

# DISCOVER OUR IMPACT 2020 - 2022



**UCC**

University College Cork, Ireland  
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

**Career  
Services**





EVER  
HALL

# WELCOME

Dear colleagues,

I hope the 2022-23 academic year is going well for you. I am pleased to share our first publication of the **Career Services Impact Report**. This report provides a wealth of information and highlights significant accomplishments from the academic year 2020-2021 and 2021-2022. We invite you to learn more about the career services impact on students, alumni, and key employer partners. Like most of you, the global pandemic presented many challenges, and we were fortunate to continue offering all our services virtually. As we emerge from that period, we continue to work in a blended and hybrid manner which offers inclusivity for all. Students continue to acquire many work placements and full-time jobs through blended career-focused workshops, virtual employer information sessions, and hybrid career fairs.

Throughout this report you will read the myriad of student supports that we have developed and delivered – all impacting positively on the students' employability journey and career development.

We know that new jobs are emerging, some have not emerged yet, and job-search tools and strategies are rapidly evolving globally. Students' needs are changing, and we no longer can be reactive, but be proactive. Life after graduation and enabling that transition is core to the mission of Career Services. As a student service we are there for all learners, building in work placements, work integrated learning and supporting work experiences and empowering student/employer connections - however we are also experts at delivering self-discovery and capacity-building experiences for students to facilitate smoother transitions from campus to career.

It is no wonder that our students are looking for leading-edge professional development and career advancement support to span their years in University College Cork and beyond. The way that we respond to these needs will provide valuable reasons for alumni and community to engage with and value our campus in years to come.

We are responding! We have designed our new Employability Framework to assist us to deliver just that, and to build a stronger eco-system of inter-connected working relationships across the university and beyond!



Wishing you the best for the remainder of the academic year ahead,

*Eleanor Donoghue*

**ELEANOR DONOGHUE**

HEAD OF UCC CAREER SERVICES



ADVICE



PLACEMENT



JOBS

# INTRODUCTION

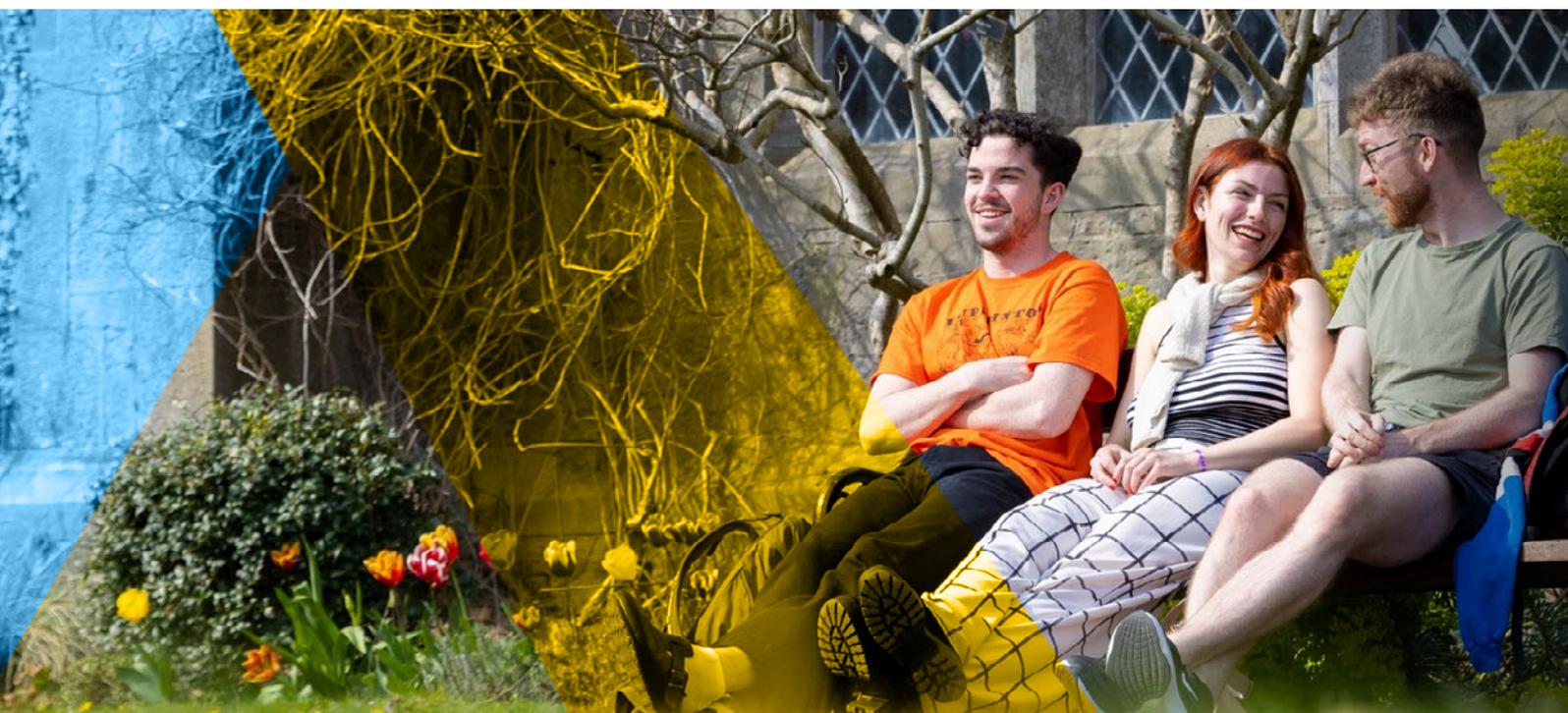
**UCC Career Services** (CS) is under the remit of the Director of Student Experience. Our team of 25 staff work in partnership with academics and employers to connect industry with skilled, competent, and well-rounded students and graduates. Career Services staff are instrumental in the organisation and management of initiatives to improve students' employability and graduate outcomes and have a pivotal role in providing employers with opportunities to connect with students, as they transition through and out of university. We teach on employability modules, assist in designing learning outcomes of accredited work placement modules, source work-integrated learning opportunities for students and develop strong employer relationships and networks. We provide access to professional, impartial, person-centred one to one careers advice and coaching, to equip students to achieve career objectives and make informed decisions that are aligned with personal strengths, values and interests. We contribute to the national conversation on employer-university connections and provide and source employability opportunities such as hackathons, entrepreneurship opportunities, internships, case studies to support students of all disciplines.

Our objective is to lead the development, integration, and delivery of UCC's Employability Framework. To be known for our expertise, agility, and strategic significance, as employability is a paramount outcome from the university experience. We aim to drive innovative, transformative employability projects within the university and work with academic leaders, employers, and the **Graduate Attributes Programme** to ensure successful work-integrated learning and transversal skills are embedded in the curriculum to enable our students to be digitally fluent, agile, and resilient.

Our priorities for 2022 to 2026 are integrated in an Employability Framework. This framework is derived from and aligned fully to the current University Strategy UCC 2022 – pillars 1 and 3, The academic strategy (Connected Curriculum) Priorities 1 and 4, the **University KPIs** and the **UCC 2022** strategic pivot. We are also working at aligning our programmes of activity towards the new University Strategic Plan.

Five pillars of the Employability framework make up 25 key actions to lead to

- 1 Embedding employability in the curriculum in disciplinary appropriate ways
- 2 Fulfilling successful student transitions, empowering students to develop and articulate the skills and attributes needed to make a successful transition from university
- 3 Building meaningful partnerships, establishing, maintaining, and expanding an eco-system of inter-connected working relationships with our stakeholders, including academics, employers, and alumni to support student career development
- 4 Increasing employment opportunities where we expand meaningful connections for all students to gain local, national, and global employment opportunities, through placements, internships, work-integrated learning, and work-based projects
- 5 Communicating and enhancing UCC's role as leader for graduate employability, and actively communicate, promote, and enhance student employability as delivered through strategic initiatives



# EMPLOYABILITY IN THE CURRICULUM

[Aligned to Pillar 1 of the Academic Strategy, 1.2 Invigorate & Innovate programme offerings to enhance learning]

## TRANSITION TO PROFESSIONAL LIFE MODULE - ECONOMICS THROUGH TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING

UCC Career Services, in collaboration with CUBS, delivered over 70 hours of teaching on the Transition to Professional Life module on the BA (Hons) Economics (through Transformational Learning). The module equips students with knowledge, experiential learning and skills to charter authentic employment paths by: i) Increasing awareness of graduate employment environments; ii) Increasing awareness of developing scholarly, professional & personal competencies, capacities & capabilities and; iii) Increasing awareness and ability to map competencies, capacities and capabilities to future employer needs.

