DCU

Diversity Report

2012

Paul Smith – Equality Director

DCU
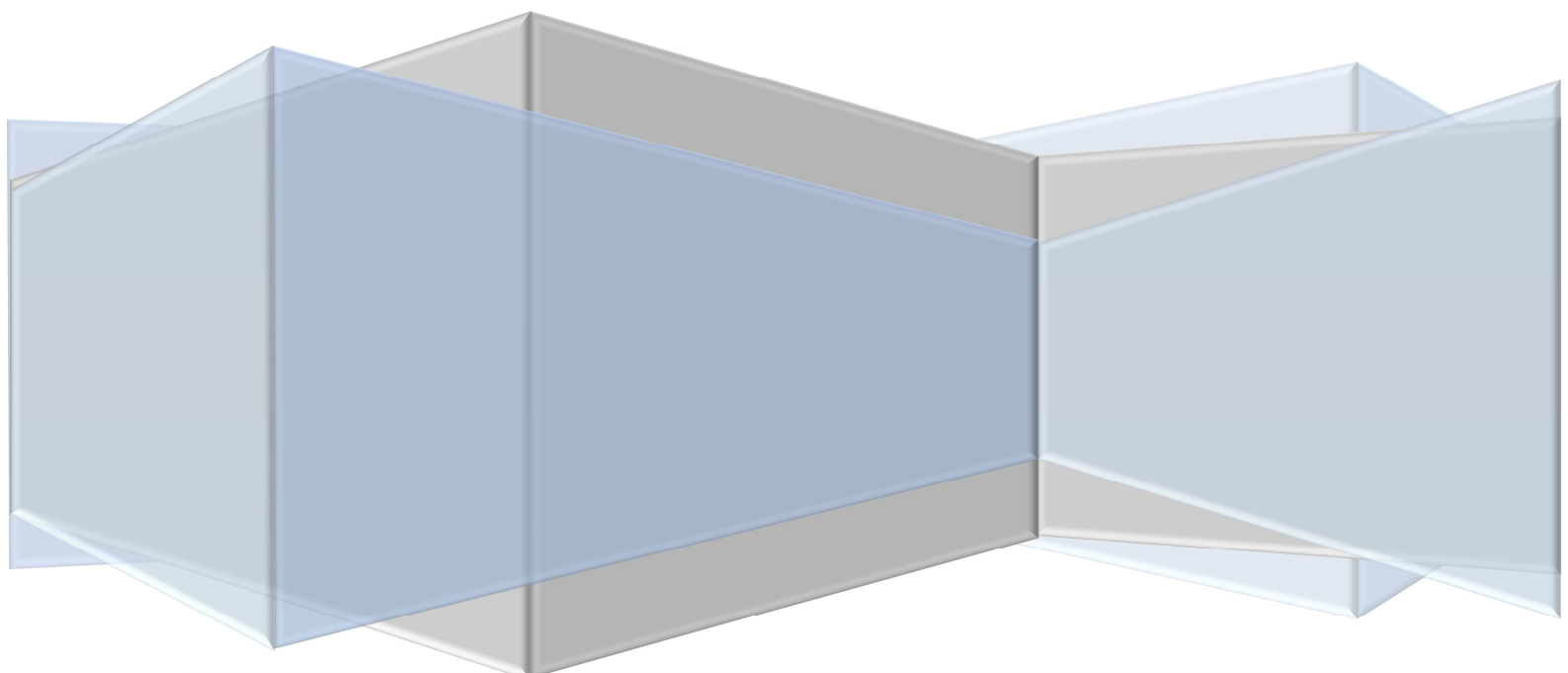
Contents

Annual Diversity Monitoring Report

DCU is committed to ensuring that diversity exists in all aspects of University life. The report constitutes a snapshot of the diversity profile and distribution of staff and students in DCU as of 2011 – 2012 based on available data.

Interpretation of Data

Some of the key findings in this report are outlined below. The report constitutes a snapshot of the diversity profile and distribution of staff and students in DCU as of 2011-2012 based on available data. While the HEA compiles sectoral reports on student profile there is currently no consistent sectoral comparative data in relation to staff although this is in the process of being addressed.

Staff

Due to the sensitivity of the data associated with equality legislation it can be difficult to get an accurate picture of tall of the diversity that exists within the staff cohort. For this reason gender has a particular significance as it is something that staff, in general are happy to disclose. From an Equality perspective, with an almost 50/50 gender split it is imperative that there are no barriers to equality of opportunity or treatment between the sexes.

Gender profile

The issue of gender imbalance and barriers to women's career progression in academe have been highlighted by international research. In DCU there have been a number of reports examining women's career progression including:

- Women in Science and Engineering Research at DCU - 2005

- Sunrise Report – 1998

- Equality Review and Action Plan (Polaris Report) – 2004

The information contained in this report highlights that women make up a low percentage of senior academic roles 12% in DCU. There is very low representation of female Heads of School, however there is a slightly higher percentage of female Heads of Administrative function at 53%. Although women make up the greater percentage of the administrative staff in DCU there remains a male dominance in the highest administrative grades.

Disability Profile

DCU is required to aim to achieve a target of 3% inclusion of staff with a disability. It has proved difficult to get staff to participate in the annual questionnaire, however, the percentage of staff disclosing a disability has increased over the last 3 years with the figure for 2011 being 2.2%.

Student

The university is required to make a return to the HEA on an annual basis and there is a wealth of information available related to the diversity of the student body. DCU has been successful in

ensuring that the non-traditional student categories have been supported and encouraged to participate on programmes in DCU.

One item that may be worth exploring further is the progression rate for male and female students. This relates to the number of students who completed their programmes in the prescribed time period 3 or 4 years; in general 80% of female students completed within this timeframe while in general 70% of male students achieved this.

DCU was innovative in introducing the first Access Programme for socio-economically disadvantaged students. Traditionally students were attracted from the communities close to the University who may not have entered 3rd level education. The section in the report covering the Access programme seems to indicate that there is an increasing number of students on the access programme who may also be categorised as non-eu fee paying. This additional element of diversity may mean that the supports being offered may not address all of the needs of this cohort.

Disability Profile

The number of students registering with the Disability and Learning Support Service continues to increase year on year. The types of disability being supported have changed. There is a reduction in the number of students with physical or mobility disabilities and a substantial increase in the number of students with specific learning difficulties which account for 49.6% of all students registered with the service.

Age Profile

Mature students when numbers for full time students and distance education students are combined account for 12% of student body. It is important that the University can provide the support structures appropriate for this cohort which often differ from the traditional undergraduate student body.

