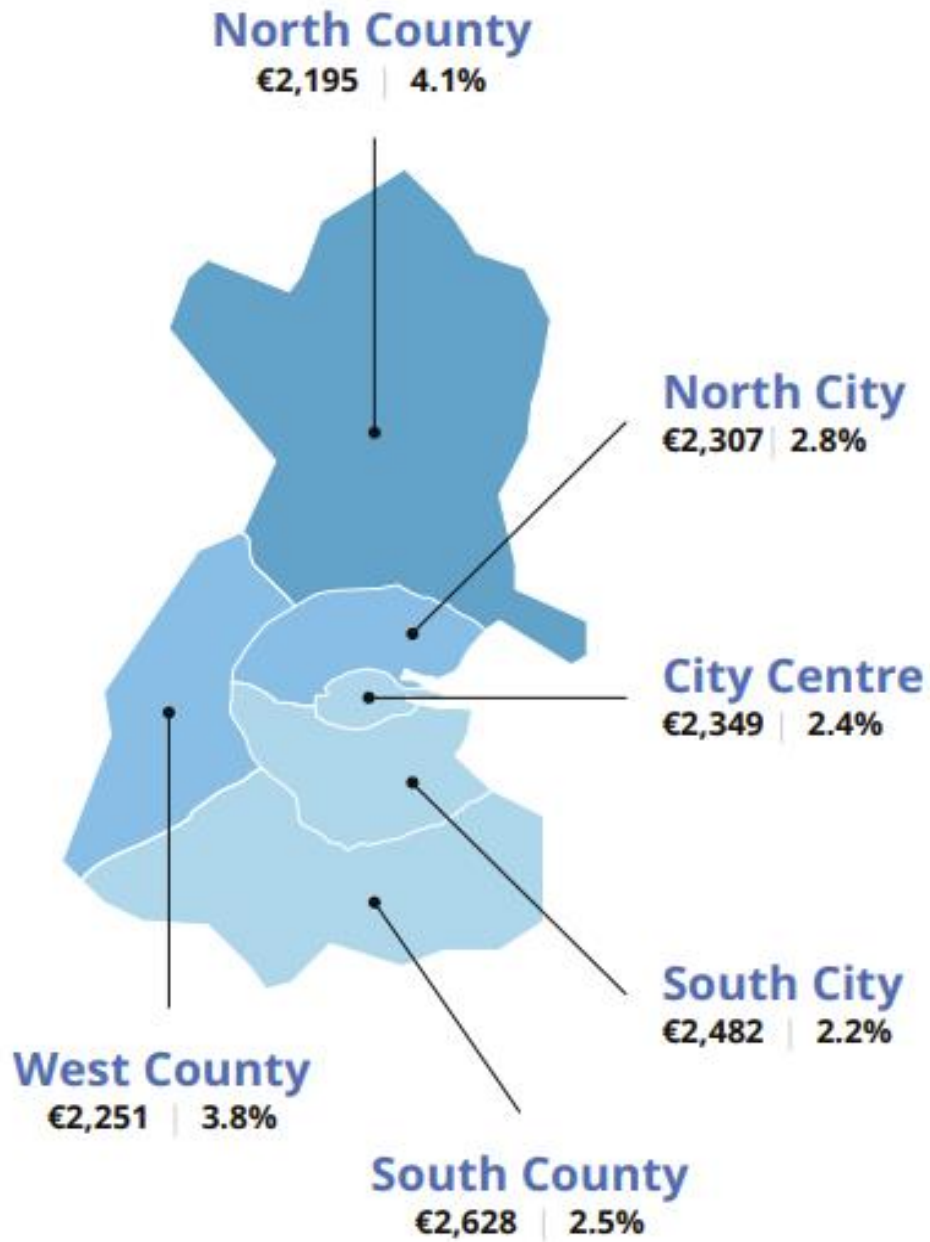Some Facebook pages where you can follow ads and post your inquiry:

- Rent in Dublin: https://www.facebook.com/groups/Rentdublin/
- Rent a room in Dublin: https://www.facebook.com/groups/1607597689487462/
- Dublin Apartments for rent: https://www.facebook.com/groups/587046708059311/