## STUDENT SUPPORT EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

### Employability Skills Education Career Events (Pillars 3.1.1 & 1.2)

In 2021 and 2022 Career Services delivered a packed Autumn schedule of over 40 Career Strategy and Employability Skills Education events each year, to support all students at each stage of their career journey. All intensive one-hour sessions were delivered online and made openly available to the wider student population on Panopto. Examples include Create your Career Strategy, Position Yourself with the Jobs Market, Understand What Employers Wants, Skills Audit, and Online Presence Networking.

### STEM Career Insights Week 24th to 27th May: (Pillars 3.1.1 & 1.2)

Career consultants and placement managers collaborated on a series of 8 virtual “career insight” events for students and graduates of STEM disciplines on 8 industry sectors, namely: Bio-Pharma, IT, Food, Deep Tech, Environment and Health and MedTech resulting in a combined attendance across eight sessions of 286 students. Each event consisted of a keynote presentation on the overall sector, followed by a panel discussion with UCC graduates working in the field, and a student-led Q&A. This series involved 10 keynote speakers (involving some academic colleagues of the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science) and 30 UCC graduates working in a wide range of careers. A second STEM Week took place in September for incoming students and included the same format of event for Bio-Pharma, IT, Food and Environmental careers, and included an event in collaboration with Tyndall, entitled “Change the World with a PhD!” to raise students’ awareness of the exciting opportunities in postgraduate research.



**Focus on Nursing Careers Event**  
**19th November 2021: (Pillars 3.1.1 & 1.2)**

UCC Career Services hosted a virtual career insight day for final year undergraduate and postgraduate Nursing students with support from the School of Nursing. This series of events included employability skills sessions from employers and insightful panel discussions with representatives from a range of public and private hospitals and organisations in Ireland and abroad, with 15 panelists contributing and a combined attendance of 155 attendees across the three sessions with views of the post session 'Focus on Nursing Careers' Event Supplement.

**Arts Humanities, Social Sciences Employability Initiatives: (Pillars 3.1.1 & 1.2)**

*Arts & Humanities Careers Week*

UCC Careers Services is actively involved in developing employability initiatives to enhance future employment of Arts and Humanities Students. Career Services organised and hosted Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences Careers Week in March of 2021 and 2022; over 30 CACSSS alumni shared career stories from 10 sectors, including: Business, Financial Services, Management, Marketing, Communications, PR, Law, Journalism, Publishing, Arts Administration. This well-established successful annual event transitioned successfully to a virtual platform.

*Arts & Humanities First Year Talks*

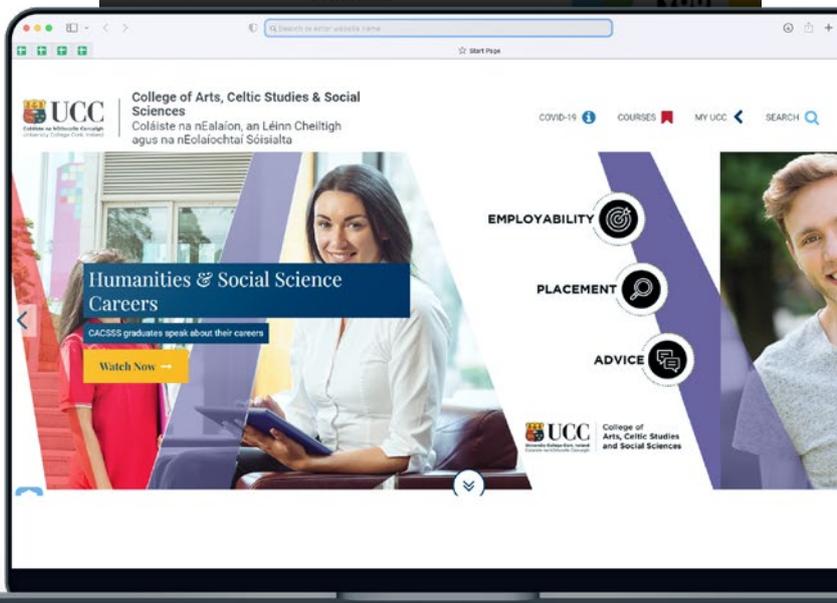
As part of an ongoing collaboration between the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences (CACSSS) and Careers Services, Career Consultants delivered over 40 in person and online talks to approximately 700 first students on degrees within CACSSS in 2021 and 2022.

"Building your Career with Arts and Humanities", is an in-class timetabled set of talks, which set the foundation for first years to embark on a career planning strategy through the life cycle of their degree. Students learn how to maximise their time in college to develop co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences and skills that will support future employment and to understand the diverse career opportunities open to them after graduation.

*Arts & Humanities Employability Webpage*

As part of an ongoing collaboration between the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences and Careers Services, a dedicated Employability Hub on the main CACSSS website has been developed, comprising alumni sharing their career journeys into multiple professional sectors including tips and advice for students.

A positive outcome of the successful digitisation of the Arts and Humanities Careers Week means that this resource Hub of content created during the Careers Week will have a wide reach for years to come.





### FOCUS ON YOU

*I just wanted to drop you a line to say thank you so much for your help in preparing my CV and getting my confidence up for my recent interview. I found your honesty, constructive feedback and knowledge to be exceptionally helpful and it made a real difference for me. I'm five days into my new job and absolutely love it.*

## CORK UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL (CUBS) EMPLOYABILITY INITIATIVES

During the academic year 2020/2021 there were approximately 80 talks, workshops and lectures specifically focussed for students of the Business school, these were delivered by Career Consultants and Work Placement Managers. The events covered topics such as CV writing, Interview preparation, Career Decision Making and Career Planning and were open to students from undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. In addition, there were a specific set of “bootcamps” run for CUBS students in the first week of the first semester to prepare students for work placement and graduate applications.

During 2021/ 2022 there were approximately 120 talks, workshops and lectures run covering similar topics, again delivered by Career Consultants and Placement Managers and in addition, during March 2022 the placement team ran a series of employer events called “Ever wondered about a career in....?” This sectoral approach gave students an idea about careers in specific areas such as Supply Chain, HR, Finance, Accounting etc.

## SUPPORTING STUDENTS FOR GRADUATE RECRUITMENT

During semester we publish bi-weekly email announcements to students. The first, sent on a Monday is our ‘Weekly Events Round-up’ email which highlights all of the career services and employer engagement events upcoming that week. On Fridays we deliver a ‘Featured Jobs’ email which highlights a number of open positions posted that week.

Additionally on our website we maintain a section dedicated to providing information about available graduate programmes and summer internships that is updated regularly. From this section we regularly highlight programmes with upcoming closing dates on our Instagram page or in our featured jobs email. The impact of this has seen an increased followership of Career Services social media platforms which has been leveraged. Bespoke social media campaigns were developed for our industry partners, including Instagram takeovers, stories and informative image or video campaigns. Some 5,162 posts and targeted communications were published last year with the aim of raising employer brand awareness amongst our students and graduates.