Another initiative which has added to the diversification of the age profile on campus is the Intergenerational Learning Programme which included participants who were 85+

Introduction

Definition

Equality Monitoring is the process of collecting, storing and analysing information relevant to, and necessary for, the purpose of promoting equality of opportunity between different categories of persons.

The report provides base-line statistics on staff in relation to equality grounds such as gender, age and disability, and provides data on the student profile in relation to gender, age, nationality, disability, mature student and access initiatives. The report also details a project on intergenerational learning as an example of initiatives intended to broaden the diversity of the campus community. The aim of this report is two-fold, firstly to establish base-line positions and to determine possible inequalities; secondly to review developments since 2003 when the Equality Office was first established. In monitoring equality data DCU is following best practice as seen in the UK third level institutions and HEA recommendations. There is a significant difference in the UK model where equality monitoring processes are a compulsory element in all recruitment processes.

About this report

The report has three key sections and provides mainly statistical information on the profile of staff and student body. The third section gives an example of one diversity related programme currently being undertaken by the university and a more detailed outline of the changing profile of students registering with the Access programme.

The data is analysed with a focus on the nine equality grounds included in the equality legislation; however there is recognition that there are limitations on the available data. The report has been produced following agreement with the Equality Steering Group.

Staff section

The staff section of the report provides detailed data tables, there is particular emphasis on gender, seniority and decision making. The information provided through the Equality Monitoring process have also been included for information. The results from the advances made in terms of DCU achieving the 3% inclusion of persons with a disability in the staff complement.

In addition the Equality Office has provided overall statistics on contacts related to issue reported under the Policy to Promote Respect and to Protect Dignity. The purpose of this information is illustrative as the Equality Office is not the only office which staff may approach should they have concerns related to respect and dignity.

The staff gender reports look at gender representation in senior academic and administrative roles within the university. The report also examines the participation of women in the decision making committees within the university.

It is important to note that when looking at gender balance and decision-making, it is useful to bear in mind that a 60-40 proportion is often provided as a minimum guideline for representation of both genders, although targets and quotas vary in different contexts from one/third minimum representation for the under-represented sex to a 50:50 ratio.[1]

Student Section

The student section outlines the student body profile in terms of the available DCU and HEA data including category of student, gender and nationality. There is a more detailed examination of non-traditional students (mature, disability and access) included with observations on the changing diversity within these groups.

Sources

The staff statistics are mostly based on the statistical reports from the HR database CORE. The information related to the application process was gathered through the equality monitoring forms which were completed on an optional basis. Student information was provided by the following offices DLSS, Access Office, President's Office.

Acknowledgements

The institutional research and analysis officer Aisling Mckenna; the members of the Equality Steering Group; Anne O'Connor, Senior disability Officer (DLSS); Joe Maxwell (HR); Cathy Mcloughlin, Post Entry Project Officer (DCU Access Service); Carmel Conry, Co-Ordinator Intergeneration 55 and Dr. Trudy Corrigan (Intergenerational Learning Project); Jane Neville (President's Office) and Louise McDermott (Assistant Registrar)

---

[1] http://www.quotaproject.org/aboutquotas.cfm

Staff:

Equality Legislation requires that any processes used in recruitment and selection cannot include questions that could be seen as discriminator with regard to the nine protected grounds. As a result only information that is provided on a voluntary basis by individuals can be used in this report and a definitive picture of the diversity that exists within the staff in DCU is not possible.

Overall staff figures by gender

The situation as reported in the Polaris HR in 2003 was that the staff in DCU comprised 53% female and 47% male. In 2003 the total number of staff 1186, although only 1038 were included in the analysis. As can be seen from the table below the gender profile has changed slightly with an increase in the percentage of women in the organisation of 0.5%[2].

	Male	%	Female	%	Total
All staff	829	46.2%	960	53.5%	1794

Overall staff figures by age

The age distribution for both male and female forms a standard bell curve with the main grouping occurring in the age range 31-40. Given the educational requirements for many roles and the age of the University this was expected.

Age Range	Female	Male	Unknown	Percentage
< 20	7	8		0.80%
20-25	91	92	1	10.20%
26-30	99	93		10.70%
31-35	169	129		16.60%
36-40	143	131		15.30%
41-45	126	96		12.40%
46-50	117	100		12.10%
51-55	88	77		9.20%
56-60	55	50		5.90%
61-65	38	31	2	4%
66-70	15	12		1.50%
>70	12	10	2	1.30%