Locations

- Suburbs near UCD:
  - Milltown, Clonskeagh, Stillorgan, Sandymount & Ringsend; pricey but easy to cycle/drive to UCD.
- South side of town:
  - Rathmines, Ranelagh & Donnybrook: well-connected with public transport and easy to walk/cycle to UCD.
  - Rathfarnham, Rathgar, Tallaght, Dundrum & Harold's Cross: they don't have a great connection with public transport but are easy to cycle/drive from.
- North side of town:
  - Drumcondra, Arbour Hill, Stoneybatter & Smithfield
  - South Cabra: neighbourhoods around the lines of the 39A, 46A and 145 buses, which are well connected through public transport, and cheaper to live in.
  - Clontarf, Richview, Howth: neighbourhoods connected to DART stations. However, it is 2.2 km from UCD to the nearest DART line.
- Outside Dublin but easy to commute with a car:
  - West of Dublin: Maynooth, Celbridge, Lucan & Blanchardstown
  - South-west Dublin: South Dublin: Blackrock, Dún Laoghaire, Shankill, Bray & Greystones etc. neighbourhoods near DART stations and 46A or 145 bus routes.

Prices

This map illustrates the average monthly rents and percent increase in 2019 across County Dublin (image) and the different postcode areas (table), which were sourced [here](#). Dublin is divided into postcodes regions with even numbers representing the areas south of the River Liffey and odd numbers north of the Liffey. Smaller numbers are normally more central and UCD is D4.

North County
€2,195 | 4.1%

North City
€2,307 | 2.8%

City Centre
€2,349 | 2.4%

South City
€2,482 | 2.2%

West County
€2,251 | 3.8%

South County
€2,628 | 2.5%

Average monthly rents across Dublin for accommodation (€), and annual change (%), for 2023 Q4.

		1 bed apartment		2 bed house		3 bed house		4 bed house		5 bed house	
DUBLIN	Dublin 1	€1,800	2.2%	€2,184	2.4%	€2,759	3.5%	€3,387	4.6%	€4,336	13.4%
	Dublin 2	€2,001	2.8%	€2,428	3.0%	€3,068	4.1%	€3,765	5.3%	€4,820	14.1%
	Dublin 3	€1,656	1.4%	€2,010	1.5%	€2,539	2.7%	€3,116	3.8%	€3,989	12.5%
	Dublin 4	€1,921	0.8%	€2,331	1.0%	€2,946	2.1%	€3,615	3.2%	€4,628	11.9%
	Dublin 5	€1,560	3.8%	€1,893	4.0%	€2,391	5.1%	€2,935	6.2%	€3,757	15.2%
	Dublin 6	€1,761	-1.1%	€2,137	-0.9%	€2,699	0.2%	€3,313	1.3%	€4,241	9.8%
	Dublin 6W	€1,628	-0.9%	€1,976	-0.7%	€2,496	0.4%	€3,063	1.5%	€3,922	10.1%
	Dublin 7	€1,626	-0.1%	€1,973	0.1%	€2,493	1.2%	€3,059	2.3%	€3,916	10.9%
	Dublin 8	€1,670	1.3%	€2,027	1.5%	€2,561	2.6%	€3,143	3.7%	€4,024	12.4%
	Dublin 9	€1,564	2.8%	€1,898	2.9%	€2,399	4.1%	€2,944	5.2%	€3,768	14.1%
	Dublin 10	€1,325	-8.5%	€1,608	-8.3%	€2,032	-7.3%	€2,493	-6.3%	€3,192	1.6%
	Dublin 11	€1,456	1.3%	€1,768	1.5%	€2,233	2.6%	€2,741	3.8%	€3,509	12.5%
	Dublin 12	€1,531	2.5%	€1,858	2.7%	€2,348	3.9%	€2,881	5.0%	€3,689	13.8%
	Dublin 13	€1,555	2.7%	€1,887	2.8%	€2,384	4.0%	€2,926	5.1%	€3,746	14.0%
	Dublin 14	€1,572	-0.1%	€1,908	0.1%	€2,411	1.2%	€2,959	2.3%	€3,788	10.9%
	Dublin 15	€1,408	0.7%	€1,709	0.9%	€2,159	2.0%	€2,650	3.1%	€3,392	11.8%
	Dublin 16	€1,486	-1.7%	€1,803	-1.5%	€2,279	-0.5%	€2,796	0.6%	€3,580	9.1%
	Dublin 17	€1,577	6.0%	€1,913	6.2%	€2,417	7.4%	€2,967	8.5%	€3,798	17.7%
	Dublin 18	€1,655	4.4%	€2,008	4.6%	€2,537	5.8%	€3,114	6.9%	€3,987	15.9%
	Dublin 20	€1,611	11.2%	€1,955	11.4%	€2,469	12.7%	€3,031	13.9%	€3,880	23.5%
	Dublin 22	€1,379	0.0%	€1,674	0.2%	€2,115	1.2%	€2,595	2.4%	€3,323	11.0%
	Dublin 24	€1,386	-2.6%	€1,682	-2.4%	€2,125	-1.3%	€2,609	-0.2%	€3,339	8.2%
	North Co Dublin	€1,403	2.9%	€1,703	3.1%	€2,152	4.2%	€2,641	5.4%	€3,381	14.2%
	South Co Dublin	€1,693	0.9%	€2,054	1.1%	€2,595	2.2%	€3,185	3.3%	€4,078	12.0%
	West Dublin	€1,387	2.6%	€1,683	2.8%	€2,127	3.9%	€2,610	5.1%	€3,341	13.9%