UCC Career Services  
Seirbhísí Gairme COC

COVID-19 ⓘ COURSES 📖 MY UCC ⏪ SEARCH 🔍



**CONNECT**  
LOGIN: FIND JOBS, BOOK EVENTS, SCHEDULE APPOINTMENTS

Login to Connect →  
Search jobs, Book appointments, register for events

**DISCOVER**  
THE PERFECT GRADUATE ROLE FOR YOU

Graduate Programme Closing Dates →  
Apply for your graduate programmes

**PRESENT**  
YOUR SKILLS IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE WITH HELP FROM OUR EXPERT TEAM

Graduate Outcomes Survey →  
Where do graduates go?

**PRESENT**  
YOUR SKILLS IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE WITH HELP FROM OUR EXPERT TEAM

Digital Tools →  
CV Review, Interview Practice, Assess your Skills

## UCC VIRTUAL OPEN DAYS 2020 & 2021

UCC Careers Services actively engaged with prospective students (European and International) at UCC Virtual Open Days 2020 and 2021 on the digital platform iVent. Career consultants advised and informed students on the day and at subsequent virtual Q&A sessions later in the year. In addition, they created and provided a diverse and informative range of digital career information resources for the Virtual Open Day repository which remained open until July 1st, examples included: Career Opportunities with sector specific degrees, such as Law, Arts & Humanities, Science, Commerce, and A Guide for Selecting the Right Degree.

## POSTGRADUATE OPEN DAYS 2020 & 2021

Career consultants engaged one to one online with prospective postgraduate students (European and International), with questions and queries regarding postgraduate degrees and employability and delivered a series of virtual webinars on topics including Selecting the Right Postgraduate Course and a webinar on Postgraduate Conversion Courses.

## ADULT LEARNER CAREER SYMPOSIUM **(Pillar 3, 3.1)**

On 1st/3rd June UCC Career Services ran its inaugural **Adult Learner Career Symposium** targeting the adult learner/mature student to address their specific careers support needs. The programme included guest speakers from industry, practical workshops and real-life success stories. Attendees had the opportunity to hear from employers, learn what skills are in demand and get practical advice on how to plan the next stage of their career journey with confidence. The events workshops focused on Self Reflection and Career Planning, CV Writing, Interview Preparation, Creative Job Searching, Creating an Online and Presence and LinkedIn Profile.

## CONQUER YOUR CAREER ANXIETY **(Pillar 3, 3.2.4)**

Conquer Your Career Anxiety (3-part series) took place on 3rd, 18th & 30th March. These sessions were designed to support, advise and provide the necessary tools to all students who were dealing with anxiety and worry about their career prospects during the pandemic. The workshops covered Confidence and Resilience Building; Strategies to overcome negative emotions, feelings of inadequacy and how to learn from setbacks; Creative job searching: self-reflection, networking, personal branding, exploring non-linear career paths, seeking out opportunities in adversity, goal setting etc and featured an excellent talk from guest speaker Stephen O'Brien from LinkedIn. The sessions very well engaged with approximately 100 students attending throughout the series.



# FULFILLING STUDENT TRANSITIONS

## COLLABORATIONS WITH GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES PROGRAMME (Pillars 3.1.1 & 1.2)



### TRANSITION IN NURTURING BRIGHT FUTURES

Career Services collaborated with the Graduate Attributes Programme team to create an online digital learning resource for all prospective students to equip them to transition to university. **Nurturing Bright Futures** comprises six interactive modules to introduce students to college life and college degrees. Career Services contributed and developed three of the modules within the programme which focused on Career Guidance resources, interactive exercises and self-reflective tasks to enable students to understand their interests and strengths and make informed decisions about which degree area and potential future path suits them best. By learning about themselves, their motivations and their assumptions, students develop a toolkit of skills, abilities and experiences to help them think critically about their choices and develop readiness for college.

### CPD SESSIONS TO GUIDANCE COUNSELLORS NATIONALLY

Career Services delivered online nationwide Continuing Professional Development training to second level guidance counsellors on the application and benefits of the **Nurturing Bright Futures** Transition In programme for students. The CPD sessions were recognised by the Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC) for CPD Credits.



### TRANSITION THROUGH GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES COMPASS DIGITAL BADGE

Career Services has collaborated with our Graduate Attributes Programme team (along with other academic and other professional services) to create a **digital badge** to support students in their development of Graduate Attributes. The **GAP Compass self-assessment tool "My Compass"** is signposting students to a suite of learning activities and resources to support their development of the ten Graduate attributes and values through curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences.



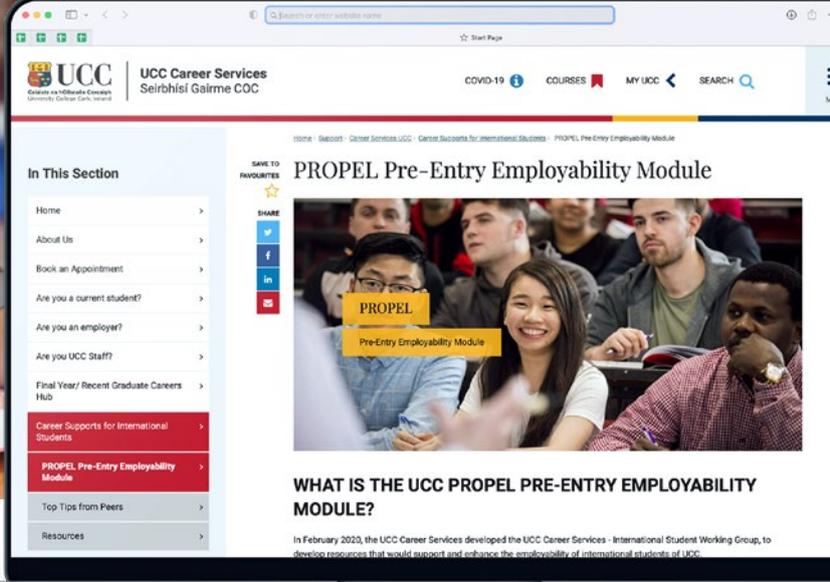
### TRANSITION OUT GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES COMPASS DIGITAL BADGE

UCC Career Services collaborated with the Graduate Attributes Programme and the UCC Academy to create a suite of 12 **Transition Out videos**, relating to specific employability skills, examples include: Career Confidence and Wellbeing, Elevator Pitch, Virtual and In-Person Interviews, CVs, Online Branding, and the STAR Interview technique.



## FOCUS ON YOU

*I was going to email you today about it! It went really well and I definitely think it's because of our meeting so I wanted to really thank you for helping me and pointing me in the right direction! I don't believe I could've done it without your help so thank you so much!*



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS EMPLOYABILITY SUPPORT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

### (Pillar 3 – Student Success and Consistency of Student Experience)

Currently 3,000 international students attend UCC each year from over 104 countries. International students attend UCC to gain a valuable third level qualification and also to secure work experience in Ireland (placement, graduate role or experienced hire role) that will benefit their long-term career in Ireland or in their home country. Once students arrive in UCC they make direct contact with the UCC Career Services with the aim of gaining as much career support as possible.

A high percentage of international students are arriving in the UCC Career Service with little or no understanding of how to prepare for the employment market in Ireland. This can result in the student being disadvantaged and unable to compete for a role.

To address these challenges a **Pre-Entry Employability Module, PROPEL**, has been designed by the UCC Career Services International Students Working Group to assist international students who are planning on coming to UCC to complete a programme of study prior to starting in UCC. This module forms part of the Transition In Programme in UCC. <https://www.ucc.ie/en/careers/international/propelpre-entryemployabilitymodule/> The development of this module aligns directly to global reach and employability in the connected curriculum and will

enhance the development of student and graduate attributes. It will support these students to deal with the challenges of gaining employment, and developing their long-term employability, while studying in Ireland.

The module is now available to offer holders a number of months in advance of their arrival in UCC and enables them to work through the course material in sequential order **Unit 1 (Workplace Readiness Skills)**, then **Unit 2 (Prepare for the Irish Job Market)** and finally **Unit 3 (Prepare to Engage with Employers)**, developing insights and practical skills in preparing students for the employment market in Ireland. The students will complete a self-reflective report on the learning gained from the module which will be submitted in semester one and accredited through the EmployAgility Pathway (aligning to Action 3.2.2. UCC 2022). The UCC EmployAgility Award is a digital badge awarded to international students for completing of the PROPEL Pre-Entry Module which they can add to their CV and LinkedIn profile.