The graph below represents the age profile for both male and female employees. The profiles for both genders mirror each other; with the age range 31-40 representing 32% of all employees.
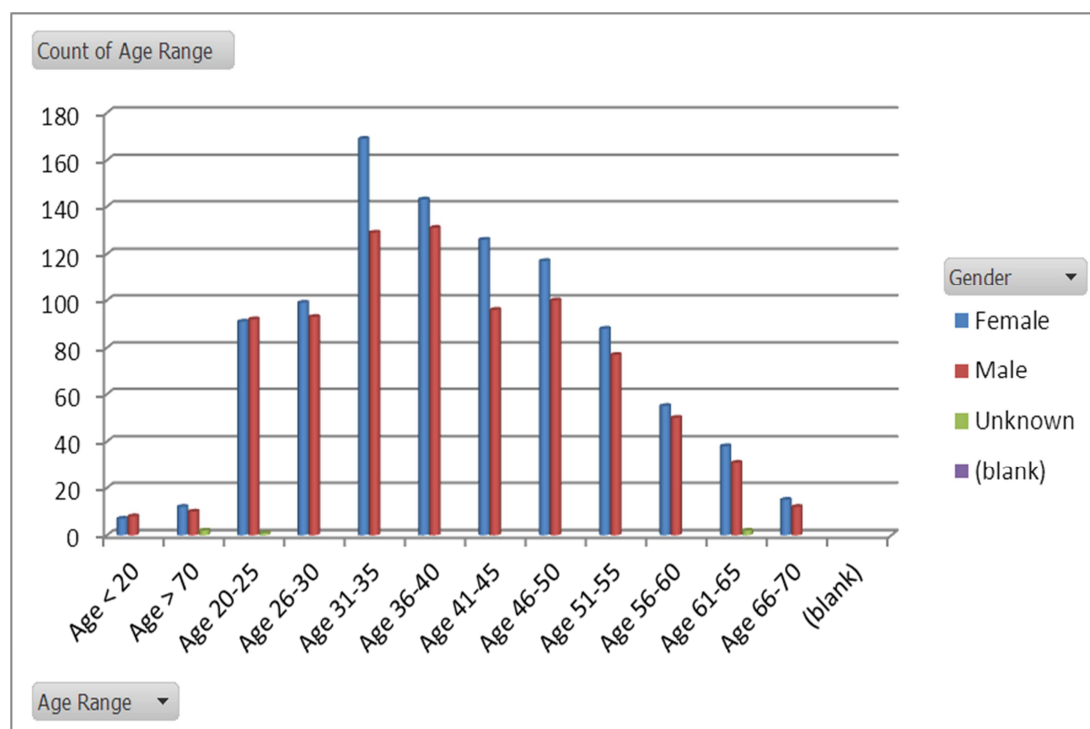
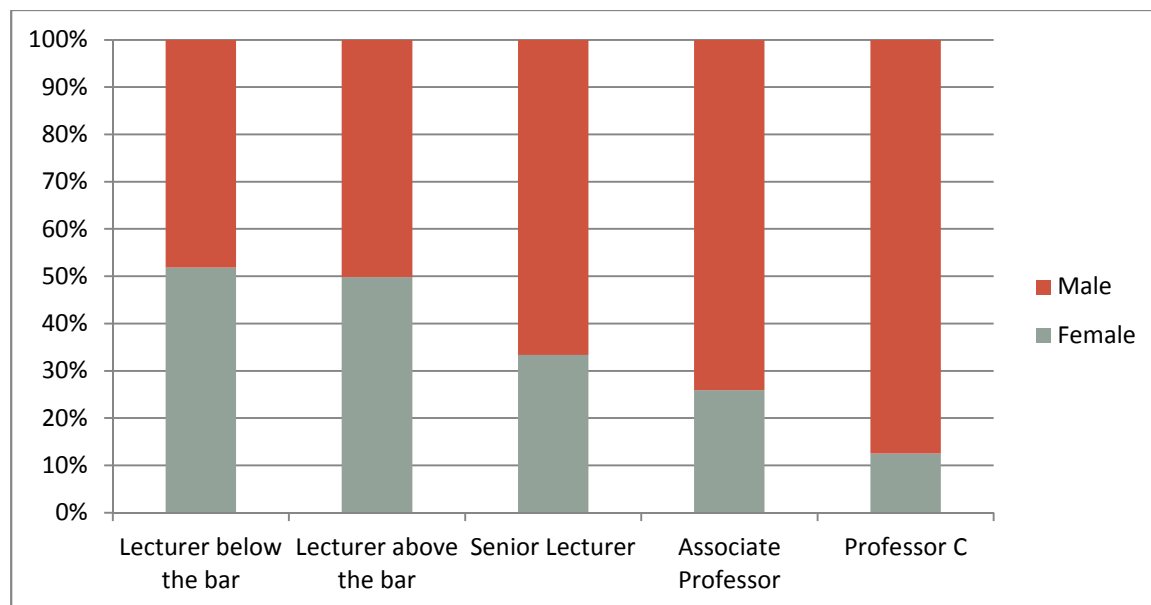## Breakdown by Gender and Grade Academic

The following data is intended to show the breakdown by gender of staff in academic grades. The data shows that at lecturer below bar and above bar there is an even split between male and female academics. Once we examine the grades that are available through promotion and progression processes the picture changes, it should be noted that some of these positions are advertised through open competition and do not form part of an internal process.

In the table below the breakdown for female academics shows a breakdown of 15.4% Lecturer below bar, 64.2% Lecturer above bar, 13.7% Senior Lecturer, 3.8% Associate Professor and 2.7% Professor. The breakdown for male academics shows a breakdown of 10.4% Lecturer below bar,47.4% Lecturer above bar, 20% Senior Lecturer, 8% Associate Professor and 14% Professor.

Category Description	Female	Male	Grand Total
LECTURER BELOW BAR	28	26	54
LECTURER ABOVE BAR	117	118	235
SENIOR LECTURER	25	50	75
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	7	20	27
PROFESSOR c	5	35	40

The chart below shows the comparison of genders at each grade. While the numbers of staff employed at Lecturer below and above bar is numerically very similar. Looking at each cohort 79.6%

of Female Academics are at Lecturer below or above bar while 58% of Male Academics are at the same grade.

Breakdown by Age and Gender for Higher Academic Grades

The following tables will be used to illustrate the breakdown by age and gender of the promotional and progression academic grades (Senior Lecturer, Associate Prof., Prof.)

Job Title Description	(Multiple Items)		
Count of Gender	Gender		
Age Range	Female	Male	Grand Total
Age 36-40	3	8	11
Age 41-45	11	17	28
Age 46-50	2	23	25
Age 51-55	12	20	32
Age 56-60	7	19	26
Age 61-65	1	10	11
Grand Total	**36**	**97**	**133**
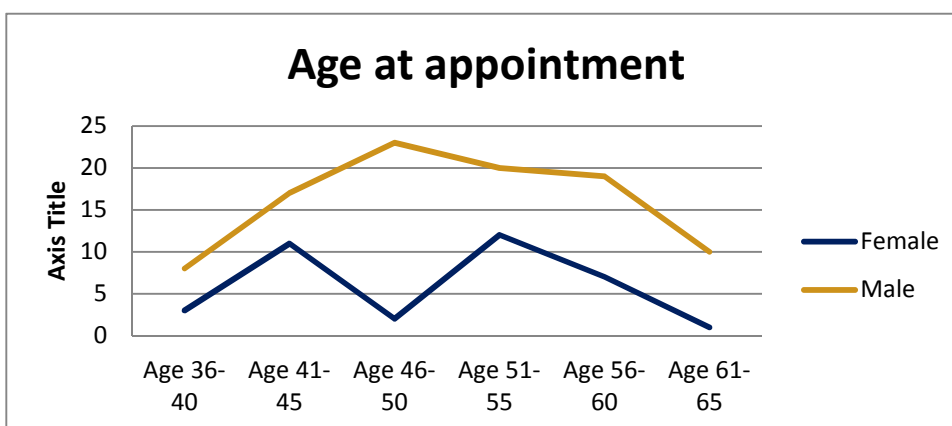
Breakdown by Gender on Administrative Grades

In total there are 585 staff categorised as non-academic 69% or 403 of these are women. 40 of this cohort are employed at Administrator Grade I or higher which equates to approximately 10% of non-academic females. For male colleagues 24 of the 182 men in non-academic roles are in the Administrator Grade I or higher category or 13.2% of this cohort.