Prices in the different postal districts of Dublin from the Q4, 2023.

The Residential Tenancies Board can provide information and mediation services to tenants and landlords. The Dublin Tenants Association is a support group for tenants in Dublin.

Search tips

- Ask for help from your supervisor/school secretaries/colleagues/friends/the RSA before you arrive. Ask them to put out an email to the school to ask if anyone is looking for a housemate.

- Give yourself at least one month to find a suitable place. The more pressure you are under, the more vulnerable you will be.

- Set up email alerts on Daft so you can respond as soon as possible. Try to reply within 3 hours of an advert being posted.

- You may find it easier to find accommodations during summer, when most undergraduates are gone, and before Christmas.

- Check Google Street View to see the neighbourhoods/surrounding areas.
- Don't pay a deposit if you have any doubts about the landlord; scams do happen.
- Don't pay a deposit if you have not seen the accommodation in person.
- During viewings ask how much bills will cost so you'll have no surprises (electricity, internet and waste collection are every month or two).
- Consider the practicalities of the commute to UCD (cost/time).
- Be aware of spam emails: keep a record of the landlords/agencies who you contacted; if the email is not from those people you contacted, it may be spam. Reply emails from Daft typically have an email address ending '@replies.daft.ie'.
- Know the price ranges: rental prices vary between different areas of Dublin. In general, north Dublin city is cheaper than south Dublin city.

Travel Around Dublin & Ireland

These sites and apps provide useful information about public transport and other options within Dublin:

- Transport for Ireland
- Dublin Bus
- LUAS
- Irish Rail (including DART)
- FreeNow and Uber app for taxis - need exact location on UCD campus on a main road as cars cannot drive into the centre of UCD
- Dublin bikes
- UCD bike shop
- How to get to UCD

Dublin is served by a bus service, a tram service (Luas; two lines called Red and Green), and a train service (DART – one line, along the coast). To get around Dublin, it's best to use Google Maps or the TFI App.

Travel pass

UCD staff (all permanent, indefinite duration and fixed term employees) are invited to avail of the Travel Pass Scheme. This tax effective scheme allows staff to purchase an annual bus and/or rail ticket through UCD and save some of their travel costs because of tax and paying related social insurance (PRSI) benefits.