Ultimately, this Pre-Entry Module will ensure all 3,000 international students are work ready before they arrive in UCC and will greatly enhance the students' opportunity to secure employment in Ireland. Inclusion of the student voice throughout the module for maximum impact with the international students will be critical (Aligning with Action 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 of UCC 2022.)

# FACILITATING EMPLOYER STUDENT CONNECTIONS & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

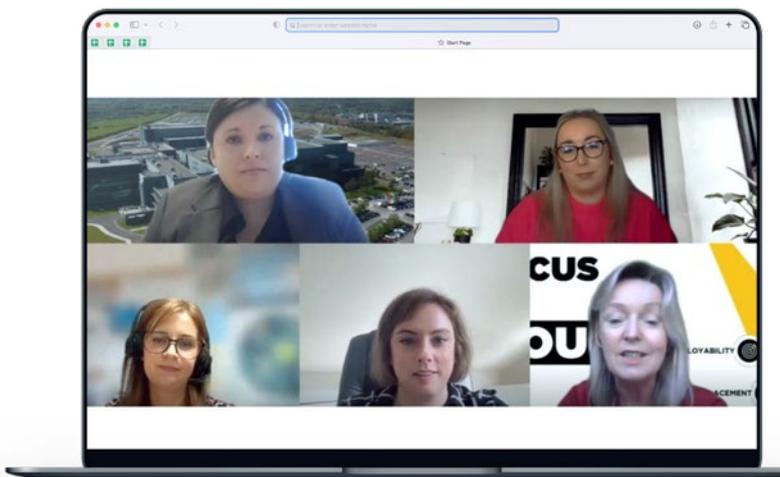
A **Thematic Review of Work Placement** was undertaken in 2020, the outcome which has resulted in 14 recommendations from an international advisory panel and has catapulted CS to leading a new **Strategic Quality Enhancement Plan**. This was approved by the Quality Committee, the **Academic Leadership Forum**, and the **University Management Team** in December 2021.

Subsequently the Head of Career Services is managing the delivery and implementation of the Quality Enhancement Plan on behalf of the university and the creation of a new strategic post is leading this mission driving institutional change in relation to Work Integrated Learning.

## EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

We have a team dedicated to facilitating and optimising engagement opportunities for both students and employers alike. Over the past number of years, we observed that students attendance at traditional models of employer engagement was exceptionally low. We recognised that in order to create the most value for students and employers we must bring the employers to the students and meet them where they are. As a result, we have transitioned to alternative forms of engagement that create the best value for our students and employer partners. Instead of hosting employer information sessions with low student engagement, employers take over our instagram account for a day with record levels of engagement. For social media engagement Instagram is our largest platform with the most engagement and as such is our primary focus, while Twitter and LinkedIn are secondary platforms that we communicate through.

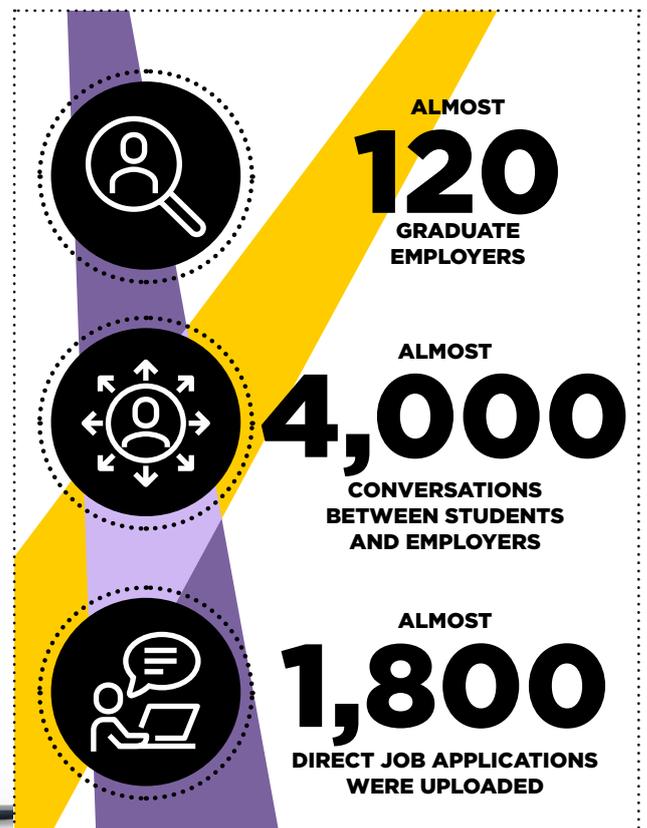
We also facilitate social media campaigns whereby we highlight specific opportunities from employers, and we work with employers to generate engaging branded content. In 2022/2023 we are providing bespoke skills workshop events where students not only learn about the company, but also learn a skill.



## GRADUATE RECRUITMENT FAIR

For many years UCC Career Services has held a large one-day on-site careers fair. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, we rapidly pivoted to an online recruitment fair on the Graduateland platform. Although the move online was entirely in response to the restrictions placed on on-site activity, we have seen great benefit from use of the online platform. This includes ease of student job applications and a feature where employers can search for specific students based on their uploaded CVs.

In recognising that employers and students wanted to return to face-to-face engagement while also wishing to retain the benefits of the online fair, in October 2022 we held our first Hybrid Graduate Recruitment Festival. Employers chose whether to have an online stand or a combination of on-site and online to allow for maximum engagement and accessibility. The festival ran over the course of 3 days. The online section of the festival took place on the 4th of October. **Almost 120 graduate employers joined us for the festival with many attending both virtual and physical events. Several high-profile employers also hosted skills workshops across the course of festival. Almost 4,000 conversations took place between students and employers with almost 10,000 chat messages conducted virtually. Almost 1,800 direct job applications were uploaded** to the recruiters at the virtual section of the festival, an additional benefit that cannot be done through a physical fair.





## FOCUS ON YOU

*"I just wanted to send a message to thank you. I got offered the job in Edinburgh and the practice interview really helped. The Careers Service is a credit to the institution and so beneficial for both staff and students."*

# EMBRACING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

[Aligned to AS 1.3 Invest in Digital education, specifically 1.3.1 – enhancing digital learning experience]

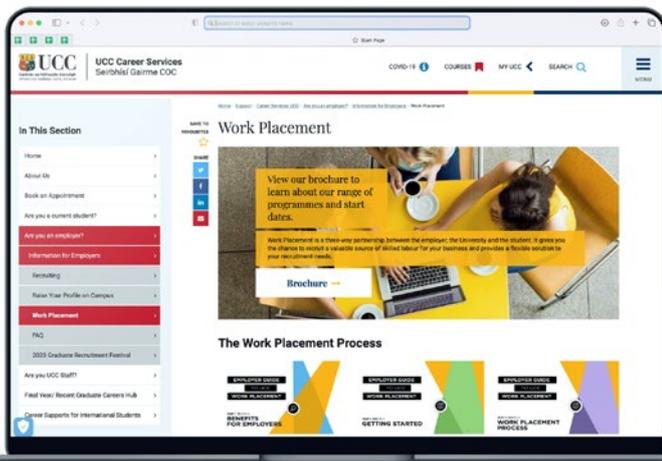
The Work Placement website has been reimaged and digitally transformed. Animated videos, visual introductions to the placement team and interactive content brings the platform to life, engaging employers and students with concise and relevant information in a more accessible manner. The work placement team has redesigned and revamped the student and employer facing webpages which present employers and students with concise, relevant information about the placement team and placement process in a dynamic format that includes video content and animations.