Breakdown by Gender for Higher Administrative Grades

Job Title	Female	Male	Grand total
Admin. Grade 4 (AA)	51	14	65
Admin. Grade 5 SAA1	23	10	34
Administrator 1	22	12	34
Administrator II	15	9	24
Administrator III	2	4	6
Administrator IV	1	3	4
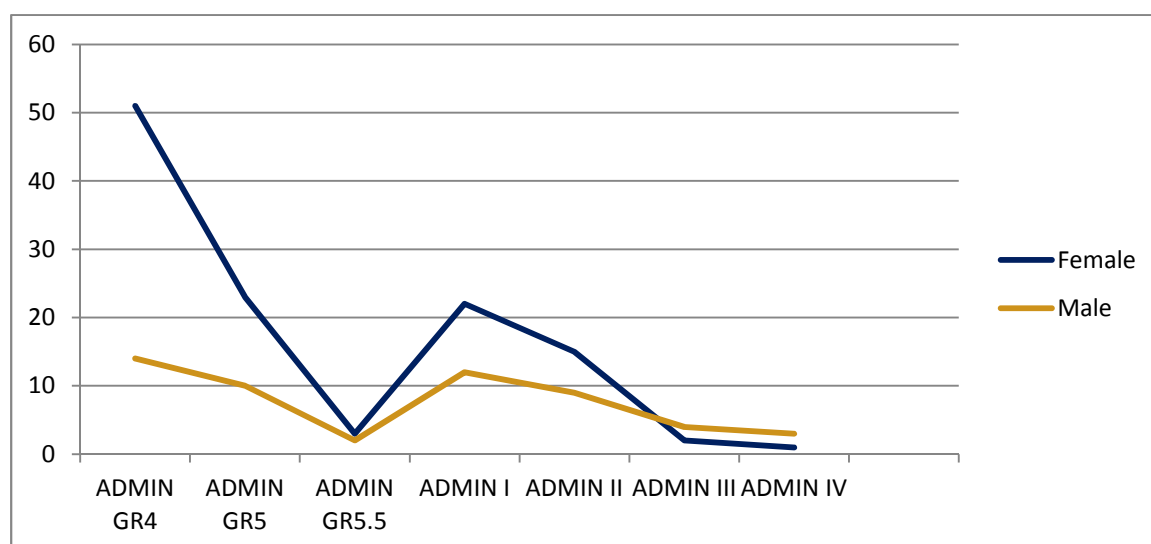
The chart indicates that number of women who are employed in administrative grades is far higher in most levels of administrative functions. There is an anomaly when it comes to Administrator Grade III and Grade IV where we find that only 25% of employees at Grade III and 33.3% of employees at Grade IV are female.

Staff distribution by grade

The table summarises the distribution of staff according to the type of function staff belong to. This graph provides an overall picture of the gender distribution of staff in different areas of activity, be it academic, research, administrative or Library, secretarial, technical or other support staff. While the overall proportion of staff is quite even between men and women, there are significant differences as can be seen in the table.

The following areas are examined in more detail in the coming sections: Academic

Count of Gender	Gender		
Type of Function	Female	Male	Grand Total
academic[3]	262	315	577
academic support	136	88	224
administrative and library	317	80	397
clinical	14	4	18
research	120	181	301
student	2	5	7
student support	14	38	52
support staff admin/teaching	66	29	95
support staff operations	2	14	16
technical	27	75	102
Grand Total	960	829	1789
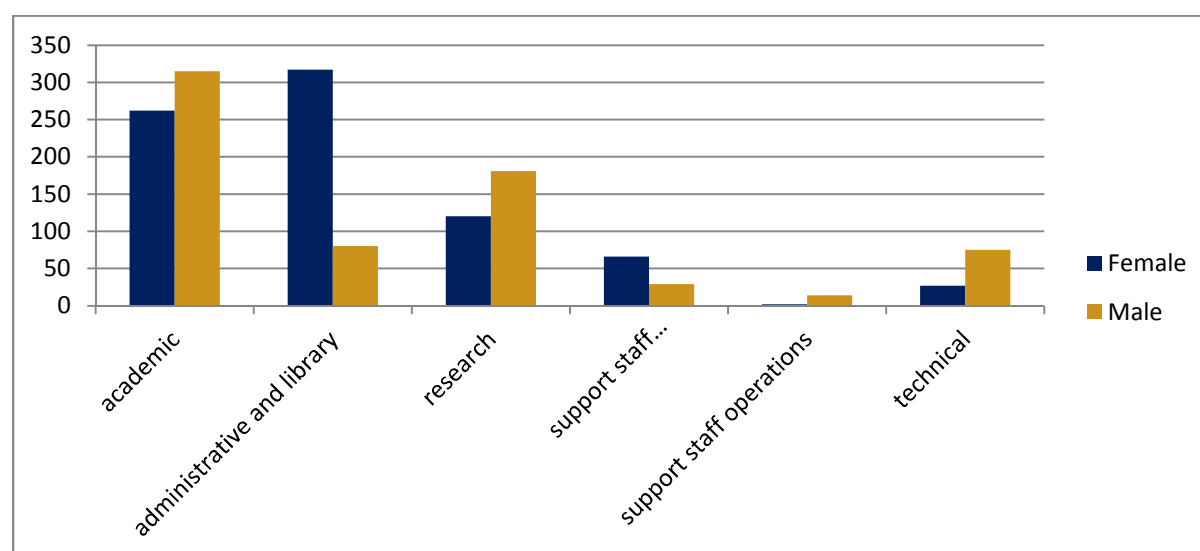
Research Funded Post

In recent years DCU has developed the level of research activity with the support of funded research roles. 349 positions are currently funded through this mechanism some of these are research active and some are administrative and technical support roles.