Dublin Bus

UCD is served by several routes, most of which call at the main campus entrance just off the N11. The most frequent services between UCD and the city centre are the 39A, 46A and 145. The most cost-efficient way to use the bus (and Luas) is to purchase a **Leap Card** (a public transport travel card), available in many stores (mainly Centras, including the one in UCD Village) all over Dublin. Credit can be added to the Leap Card at some shops or using an app. When boarding a Dublin bus "tap-on" by placing the card on the green reader by the driver, then tell them (or press a 'stop' button) where you would like to get off. Standard fare is around 2 euros for 2 hours travel, while a regular bus ticket (without Leap Card) costs ~2.50 euros and can be purchased only in cash from the driver.

Luas

The Luas service currently operates on two lines: The Red Line runs east-west from the Point Depot or Connolly Station to Tallaght or Saggart. The Green Line serves a north-south axis from Broombridge to Bride's Glen.

Luas stops have ticket machines where you can purchase single or return tickets based on zones. Using a Leap Card is cheaper with a cost of 2 euros per 2 hours travel. Luas and Dublin Bus staff carry out periodic checks, so make sure you purchase a ticket or tap-on with your Leap Card, otherwise you may incur a fine.

DART

The DART service runs along the coast from Greystones (south) to Howth or Malahide (north), calling at several central stations including Tara Street and Connolly Station. The closest to UCD is Booterstown and a shuttle bus sometimes runs to UCD or it is a 2.2 km walk. Commuter Rail services to places like Maynooth and Leixlip also run on these lines, and you can plan your journey here.

Commuting by car

Go Car is an app that can be used to rent a car. Note that Go Car requires a full EU/Irish driving licence to book the car. If you have an International Driving Permit (IDP), contact Go Car as policies keep changing. Other options include car clubs like Yuko.

At rush hour times, traffic in Dublin is very busy with commute times increasing by 3-5X normal.

Parking is limited on campus and available on a first come first serve basis. Eligible UCD Community members can apply for parking permits (€50 for one trimester or €100 for the entire academic year). Permit parking is in effect 08:00-17:00 Monday-Friday (excluding bank holidays) during the Autumn and Spring trimesters including fieldwork, study and exam periods. Outside of these hours car parking in permit spaces is free of charge except those associated with UCD Sport & Fitness.

For full details click here.

Cycling

There are over 4,000 bicycle parking spaces, six public repair stands, and several shower and day use changing facilities on campus. To learn more about commuting by bike, click here.

UCD Bike Shop, located on Belfield campus, sells new and second-hand bicycles, cycling accessories and offers a bicycle repair service.

Cycle To Work Scheme is a tax incentive scheme aimed at encouraging employees to cycle to and from work. It is open to all permanent, indefinite duration and fixed term staff. Under the scheme

employers pay discounted prices for bicycles and equipment for their employees and the employee pays back through a salary deduction of up to 12 months. Deductions are made pre-tax. Details of this scheme can be found [here](#).

UCD Bike Library is a new 6-week long pilot programme, where UCD staff and students can now apply for folding bikes from the Bike Library. The bikes can be accessed on-campus using self-service bike bunkers. To register for the programme, click [here](#).

Banking

Opening an Irish bank account

There are several banks in Ireland. In most cases, you will be opening a current account. The documentation required to open a bank account in Ireland is as follows:

1. Photo identification e.g. your passport, driving licence or current EU national identification card.
2. PPS number (see below for more information).
3. Proof of address that is less than 6 months old (e.g., a utility bill or an "Employment Letter" from UCD HR that includes your staff number, date of birth, PPS number and address).
4. Some banks may require a second photo identification.
5. If you are opening a graduate account (such as the one offered by the AIB bank) you will also need proof that you have recently graduated.

There are two bank branches situated near UCD campus:

● AIB, 60 Clonskeagh Road, and
● Bank of Ireland, University Montrose Branch, Stillorgan Rd

If you are coming from overseas and have just moved to Ireland, getting proof of address in Ireland can be difficult. Fortunately, the AIB Bank on Clonskeagh Road accepts an Employment Letter from UCD verifying where you live – just email hrhelpdesk@ucd.ie to request one. In addition, AIB bank also accepts overseas proof of address, but you will need to bring two proof of address documents.