You can access the new employer facing page by clicking here: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/careers/areyouanemployer/employers/placement/>



You can access the new student facing page by clicking here: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/careers/areyouacurrentstudent/workplacement/>



## PLACEMENT & INPLACE

[Connect to Pillar 3 Student Success, 3.1. Consistency of Student Experience]

In 2020/2021 the Work Placement team went live with the pilot of a new UCC IT system, **InPlace**, that is designed to manage administration of work placement. This new placement system allows for increased reporting functionality for placement and acts as a central student portal for advertising placement opportunities to students, managing applications, as well as organising interview schedules. The system has the capability to track trends and report on student engagement, as well as managing communication with work placement groups. Inplace offers a unique opportunity to standardise the placement process across programmes, therefore ensuring an equitable experience to all groups. The system also acts as a database of employers that engage with our programmes. Since its introduction there has been strong student engagement with the system with students reporting that they find the system easy to use. Inplace is currently supporting placement managers based in Career Services working with 31 distinct programmes across 3 university colleges.



A “**Career Services Learning Hub**” has been set up on Canvas which is a learning space for all students to access career-relevant material such as information on job search skills, CV preparation, interview preparation and online/offline assessments. The material has been designed to be interactive and to facilitate active planning and private reflection. The Career Services Learning Hub is set to expand and will support and help to standardise the work that Career Services staff members do to support students across all Colleges and degree programmes. To date over 300 students have accessed and engaged the new Canvas content, with well in excess of 650 students engaging with the Employability content.

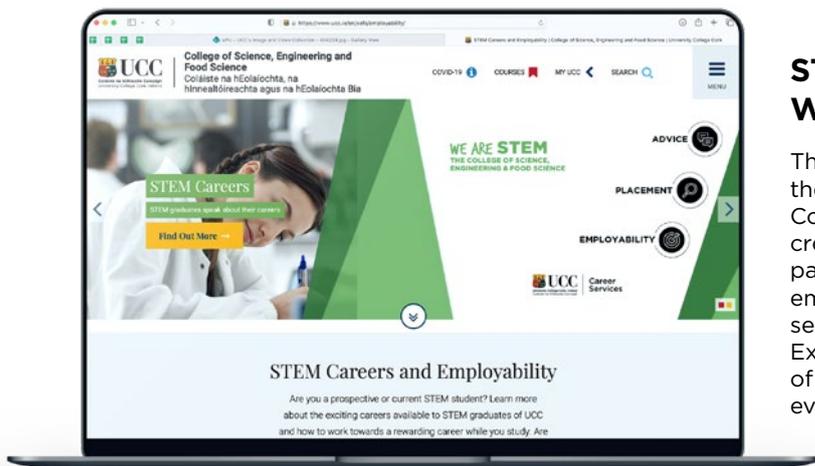
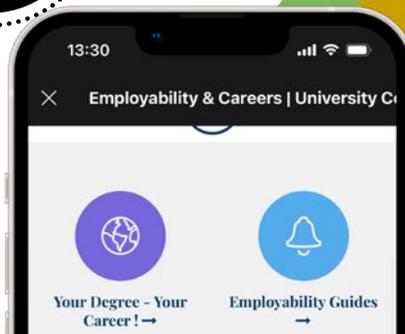
In collaboration with the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences Employability Committee, our team supported the development and promotion of an **Employability Hub** on the **main CACSSS website**. The project involved working with the CACSSS web administrator and committee members to create a page plan, gather content and develop a promotional campaign to drive traffic to the webpage during Humanities and Social Science Careers Week (1st-5th March). The Careers team developed digital assets to promote the initiatives across Careers and CACSSS platforms and this platform is now used widely.



OVER  
**300**  
STUDENTS HAVE ACCESSED AND ENGAGED THE NEW CANVAS CONTENT



OVER  
**650**  
STUDENTS HAVE ENGAGED WITH THE EMPLOYABILITY CONTENT



## STEM CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY WEB PAGE (Pillar 1.3.1)

The Career Services team also collaborated with the Marketing and Communications manager of the College of Science, Engineering and Food Science to create a new “STEM Careers and Employability” web page to raise awareness amongst STEM students and employers of relevant careers information and support services. The SEFS Teaching and Learning and Student Experience Committee were consulted in the creation of this new resource which will be a hub for any careers events and initiatives for STEM students in the future.

## GRADUATE SKILLS CAMPAIGN

The Career Services team partnered with UCC Students Union to create an employability ‘skills campaign’ across social media platforms. The union highlighted concerns amongst 2020 and 2021 graduates whereby some students felt that they will be viewed as ‘less qualified’ than graduates of previous years whose learning was not disrupted by a global pandemic. The campaign illustrates that the soft skills students have developed throughout this experience are key to thriving in the workplace and very much in line with the attributes and values of our Graduate Attributes Programme. Our team has sourced quotes from industry partners to reinforce this. First Derivatives, Nikon, PayPal, VMWare, PWC and Hays recruitment have all contributed to the campaign to support students and strengthen their confidence in relation to skills development. Many of those skills include self-motivation and adaptability, enhanced technical and digital appetite, resilience, flexibility, critical thinking and being active learners.



## GROUP DIGITAL TOOLS

**[Connect to Pillar 1, 1.3 Invest in Digital Education and 1.3.1 Enhance the digital learning experience for on-campus and off-campus learners]**

UCC's Career Services has invested significant time and resources into sourcing and promoting various digital and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools that aim to engage students who are preparing for the world of work, whether looking forward to their first graduate role or an internship, part-time job or work placement opportunity. The tools support CV writing, interview practice and labour market awareness, enabling engagement with employability skills more accessible to students whether on or off-campus. Below is a description of each of these tools.

**BOI - LinkedIn Learning:** LinkedIn Learning was made available for all work placement students in 2021/2022. This platform provides an opportunity for students to learn the most in demand business technology, creative and practical skills to prepare students for the workplace such as excel, python, electronics fundamentals, one-minute habits of success, project management simplified, learning digital things, diversity inclusion and belonging to name just a few. The platform was funded through sponsorship of Bank of Ireland, who supported the allocation of 4000 licences in the pilot year.



**21,245**  
VIDEOS VIEWED  
BY UCC STUDENTS



### Academic Testimonial :

"I just want to say a huge thank you for the access the students (& I!) had to LinkedIn. They rated them so highly and in the final reflection of their overall learning within the module of personal & professional portfolio they identified them as being particularly beneficial in supporting them in their careers ahead ...here is what one student said :

"I benefited from the LinkedIn courses on conflict resolution and developing emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence requires an ability to be self-aware and manage your actions within the work environment (Raghubir 2018). I now recognize the importance of maintaining social awareness and creating collaborative relationships within the work environment..." I hope we can have the same access in the next academic year!

### Student Testimonials:

"I find the courses extremely helpful. It is easy to listen to such courses or summaries while commuting from college. I find I'm quickly building a course library and these skills transfer directly to my LinkedIn profile which is great. Some of the courses can be very general but it can spark some thinking in how I can apply the skills to my own career and life in general."