Most but not all of funded roles fall into one of 3 categories, as outlined below:

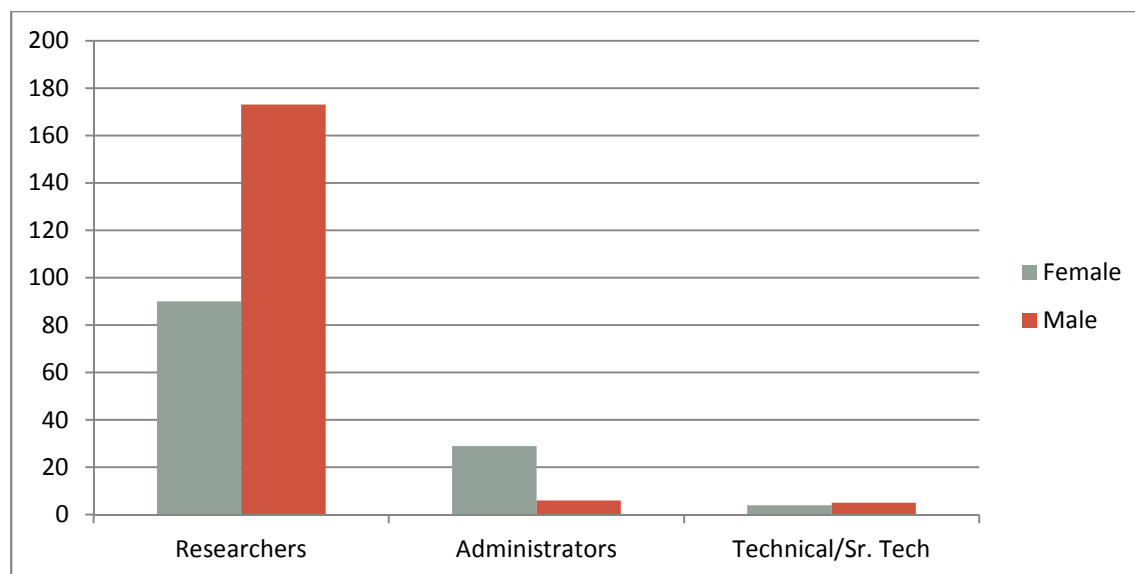**Post Doc, Research Fellow, Research Assistant   263**

Administrative posts   35

Technical/Senior Technical Officer   9

The gender breakdown of these categories are provided in the table below.

---

[3] Academic refers to a database field and is broader than the specific academic grades outlined on page 8

Staff Disability Audit

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) has been required to report on the % of staff with a disability on an annual basis since 2008.   All public bodies are required to submit this figure.

Audit results for DCU from March 2012

Total Number of Employees	Number who disclosed a disability	% of Employees with a disability under the definition	Number of Staff who responded to the Audit	% of Staff who responded to the Audit
1209	27	2.2%	535	44.3%

This is a marked improvement on the returns for previous year where there had been a very poor response from staff. In 2011 the return was 0.6% of staff who responded disclosing a disability.

The problem remains that this is a voluntary process and there is no requirement for staff to disclose a disability. DCU has made considerable advances in comparison to previous years with a total of 2.2% of staff disclosing a disability. There were a group of staff who chose the option prefer not to disclose. There was also a difference in the number disclosing a disability and then choosing to identify themselves as having a disability. This may relate to the fact that respondants did not feel that the question asked [4] represented them. In other words while they agreed they had a disability they did not feel that they had substantial difficulties and did not want to be represented as such. The employment control framework that is in place has also restricted the number and level of roles available. Due to the nature of this framework only strategically imperative posts are being filled. The fact that many of these roles are senior and specialised in nature means that the potential pool

---

[4] ***Having read the definition do you have any long-term (including episodic) condition: A physical impairment A sight, hearing or speech impairment An intellectual disability A mental health condition which causes you substantial difficulties in any area of everyday life such as work or social life or leisure or cultural activities?***

of applicants is very small, this mitigates against the potential for people with a disability applying for these roles.

Equality Monitoring

Recruitment equality monitoring data has been collected anonymously since 2008. Employment applicants are requested to fill in an anonymous form that collects data on all of the nine equality grounds. The equality monitoring forms[5] received indicate that there is an overall response rate of 41% when compared to all applications received by the HR Department. While this does not provide an accurate representation of all applicants for roles in the university it can be used as an indication of the diversity profile of applicants to DCU. When reviewing the detail of the received monitoring forms there appears to be a greater response rate for academic roles and there is a better response rate for externally advertised roles.

Applications received by HR

Jan 2010 – 23rd May 2012	Male	%	Female	%	Unknown	%	Total
Total applications received	1565	40.76%	1960	51%	314	8.2%	3839

Equality Monitoring Forms Received by Equality Office

Jan 2010 – 23rd May 2012	Male	%	Female	%	Blank or did not disclose	%	Total
Total applications received	725	46.2%	789	50.25%	54	3.4%	1570

Nationality of applicants returning monitoring forms:

In all applications were received from candidates from 77 countries. Looking at the top 5 nationalities disclosed by applicants unsurprisingly Irish was the highest proportion of all applications with 834 applications or 53% or all applications received. The majority of applications of an Indian origin were for research positions. The high number of applications from Spain was due to a competition for a Spanish academic post which attracted a very large number of applicants.

---

[5] In the UK there is mandatory equality forms as part of the application process for posts in the Higher Education Sector although not all nine grounds covered by Irish legislation are part of equality monitoring in the UK.

Top 5 Nationalities applying for positions in DCU

Country	Number of Applications Received	% of total applications received
Ireland	834	53%
British	94	6%
Spanish	86	5.5%
Indian	57	3.6%
Italian	46	2.9%

Sexual Orientation

This question is not required in the UK system as it was seen as too sensitive an issue. The high level of respondents who chose not to disclose any of the options available would seem to support this position

Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	Homosexual	Bi-sexual	Did not disclose	Blank
%	87.7%	2.6%	0.9%	6.7%	2%
Numbers of returns	1377	41	14	105	33

Family Status

At application stage the vast majority of those that completed an equality monitoring form stated that they had no caring responsibilities with 63% of respondents choosing this option. The vast majority of women who completed and returned the forms stated that they had no caring responsibility. One other factor, not reflected in the chart below, is that 8% of all respondents did not choose any of the options available to them.
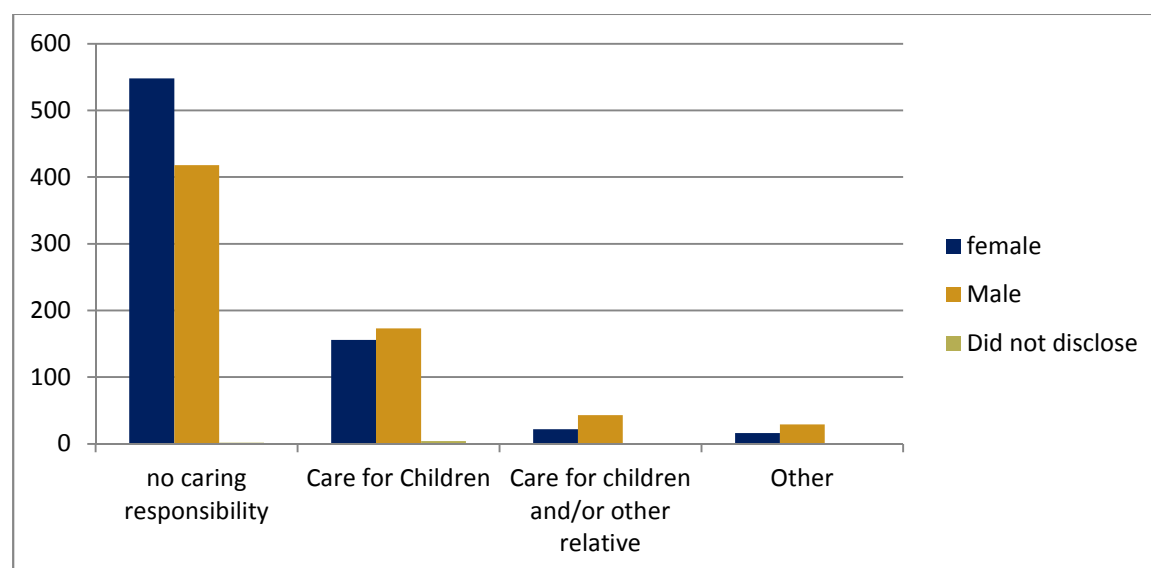
## Membership of Decision making committees