Cash dispensers/ATMs are located at the following points:

● at the entrance to the AIB branch
● at the entrance to the main restaurant
● beside Readers Deli
● at the rear of the Student Centre
● at the AIB Clonskeagh branch
● opposite the laundry room, Blackrock campus

PPS number

Your Personal Public Service Number (**PPS number**) is a unique reference number that helps you access social welfare benefits, public services and information in Ireland.

Please go to the following government website for details on how to apply for your PPS number. You must obtain your PPS number before applying for your Certificate of Tax Credits & Standard Rate Cut-off Point.

Acquiring a PPS number

Proof of identity is a vital for the registration procedure and must be established before a PPS Number is allocated. Documents presented may be held for authentication. The following are the prescribed documents to accompany a PPS Number application:

	Irish National born in the Republic of Ireland	Irish national born in Northern Ireland and UK citizens	EU Nationals and Other EEA Citizens (including Citizens of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway & Switzerland)	Non-EEA National
Birth Certificate or Passport	Birth or Adoption Certificate	Passport or Birth Certificate	Current Valid Passport or National Identity Card	Current Valid Passport or Current Valid 1951 Travel Document
Photographic Identification	Valid Photographic Identification e.g. Passport or Current Valid Full Irish Driving Licence	Valid Photographic Identification e.g. Current Valid Irish or UK Driving Licence		
Address	Evidence of Address in Ireland	Evidence of Address in Ireland	Evidence of Address in Ireland	Evidence of Address in Ireland

Please keep your PPS number in a safe place as if you return to Ireland in years to come you may still need it. You cannot apply for a new one if you already have one.

Tax

Irish Revenue (revenue.ie) is the tax collection and enforcement authority in Ireland. The Irish financial year coincides with the calendar year (January 1 to December 31)

The Income Tax is known as Pay As You Earn (PAYE). Additionally, eligible incomes are subject to Universal Surcharge (USC). Also, Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) is deducted from your salary, which is a social insurance contribution. To reduce tax, you're provided with tax credits based on your personal situation as informed to Revenue. Common credits include personal tax credit, married person credit, rent credit, etc. You can register to pay tax as a household (if your spouse/partner is resident in Ireland & has a PPS number) or a single person. Tax credits are then divided accordingly as you wish to choose on Revenue.

Before your salary is paid, UCD Payroll requests a Revenue Payroll Notification (RPN) from Revenue. Your PRSI, PAYE and USC along with relevant tax credits are then applied to your payroll. If RPN is not available an emergency tax rate is applied. The PAYE rate for emergency tax is 40% of taxable income & for USC 2% of gross income. Absence of RPN may be due to absence of PPS number or your employment is not registered with Revenue yet.

Don't worry about emergency tax as once a RPN is issued all overpaid taxes come back in the next pay period. If your next pay period is after December 31, you'll have to file an income tax/PAYE return on the Revenue website to reclaim overpayment. The process is very simple, and no consultant should be required.

Double Taxation Avoidance & PAYE Exemption

Ireland has Double Taxation Agreements (DTAs) with a large number of countries, see here. Hence, once you are taxed in Ireland, you can claim paid tax as credit in your home country if you find yourself liable there as well.

For certain DTAs, researchers moving from their home country to Ireland are exempt from paying PAYE and USC for two years. Exemption can be requested by notifying UCD Payroll (payroll@ucd.ie) who will request a PAYE Exclusion Order from Revenue on your behalf.

The tax exemption is a substantial saving. Care must be taken, however. Depending upon your home country DTA, you might be liable to pay the tax back after two years should you overstay this period (e.g. Italy). However, for certain countries (e.g. India), this does not apply. See Section 7.3 of the document here.

Immigration

Visas

Ireland is part of the European Union but not a part of the Schengen area. Additionally, Ireland & UK form a Common Travel Area (CTA). Hence, if you're not a national of a visa-exempt country you'll be required to apply for a visa. See here for details.

Type of Visa & Documentation

If you're coming to Ireland for less than 3 months, you need to apply for a short-stay visa (type C). Otherwise, a long- stay (type D) visa is needed. You can choose a single or multiple entry option for the visa.