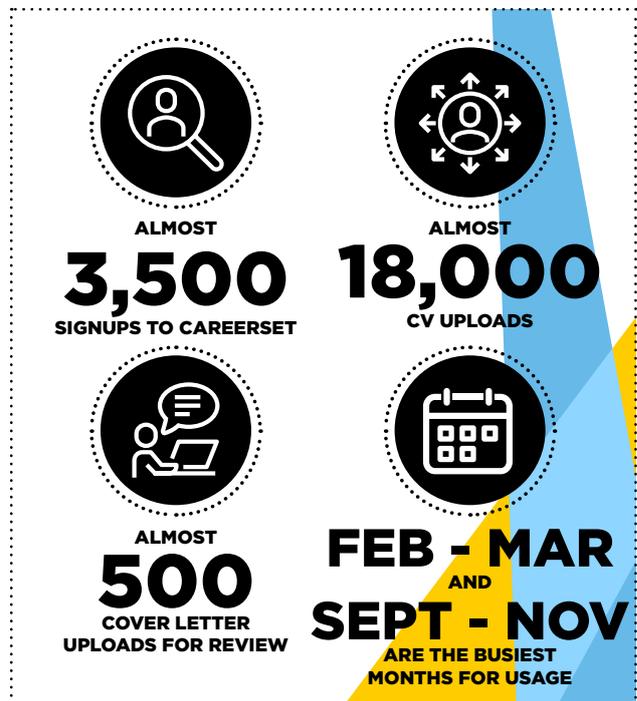
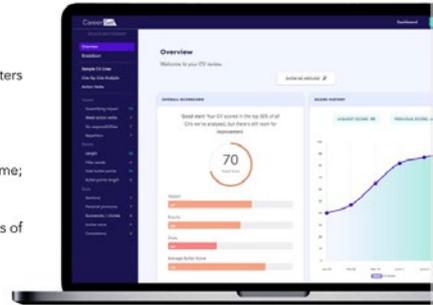
**CareerSet:** Since Semester 1 2021/2022 the Career Services have delivered "Career Set", a digital tool available to all students. CareerSet utilises Artificial Intelligence technology to score student CVs and to generate constructive individualised feedback, based on key criteria that recruiters and employers are looking for. All areas for improvement are supported by detailed explanations and examples. The tool allows students to tailor their CV for the role they are applying for and provides a greater number of students with support in improving their CV.

### SCORE MY CV: INSTANT CV FEEDBACK

Instantly scores a CV based on key criteria that recruiters and hiring managers look for.

- Personalised, actionable feedback;
- Applicant Tracking System compatibility;
- Line-by-line analysis to improve one line at a time;
- Full insight into student activity and progress.

→ Harness the power of AI and experience the benefits of CareerSet's leading CV review technology.



**Big Interview:** UCC Career Services launched Big Interview in 2020/2021. This is an AI-based Practice Interview Tool. Once registered on the platform, students and recent graduates could use the 'Learn' option to undertake short courses to help them understand the interview process and STAR technique. Users also benefitted from hands-on practice with interactive mock interviews tailored to specific industries, jobs, and experience level.

**GoingGlobal:** The GoingGlobal database was made available to all current students and recent graduates via the Careers "TargetConnect" dashboard. GoingGlobal helps new job seekers find opportunities both at home and abroad. The database provides unlimited access to more than 16 million job and internship listings globally and provides location-specific career guides, advice on hiring trends, information on work permits/ visa regulations and more.

**CACSSS Videos:** The team collaborated on editing the videos from the UCC Humanities & Social Science Careers Week 2021. This has resulted in over 30 bite size videos of each alumni speaker sharing their personal career journey which started with their BA degree in UCC and how they built on their degree to develop a successful career in their chosen industry sector. Careers and CACSSS are marketing these videos to students, and they will be used for recruitment purposes in CACSSS.



### FOCUS ON YOU

*"Thanks for the session, I really enjoyed discussing my options. Your advice and direction was positively motivating. I will look forward to exploring more and to the next session."*

## BUILDING MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

[Aligned with AS point 2.4.1. Focus on the QS World University Rankings and THE Rankings]

Career Services have contributed to the university rankings efforts through working closely with the Office of the Vice President for External Engagement. We have worked with the office to ensure our extensive employer network is utilised to improve our employer reputation score.

We also lead the Graduate Outcomes Survey on behalf of University College Cork which involves extensive work each year reporting returns to HEA. This Graduate Outcomes data is utilised in all rankings' submissions.

Our QS employability rankings in the past number of years resulted in a move from 301-500 in 2017 to 201-250 in 2021.

### UCC MENTORING PROGRAMME 2021/2022

UCC Alumni and Development in collaboration with Career Services launched UCC's first mentoring programme in October 2021. The initiative offers student mentees the opportunity to form meaningful professional networks with a wide range of impressive alumni. UCC's Career Services played a key role in the recruitment of mentees for the programme. 83 final year undergraduate students across four colleges registered their interest and 36 students were successful with their application and matched to UCC Alumni Mentors. Career Services will continue to be heavily involved with this programme.

In May 2022 UCC celebrated and reviewed the inaugural UCC Mentoring Programme at an event in the Hub, and the 2022/23 Mentoring Programme has now just begun for the second year running.



I really enjoyed this [mentoring] programme -through my meetings with my mentor I was able to ask her all the questions I needed answering. As my mentor had gone through a similar route to me it was very beneficial, and it made my choices clear to pursue a master's degree following my undergraduate degree.

I received invaluable advice from someone with experience within my field. This programme taught me to believe in my decisions and made me more confident in myself. It is extremely beneficial to get to bounce ideas off someone who understands your uncertainties, and to receive relevant advice.

I felt by talking through my future plans with someone who has experience with making these decisions very insightful and helped me to identify what my future career goals were. In practical terms it was very helpful in knowing what specific skills and qualities employers look for and identifying any gaps in my knowledge and how to bridge this gap.

Through talking to someone in a senior role it was very useful with regards to gaining insight into what it is like to carry out research in a lab over a number of years and the importance of the university culture being a correct fit for you.

## STEM WORK PLACEMENT NETWORKING (Pillar 1 - 1.2)

The annual STEM Work Placement Networking event took place virtually on Thursday 16th September 2021. It was yet again a great success with 51 companies and 400 students in attendance. The feedback from employers was extremely positive:



'Interactive sim type game environment. Hands down the best career fair I have attended virtual and non-virtual'  
- **Dell Technologies**

'The Gather platform: very intuitive and fun. All technical aspects, interactive items, navigation, video worked well. The virtual conference centre layout, the interactive items for video and docs'  
- **Cisco**

'The face-to-face contact with the students was excellent, and the students themselves were enthusiastic and knowledgeable'  
- **ThermoFisher**



## EMPLOYER SURVEY INSIGHTS

Abodoo Limited conducted a data survey on behalf of UCC's Career Services between November 2021 and May 2022. The aim of which was to unearth hard data about alumni success in line with market demands.

**175 RECRUITERS SURVEYED IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING AS DESIRABLE FUTURE SKILLS:**



### HARD SKILLS:

**ENGINEERING SKILLS, TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION, PROBLEM SOLVING AND DATA ANALYSIS**



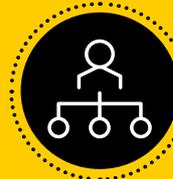
### SOFT SKILLS:

**COMMUNICATION SKILLS, CRITICAL THINKING, ADAPTABILITY AND BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE**



**10.1%**

Communication



**9%**

Management



**8.2%**

Innovation

And **85.7%** of recruiters opt for Behaviour/Competence Interviews during recruitment processes.



# COMMUNICATING AND ENHANCING UCC'S ROLE AS A LEADER FOR GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

## UCC WORKS & UCC EMPLOYAGILITY AWARDS (Pillars 1.2/1.3.1/3.1.1/3.3.1)

The **UCC Works Award** relaunched in late October 2020 and some 300 applications were made within a fortnight. The programme is supporting students to undertake remote activities and is supporting remote and physical voluntary activity and work experience.