The following table outlines the participation of women and men in the University Senior positions and decision-making bodies. The membership of each committee[6] is predicated on the roles of individual members as required under their terms of reference.

	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Education Committee	8	57%	6	43%	14
Academic Council	83	63.8%	47	36.2	130
University Standards Committee	5	27.7%	13	72.2%	18
Graduate Studies Board	6	33.33%	12	66.66%	18
Governing Authority	18	60%	12	40%	30
Senior Management	8	73%	3	27%	11
DCU Executive	12	63%	7	37%	19
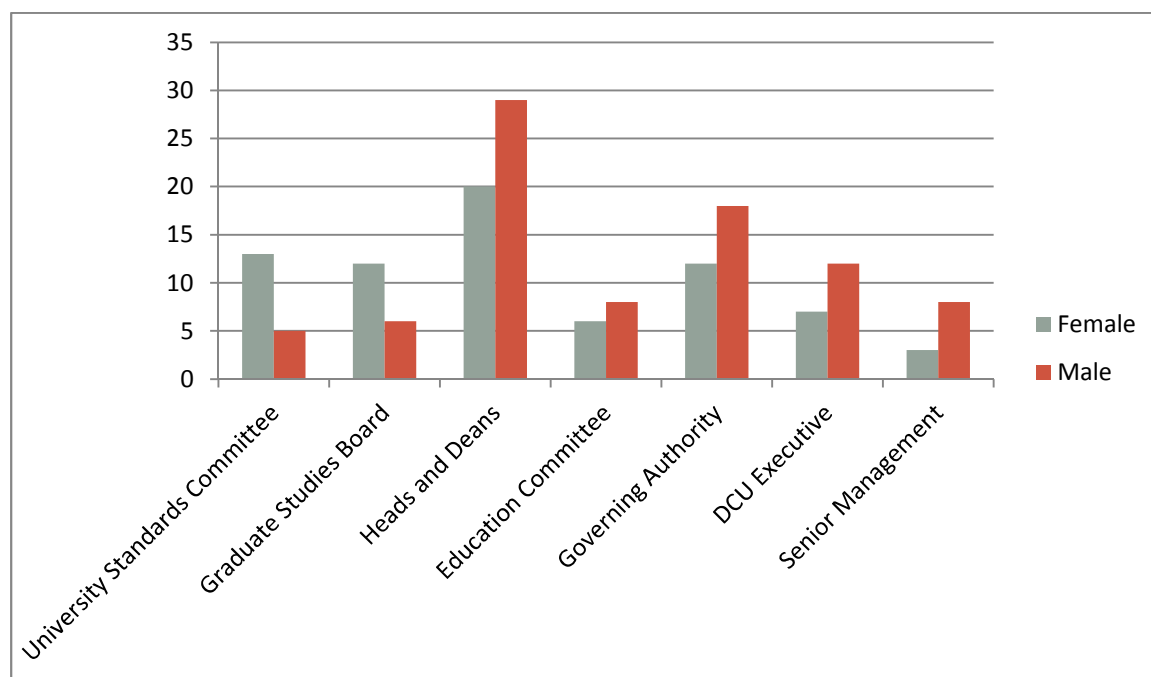
Governing Authority

While some constituencies such as appointed and elected members are gender balanced there are some areas such as student and linked colleges where gender representation could be reviewed.
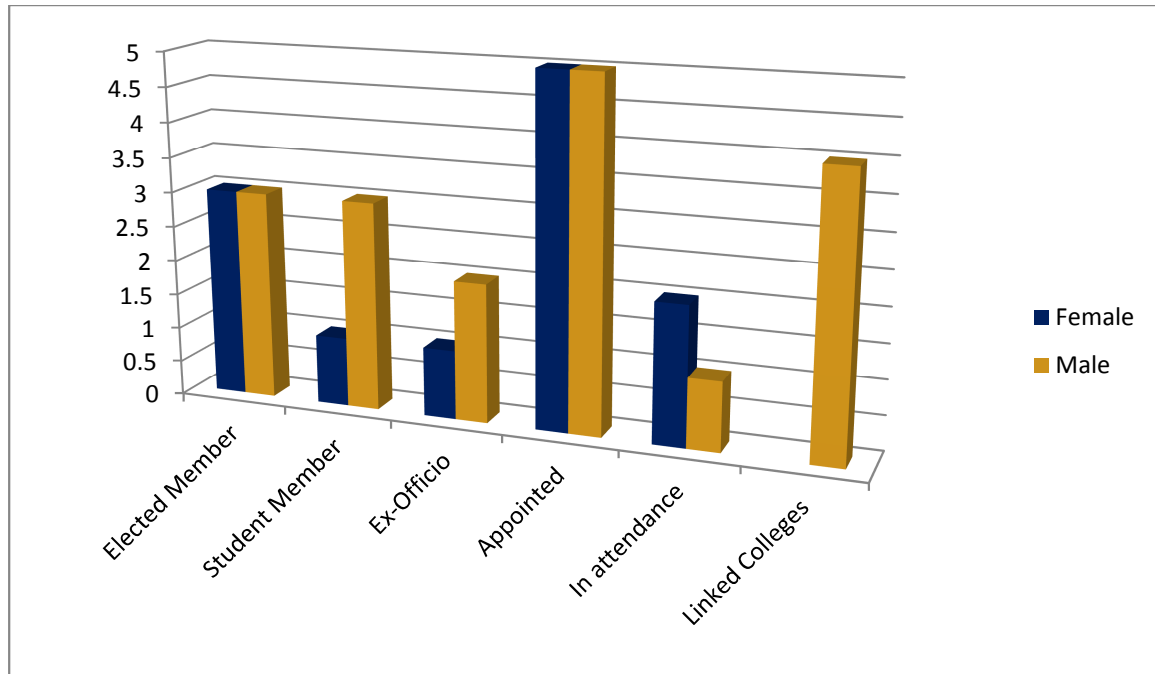
Heads and Deans Group