Long stay visa for researchers employed by UCD would typically require the following documentation:

1. Cover letter to the consulate/embassy issuing visa
2. Visa application on AVATS portal.
3. Passport with validity of at least 6 months
4. Employment Contract with UCD
5. Hosting Agreement (HA) provided by EURAXESS. If travelling with your immediate family, the HA should carry details of your family member. All details can be filed online with the EURAXESS portal for Ireland. Note that the HA serves as the work permit for researchers.
6. Previous employment history/tax statement/bank statement, as required.
7. Copies of photograph, if required.
8. Any other documentation required by the Irish Embassy of your country or the nearest one.
9. Documentation for immediate family (spouse and kids), if travelling together. Refer to the local visa issuing authority.

Advance ticket bookings, travel and medical insurance may or may not be required, depending upon where you apply from. Confirm with the visa issuing authority. The consulate/embassy issuing the visa will publish typical wait periods for issuing visas. Please plan accordingly. It is advisable that thorough documentation be provided for speedy visa process. Any special mentions can be noted in the cover letter to the immigration officer.

Successful long stay visas are granted typically for six months within which you can reach Ireland via a port of entry.

On Arrival

For visa required individuals, please carry your documentation that was provided during the visa process. Travel and medical insurance should be taken before arrival at the port of entry. Immigration will stamp your duration of stay before which you need to take an appointment to register your Irish residency.

Registration & Irish Residency

If you're required to register your residency as per visa requirements, please make an appointment at the nearest immigration registration office. Dublin Burgh Quay office handles all registration for residence in addresses of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Meath, Kildare & Wicklow counties. For other counties, contact the local Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) office.

On the appointment day, your documentation will be checked and after paying €300 as registration fees, your passport will be stamped with Stamp 1 residency. Subsequently, you should receive an Irish Residence Permit (IRP) card at your provided address. Check the details on the card carefully. It should say Stamp 1. Details about appointment and documentation is provided [here](#) and [here](#). For details of residency stamps, refer [here](#).

Stamp 1 Renewal & Stamp 4

Stamp 1 residency provides you with the right to work in Ireland on a work permit. Stamp 1 residency is reckonable towards Irish Naturalisation (citizenship). Stamp 1 is renewable every year with the required documentation and fees. For registrations at Dublin Burgh Quay, this process is online. For other counties, presence at the local GNIB office is required.

After two years on Stamp 1, you can apply for a Stamp 4 residency permit which allows you to work anywhere in Ireland without requiring a work permit. There are additional benefits for Stamp 4 individuals. Stamp 4 is renewable every two years with the same process as for Stamp 1. Stamp 4 residency is reckonable towards Irish Naturalisation.

Join Family Visa & Registration (Non-EU)

If your family is joining after you arrive in Ireland and require a visa, you should apply for a "Join Family Long-Stay" visa. It is advisable to update the HA with your family details before doing so. The visa application and issuance processes are similar as before. Some additional documentation proving your relationship with your family may be required.

Spouses of researchers are eligible for Stamp 1G residency which allows them to work and study in Ireland. This is a dependent residency permit in which your residency is linked with theirs. For

registration towards Stamp 1G, your documentation as well as required fees are needed. Note that the documentation must provide proof of valid health insurance. In absence of health insurance, your spouse will receive Stamp 3 instead, which doesn't allow your spouse to work in Ireland. If your spouse is eligible for Stamp 1 (e.g. getting a job on a critical skills list or being a researcher on HA), then their residency can be independent of yours and the above doesn't apply.

Other Travels

Visa is generally required for travel from Ireland to the Schengen Area/CTA for Non-EEA/Non-Irish for holidays, conferences or other work. Make sure you apply for these visas at least 4 months in advance of the intended travel date as delays in the application process are very common.

UCD HR

UCD has a HR (human resources) department that can be accessed [here](#). They provide support in the areas of Pay, Leave & Absence, Resourcing, Partnering & Advice, Pensions and Promotions. HR can provide support to staff at UCD, but there is often a delay in responding to queries.