## UCC EMPLOYAGILITY AWARD

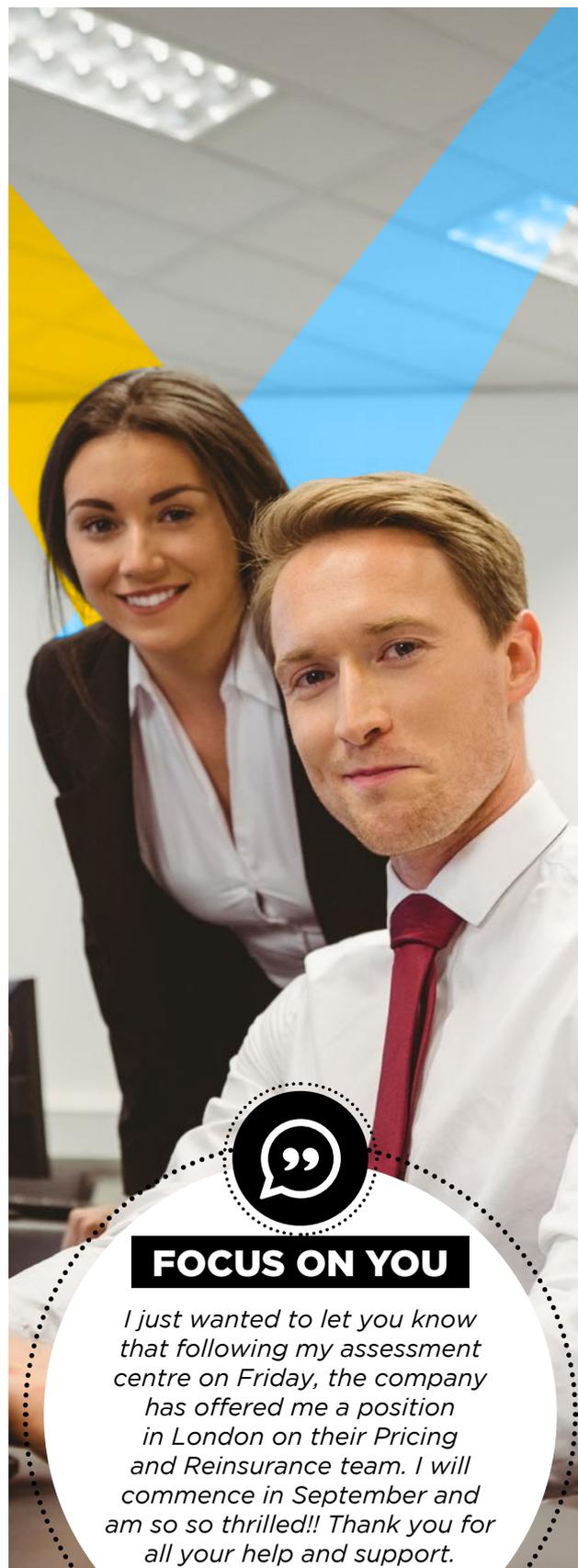
The UCC Career Services employability award offering, UCC Works has been redesigned and the new UCC **EmployAgility Award** programme was launched on the 28th of September 2021. The UCC EmployAgility Award is a professional skills development programme and demonstrates that students have engaged in and developed professional skills, graduate values, and attributes through extra-curricular activities and work experience. Participation in this award benefited the students by enhancing their employability and graduate attributes through extra-curricular activities, allowing them to also complete a digital badge, improving their CV & interview skills while also receiving official recognition on their Diploma Supplement.

There are six pathways for this award, Student Life Pathway, Volunteering and Civic and Community Engagement Pathway, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Pathway, Internship Pathway, Research Pathway and an Open Pathway, each with a corresponding digital badge for students to complete. **715 awards and digital badges were presented to 653 students in 2020-21**, with an increasing number of students registering their interest for 2022.

Over 1250 students have logged hours. UCC students dedicated some 59,851 voluntary hours to Not-for-Profit, Civic and Social Organisations in the past 5 years.

## 7 CAREER SERVICES' DIGITAL BADGES (1.2/ 1.3/1.3.1/1.3.2)

UCC Career Services has developed seven digital badges to enhance graduate employability, with plans for additional badges in progress. Six of these badges are linked to the UCC EmployAgility Award programme.



### FOCUS ON YOU

*I just wanted to let you know that following my assessment centre on Friday, the company has offered me a position in London on their Pricing and Reinsurance team. I will commence in September and am so so thrilled!! Thank you for all your help and support.*

# GRADUATE OUTCOMES

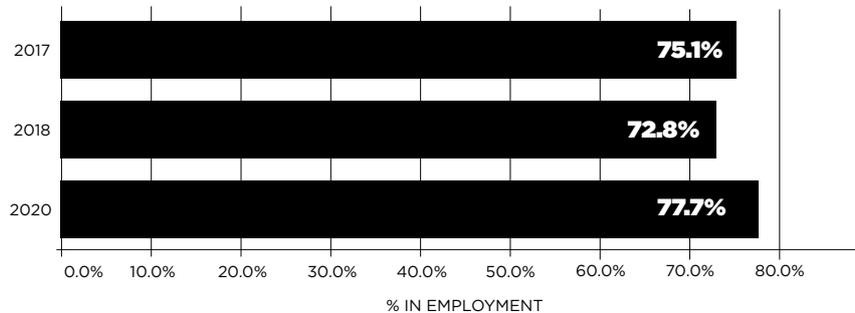
Career Services is the central unit within UCC with responsibility for managing and administering the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) each year. The Graduate Outcomes Survey is a national survey distributed to all graduates of higher education institutions (HEIs), six to nine months after graduation. The outputs of this nationwide survey give a picture of what graduates are doing in their early-stage careers. Each year, detailed outcomes are given for undergraduates and postgraduates, as well as international graduates. This is a large body of work for Career Services, planning and managing the survey takes approximately 8 months of the year.

Data is submitted to the HEA each year in September, it is then verified and becomes part of a national report on the outcomes for all graduates from each HEI. Internally the data is exceptionally valuable to stakeholders. UCC has traditionally had a high response rate from graduates for the survey and we have one of the highest employment rates post-graduation in the country. The latest report from 2020 outlines that over 91% of UCC graduates went into employment or further study after their graduation.

## HOW MANY GRADUATES ARE IN EMPLOYMENT?



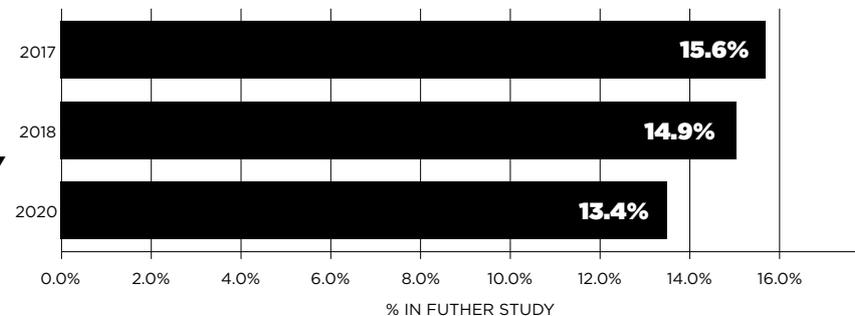
**77.7%**  
IN EMPLOYMENT



## HOW MANY GRADUATES PURSUE FURTHER STUDY?



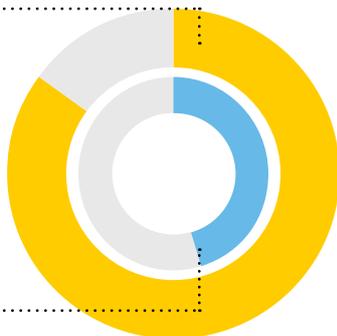
**13.4%**  
IN FURTHER STUDY



Where do UCC Students go after they graduate? The following information was harvested from a survey of graduates, 9-months post-graduation:

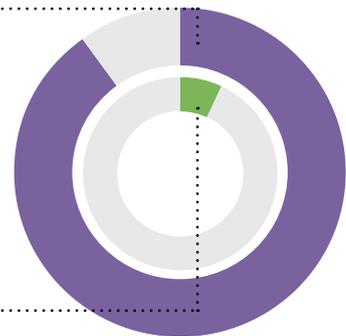
**85%**  
REMAINED IN IRELAND

**45.5%**  
OF THESE REMAINED  
IN CORK



**90%**  
IN EMPLOYMENT

**7%**  
THROUGH GRADUATE  
PROGRAMMES OR  
INTERNSHIPS



When asked how they sourced their post-graduation work opportunities 20.4% had sourced work through recruitment websites whereas 19% had already worked with their employer previously.