The Heads and Deans group has a membership of 50 with a gender split of 20 Female to 29 Male. In terms of Heads of School there are 15 in total with 13 being male and 2 Female (13.33%). Looking at the situation in administrative and support functions there are 16 female Heads and 14 Male Heads of unit.
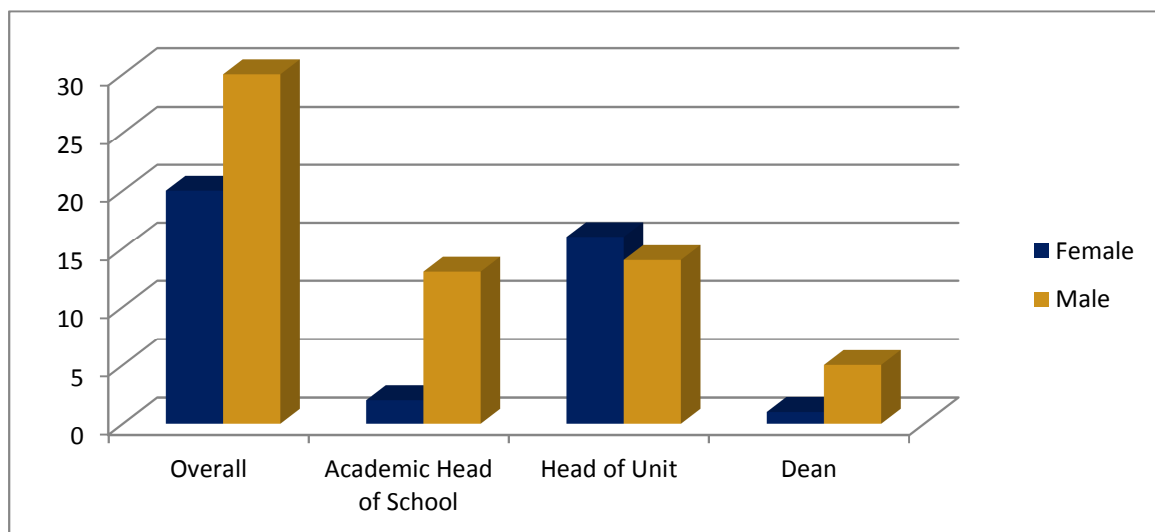
Student:

In 2011/ 12 the DCU Student body was made up of 11,340 students from 114 different countries. The size of the student body has remained relatively stable in the last 5 years, with growth principally driven by an increase in undergraduate numbers.

Overall Student Body Profile					
Qual Descp	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
UG	7414	7377	7596	7710	8021
PGT	2426	2185	2571	2189	1952
PGR	729	765	772	804	769
Non award	644	458	438	412	598
Grand Total	11213	10785	11377	11115	11340

Figure **: Total DCU Student Population, 2007/08- 2011/12

Gender Profile of the Student Body

	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
Faculty Description	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
DCU BUSINESS SCHOOL	47%	53%	47%	53%	46%	54%	45%	55%	47%	53%
DCUBS/HSS	62%	38%	58%	42%	60%	40%	53%	47%	48%	52%
DISTANCE EDUCATION	46%	54%	46%	54%	47%	53%	47%	53%	44%	56%
ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING	15%	85%	15%	85%	16%	84%	16%	84%	16%	84%
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES	64%	36%	64%	36%	63%	37%	64%	36%	65%	35%
SCIENCE AND HEALTH	69%	31%	68%	32%	65%	35%	64%	36%	63%	37%
NON AWARD VISITORS	55%	45%	47%	53%	50%	50%	34%	66%	48%	52%
Grand Total	54%	46%	53%	47%	52%	48%	52%	48%	51%	49%

Figure **: Gender Profile of DCU Student Body by Faculty of Study, 2007/08-2011/12

In 2011/12 the overall DCU student body is evenly split between male and female students. The proportion of male students has increased marginally since 2007/08. This is principally due to the decline in the number of female students entering Nursing Programmes at DCU, while the number of male students has increased overall in a number of Schools, particularly in Education.

There are a number of faculties where the student body does not reflect the almost 50:50 split in student gender. Engineering and Computing has traditionally had the lowest proportion of female students. However, even within the faculty, the proportion of female students is not uniformly low. The programmes with the highest proportion of female students within the Faculty of Engineering and Computing are, Enterprise Computing (35%), Manufacturing with Business (40%) and Information and Communications Engineering (45%). Among postgraduate research students, Engineering and Computing has 27% female registration in 2011/12.

Science and Health has traditionally the highest proportion of female students, driven largely by the large numbers of female undergraduate students studying within the School of Nursing. Should these students be excluded from our analysis, the percentage of female students within the faculty falls from 63% to 53%.

The percentage of male students has been traditionally lower in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Traditionally, Education had one of the lowest percentages of male students within this faculty, but this has shifted somewhat in the last five years, from 22% in 2007/08 to 30% in 2011/12. Similarly SALIS[7] has a relatively low percentage of male students, 30% in 2011/12. Other Schools within this faculty with a more even gender profile include Law and Government and Communications.

Gender and Completion

A high level summary of completion-on-time by undergraduate students identifies some differing trends between female and male students.

	Female	Male
	Graduation with 4 years	Graduation with 4 years
Entering 2002/03	81%	74%
Entering 2003/04	75%	68%
Entering 2004/05	79%	70%
Entering 2005/06	82%	70%
Entering 2006/07	81%	70%

Figure **: Overall Profile of Undergraduate Students completing studies within anticipated time.

Overall, female undergraduate students are more likely to graduate within the initial anticipated length of the programme. Completion within anticipated length of programme varies across the faculties within DCU.