Each School and College within UCD also has its own HR department. They will support staff in areas including finding office space, gaining access to the building and other School-specific tasks.

[IT services](#) can help setup new IT equipment at UCD including accessing some of the printers and some software are available freely to UCD staff (including Microsoft Office and Antiviral Protection). To access your UCD account, which is run through gmail, an authentication software called Duo is required on your work laptop/computer and phone.

[UCD Careers Network](#) can also provide support for postdocs.

Unions

UCD research staff are entitled to join a trade union if they choose too. Research staff are primarily represented by one of two Unions, IFUT (Irish Federation of University Teachers) and SIPTU (Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union). UNITE are also present at UCD, representing primarily technical staff, as are the Irish Medical Organisation (IMO), representing medical staff in UCD-associated hospitals.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) is a useful resource for staff members interested in joining a trade union. The ICTU functions as an umbrella organisation representing a broad range of interests of employees in both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT)

IFUT is a trade union for university teachers and its members include university teachers; researchers; staff in the professional library, computer and administrative posts; higher technicians in some institutions, part- and full-time and temporary and permanent staff. IFUT is run by Frank Jones (General Secretary) and Miriam Hamilton (Deputy General Secretary). An overview of IFUT can be found here. Click here to download the Application form - annual subscription rates are outlined here. As of 2024, IFUT has lowered its rates for everybody earning below €56,000 meaning that it is now cheaper for Postdocs to join. The IFUT also provides members with the option of joining the IFUT Credit Union.

The Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU)

SIPTU represents a broad range of professions and is Ireland's largest trade union with around 200,000 members. SIPTU describes its function as "providing the expertise, experience and back-up services necessary to assist workers in their dealings with employers, government and industrial relations institutions". Individuals can join SIPTU by completing the application form and membership rates can be found on the same page.

Healthcare & Insurance

Primary care

In Ireland, GP services are usually paid for privately. A consultation typically costs between €50 and €80, often towards the higher end in urban areas like Dublin. Children under the age of 8 and adults over the age of 70 are entitled to free visits to a participating GP. Some services such as maternity care, infant care, and vaccinations may be free of charge, though some vaccinations such as the flu vaccine may have a charge for the GP's services, often around €35. A list of GP services in Ireland can be found here.

If you do not know the location of your nearest GP, an easy way to find one nearby is to use the Google Maps app on your phone, type in "GP" and Google Maps will find the nearest GP facilities. You may want to ring them before your visit to make sure the information is still up to date.

People on low incomes may be entitled to a GP visit card or a medical card. The GP visit card allows individuals with an income below a certain threshold free GP visits. A medical card entitles recipients to free GP services, free prescription drugs, dental services, in-patient and out-patient services, mental health services and maternity services. See here for more information. Additionally, if you are from another EU country or the UK you may be entitled to a medical card in some circumstances, see here for the exact criteria.

As of 2024, the income threshold for a medical card for a single person under the age of 66 and living alone is €184 per week, and the income threshold for a GP visit card for a single person under the age of 70 living alone was €418 per week. If you are living with your family, as part of a couple, or have children, the thresholds will be different, and you can find a full list of thresholds for both medical cards and GP visit cards for under 70s here. If you do not pass the means test but would be put in financial hardship due to medical expenses without a medical card, you may qualify for a discretionary medical card, for which you can find the application form here.

Drugs Payment Scheme

Under the Drugs Payment Scheme, an individual or family in Ireland must only pay up to a maximum of €80 each month for approved prescribed drugs, medicines and certain appliances for use by that person or his or her family in that month. The amount is determined from time to time by the Minister for Health and Children. If you have a GP Visit Card or do not have a medical card, you should apply for a Drugs Payment Scheme Card.

This scheme is aimed at those who don't have a medical card and normally must pay the full cost of their medication. The scheme applies to you, your spouse/partner, your children below the age of 18 (23 in full time education) and any family member with a disability or illness that cannot maintain themselves fully. It also applies to those who have a GP visit card. Anyone ordinarily resident in Ireland can apply to join the scheme here, regardless of family, financial circumstances or nationality. Being ordinarily resident in Ireland means that you have been living here for a minimum of one year or that you intend to live here for a minimum of one year.