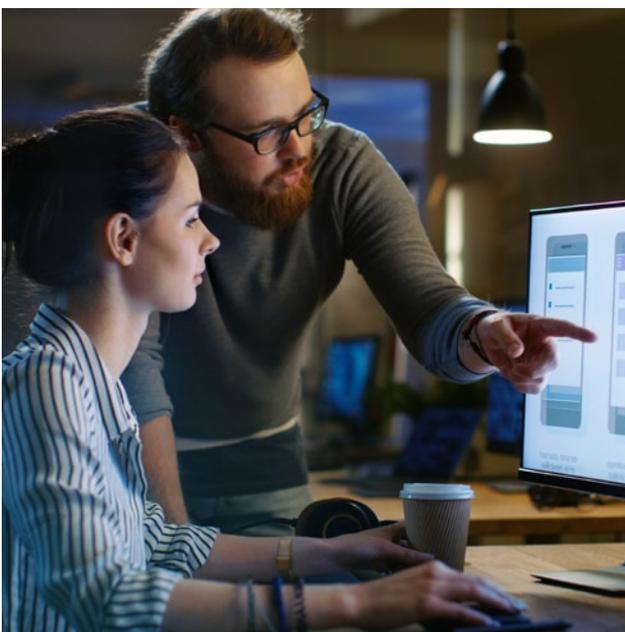
# AWARDS/COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Career Services Head of Service is

- 1 Member of the Student Experience Leadership Team (SELT)
- 2 Member of the [AHECS](#) (Association of Higher Education Careers Services in Ireland) Heads of Service Group
- 3 Current Joint Chair of the [UCC 2022](#) Pillar 3 Student Success Strategy Group
- 4 Reports to [University Governing Body Student Experience Committee](#)
- 5 An active member of the [Priority One Connected Curriculum Working Group](#),
- 6 Member of [Student Affairs Ireland](#) (SAI)
- 7 Member of [AGCAS](#) (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services in the UK and Ireland)
- 8 Member of the Institutional Profile Group (part of the Institutional Review (CINNTE))

Individual staff members of Career Services provide leadership through

- 1 Attendance at and contributions to AGCAS, AHECS, ASET, WACE and employer conferences such as IBEC (Irish Business and Employers Confederation) and Student Affairs Ireland (SAI)
- 2 Active membership of University Committees, including; Recruitment, Civic and Community Engagement, College Employability Committees, Cork University Business School Curriculum Management, College of Science Engineering and Food Science Teaching Learning and Student Experience, Irish University's Association Campus Engage Volunteering Working Group, and the UCC Volunteering Working Group.



## AGCAS QUALITY STANDARD

AGCAS (the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) is the expert membership organisation for higher education student career development and graduate employment professionals. UCC Career Services has been a longstanding member of this association, contributing to our professional development through conferences, training and further education. The AGCAS membership Quality Standard outlines the levels of professionalism with which member services fulfil their purpose. The aims of the AGCAS Membership Quality Standard are to:

- Encourage and maintain high standards of professional delivery and conduct by AGCAS members
- Integrate with, not duplicate or replace, other externally verified quality standards, which a service may wish to achieve
- Offer a developmental opportunity for member services through self-identification of good practice and opportunities for development; alongside peer review in a form that suits individual service needs

UCC Career Services completed the Quality Standard self-evaluation assessment in early 2022, this was an extensive body of work and all staff of the service contributed. The assessment covered all aspects of our work and involved reflection on how we can improve our service delivery and have a strategic focus in the future. There was an AGCAS led peer review process of our self-evaluation assessment and in April 2022 we successfully achieved the Quality Standard, just the **second University in Ireland to meet this Quality mark**. The feedback from the peer review was very positive

**It is clear via detailed review of the UCC SED documentation, and subsequent peer review discussion, that the University College Cork Career Services provide an excellent, inclusive, data-driven, and professional service to students, graduates, academics, and employers. University College Cork Career Services should be incredibly proud of their outstanding employability and career development provision, and fully deserve receipt of the AGCAS Membership Quality Standard.**

This process involves review again in 2025 which will facilitate and underpin other continuous improvement activities that we undertake in the coming years.



# UCC CAREER SERVICES AWARDS AND RECOGNITION (PILLAR 3)

UCC Career Services was the recipient of multiple awards in recognition of excellence in the past year; two national and one within UCC.

In April, Career Services won the **Best Career Impact Strategy** at the **Education Awards 2022**, in recognition of our leading role the development, integration, and delivery of UCC's Employability Framework 2021 to 2025. The award was presented to UCC "Outstanding Careers Services with a proven partnership model between the university, students, and employers. UCC are doing superb work in the area of preparing students for their careers"

In May, Career Services won the Association of Higher Education Careers Services (AHECS) **Employability Award 2022 for Building Effective Partnerships**, in recognition of several collaborative initiatives with UCC **Graduate Attributes Programme**, one of which included the creation of Transition In and Transition Through resources to support students' development of Graduate Attributes and Values. The aim of the annual awards being, to promote, encourage and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the career professionals working in Ireland North and South.

In April, Career Services won a **UCC Staff Recognition Award 2021**, an honour bestowed in acknowledgement of outstanding contributions to university life and the wider community, under the category "**Enhancing the Student Experience Award**". The awards were nominated by colleagues or students for their exceptional and influential achievements and contributions over the past year. The award recognised the steps that Career Services took to support students in a time of crisis during COVID-19. The approach involved creativity and innovation within every initiative, but it was the passion of approach together with genuine interest in the students that provided the impact.



## CAREER SERVICES DATA



OVER  
**6,000**  
ONE TO ONE  
CONSULTATIONS TOOK  
PLACE FROM 2020 TO 2022



**684**  
WORKSHOPS AND LECTURES  
SUPPORTED STUDENTS' CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT IN 2020-2022



**125**  
EMPLOYERS TOOK PART IN  
THE 2021 CAREERS FAIR, 100  
EMPLOYERS TOOK PART IN THE  
2020 CAREERS FAIR. THE EVENT  
WAS ONE OF THE HIGHEST  
ATTENDED VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY  
CAREER FAIRS IN EUROPE WITH  
AN 83% PARTICIPATION RATE



**2,690**  
STUDENTS MADE  
CONNECTIONS WITH  
RECRUITERS AT THE  
CAREERS FAIRS IN 2020  
AND 2021



**6,012**  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
PROMOTIONS SUPPORTED  
EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT  
BETWEEN 2020 AND 2022



**1,735**  
GRADUATE ROLES WERE  
ADVERTISED TO UCC  
STUDENTS BETWEEN 2020  
AND 2022

## WORK PLACEMENT DATA



**31**  
SUPPORTING 31  
WORK PLACEMENT  
PROGRAMMES  
IN 3 COLLEGES



**1020**  
STUDENTS PLACED  
IN 2021, 1004 STUDENTS  
PLACED IN 2020



**1386**  
STUDENTS  
SUPPORTED IN 2021  
1380 STUDENTS  
SUPPORTED IN 2020

	17-18			18-19			19-20			20-21			21-22		
	Total	Placed	% Placed	Total	Placed	% Placed	Total	Placed	% Placed	Total	Placed	% Placed	Total	Placed	% Placed
<b>Totals</b>	1013	968	96%	1140	1041	91%	1237	982	79%	1380	1004	73%	1386	1020	74%
<b>COLLEGES</b>															
<b>SEFS</b>	360	354	98%	387	383	99%	374	370	99%	394	388	98%	486	400	82%
<b>B&amp;L</b>	605	577	95%	648	584	90%	759	552	73%	773	567	73%	709	596	84%
<b>CACSSS</b>	21	21	100%	86	86	100%	89	60	67%	193	46	24%	191	24	13%
<b>Springboard</b>	27	16	59%	19	4	21%	15	0	0%	19	1	5%			









## CONNECT WITH US



UCC Career Services,  
Seirbhísí Gairme COC  
2nd Floor, The Hub,  
University College Cork,  
College Road,  
Cork,  
T12 YF78



+353 (0)21 490 4802



careers@ucc.ie



[www.ucc.ie/careers](http://www.ucc.ie/careers)



**Career  
Services**