Secondary Care

Everyone is entitled to in-patient and outpatient hospital services in public hospitals in Ireland. If you use accident and emergency services without being referred by a GP, there is a charge of €100. This charge is not applicable for medical card holders, people who are then admitted to hospital, people receiving treatment for prescribed diseases including COVID-19, children with certain diseases, and people entitled under EU regulations.

As of April 2023, charges for inpatient or day service care in public hospitals have been abolished and these are now free of charge. Long-stay (>30 days) patients are charged up to a maximum of €179 per week for those requiring 24-hour care and €134 for those requiring part-time care, and €74 for others, though the Health Service Executive can alter these charges at its discretion to avoid hardship. Additionally, you may opt for private services in public hospitals, which will incur charges depending on the category of hospital and type of room you are staying in. More information on hospital charges can be found here.

Waiting lists for non-emergency public hospital services can be very long. Many people opt for private health insurance which entitles patients to care in a private hospital or to be treated as a private patient in a public hospital.

General information on services and entitlements can be found at Citizen's Information

http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/

Health Insurance

Health insurance is not mandatory in Ireland and there is a public health system available to anyone who is considered 'ordinarily resident' in Ireland (see here for more details). Be aware that use of the public system is often charged for at the point of use. Seeing a specialist consultant will normally require a referral from a GP and whilst usually free if you are entitled to access the public health system, the waiting lists for non-urgent care can be very long.

Some people take out private health insurance, which may offer quicker access to specialist consultants along with private or semi-private accommodation in hospitals, and some plans also cover specific things like GP visits, dental plans and maternity care. Health insurance corporate plans are available through VHI, Laya Health Care and Irish Life Health. The Health Insurance Authority offers a comparison tool for insurance plans [here](). There is variation across the insurance quotes so it is important to choose the best one for you and look at which hospitals you will be covered at.

UCD offers a group scheme with several providers in which the University facilitates payment through payroll. You can find the details of this scheme and UCD's Private Health Insurance Policy [here](). Please be advised that this scheme only applies to contracts of greater than one year.

Networking

RSA

UCD Research Staff Association was formed in 2010 following the introduction by UCD of the Research Careers Framework (RCF).

We are currently working on:

- Social and networking events for research staff members;
- Events and lectures which raise awareness about the growing number and unique necessities of research staff – both postdocs and research assistants;
- Removing the status of Trainee from postdoc contracts;
- Common rights for postdocs across university.

Every year during Annual General Meeting RSA members choose a new committee (comprising Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Social Media Officer, Webmaster, EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) Officer, and ordinary members). The role of the committee is to organize events and activities for the researchers' community on campus, and to represent research staff on various UCD committees (including Research, Innovation and Impact Group - RIIG; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee; Responsible Conduct of Research Committee).

You can join RSA anytime - please contact rsa@ucd.ie and introduce yourself!

X/Twitter: @ucdrsa

Website: https://www.ucd.ie/rsa/

UCD

UCD supports research staff networking through various events and clubs. Here is a list of resources we recommend:

- UCD InfoHub - section: New Staff Orientation - usually there are separate orientation events for new staff overall and new postdocs (registration required), happening more or less every quarter. We recommend you attend one of them as soon as you join UCD. Under this section, you can also sign up for the Coffee & Connect with New Employees event!
- UCD InfoHub - section: HR - Research Skills & Career Development for PostDocs - a list of training and networking events available to UCD PostDocs for free (only registration required). This is a very effective method of meeting new people and learning new skills at the same time.

- Employee Clubs are a great way of connecting with other staff members with common passion for music, sports, or crafts.
- Check out if your School or Institute has any social events posted on their website/social media/newsletters. Also check other schools, as sometimes collaboration happens in unexpected places! For instance, we recommend weekly Earth Institute coffee mornings, Deep Lab seminars, keep up to date with Conway Institute events by signing up there mailing list, or UCD events website.