Faculty Description	Gender	Entering 2002/03	Entering 2003/04	Entering 2004/05	Entering 2005/06	Entering 2006/07
DCU BUSINESS SCHOOL	Female	94%	84%	80%	86%	85%
	Male	89%	86%	89%	82%	85%
DCUBS/HSS	Female	79%	78%	73%	79%	54%
	Male	80%	65%	76%	82%	55%
ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING	Female	73%	63%	40%	47%	56%
	Male	65%	53%	54%	58%	42%
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES	Female	83%	73%	86%	84%	85%
	Male	70%	73%	75%	72%	80%
SCIENCE AND HEALTH	Female	73%	73%	77%	81%	81%
	Male	74%	63%	63%	71%	70%

There appears to be little gender difference in the summary of completion within anticipated time among students in the DCU Business School, and joint DCU Business School and Humanities Programmes. In Science and Health and Humanities and Social Sciences female completion is consistently higher than male completion, while in Engineering and Computing, female completion within anticipated programme length is higher on 3 of the 5 years of analysis.

---

[7] School of Applied Languages and Intercultural Studies

Non Traditional Student Body

Around 20% of DCU's undergraduate student body is classified as "non-traditional". The largest of these groups are mature learners, classified as being 23 years old on 1st January on the year they enter higher education. DCU also has a significant number of students studying under our Access Programme. The DCU Access Service co-ordinates a range of initiatives aimed at increasing participation in higher education by students who, for a variety of financial or social reasons, traditionally have not considered a university education as a viable or attractive option. In the last five years, DCU has also seen an 84% increase in the number of students who register has having a disability.

The table below provides information on the profile of non-traditional learners among full time undergraduate students.

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Mature Students (UG)	671	663	676	675	595
Access Students (UG)	448	441	442	449	484
Students With Disabilities (UG)	175	227	272	286	322
Total Non-Trad (UG)	1294	1309	1390	1410	1401

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
% Mature	10%	10%	10%	10%	8%
% Access	7%	7%	6%	6%	7%
% Disability	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Total All Undergraduate	6530	6579	6802	7039	7273
% Non trad	20%	20%	20%	20%	19%

Mature Students at DCU

While mature students represent 8% of the total full time undergraduate student body, once distance learners are incorporated, this figure increases to 12%. DCU's distance learning service, Oscail, provides online and e-learning offering at degree and postgraduate taught level. In 2010/11 DCU's has above average participation among mature learners among Irish universities.

	Average	UCD	UCC	NUIG	TCD	NUIM	DCU	UL
Mature Entrants	11%	8%	9%	12%	10%	18%	12%	12%

Flexible Learners

The HEA considers flexible learners to be part-time, distance, e-learning or in-service learners. Among the seven universities, DCU has the highest proportion of this type of flexible learner in 2010/11. This is a result of the DCU's position as the leading provider of distance education through Oscail within the university sector, and the high proportion of part-time students studying towards taught Masters awards.

	Average	UCD	UCC	NUIG	TCD	NUIM	DCU	UL
Flexible Learners	15%	18%	8%	17%	12%	15%	25%	14%

International Student Body

The DCU student body includes students from 115 different countries and 6 continents. The number of international students peaked in 2008/09, but has remained close to 2,000 ever since.

The highest proportion of international students is among DCU's postgraduate research students, where 39.6% of students are International.

Qual Descp	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
UG	826	833	801	868	929
PGT	566	496	480	416	348
PGR	278	310	315	328	305
Non award	101	15	18	31	46
Study Abroad	131	142	130	115	133
Exchange	285	224	193	193	213
Total	2187	2020	1937	1951	1974

The HEA examine statistics on international students, based on full time students who have a citizenship other than Irish. In 2010/11, 10% of the full time students at DCU had international citizenship, 1% below the national average of 11%.

	Average	UCD	UCC	NUIG	TCD	NUIM	DCU	UL
Full Time International	11%	15%	10%	14%	13%	3%	10%	5%

Access Service

In October 2011, the DCU Access Service celebrated its 21st Anniversary. From 6 students from Ballymun entering DCU in 1999, in 2011/12, 162 first year undergraduates entered DCU as Access Students. Access Scholars can expect to follow in a tradition of both academic and future career success. Since 1990, 93% of Access students who entered DCU have completed their third-level education.

	Average	UCD	UCC	NUIG	TCD	NUIM	DCU	UL
Manual, Semi and unskilled socio-	18%	17%	19%	20%	14%	24%	19%	20%

DCU participates in the Higher Education Access route (HEAR) as a third level admissions scheme for school leavers from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. HEAR has been established by a number of higher education institutions as evidence clearly shows that socio-economic disadvantage has a negative impact on educational attainment at school and on progression to higher education.

Access students applying through HEAR must achieve the Minimum Entry Requirements and applications are assessed on a number of financial, cultural and social indicators including:

- A family income meets low income thresholds,
- A parent/ guardian holding of a medical card,
- A family member is in receipt of a means-tested social welfare payment
- An individual belong to a group that is under-represented in higher education, based on the occupation and employment status of their parent(s)/guardian(s). The grouping includes non-manual, semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers and agricultural workers.

DCU has very close links with 24 designated disadvantaged second level schools in North Dublin. Our initiatives run at primary level, and throughout the secondary school junior and senior cycles.

A number of pre entry initiatives run throughout the year to assist students achieve their educational goals.

The Access Service has established a secondary school Achievement Awards Scheme to reward and recognise the achievements and efforts of students who may not view progression onto third level as a viable option for various reasons. Students were nominated for achievements in the areas of academic work, sport, information technology, arts and culture and community spirit. This year's awards were sponsored by Accenture which recognised over 400 students for their various accomplishments and achievements.

The DCU Educational Trust raises private funding to support elements of the Access service. Over 440 current DCU students received scholarships this year.

The Access Service in DCU has and continues to have it origins in representing socio-economically disadvantaged students. Beginning as a small pilot study in 1990 with just six students from nearby Ballymun the service has grown to over 500 students8. The Service has evolved from a small group

---

[8] http://www4.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/21%20Year%20Research%20Publication.pdf

of six student coming from one school in Ballymun, then to a Service catering for students in linked schools in North Dublin in the 1990s to a truly national scheme operating under the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) in more recent years. In tracking the evolution of the programme what has become obvious is the ethnically diverse reach of the programme.

The 2007 intake of 1st year Access student came from eight countries, 93% from Ireland and the UK. In 2011 the ethnic makeup of our students presented a very different picture with our first year intake having students born in 23 countries making up 23% of our intake from all part of the world, Chechen, Kyzanstan, China, Libya, Somalia, Eriteria, Nigeria and the USA to name a few. This has presented a new set of challenges for the staff of the Service. In addition to dealing with so many different new cultural backgrounds, almost 12% of the new student cohort are liable for EU fees up to €7,500 despite meeting the eligibility requirements for the HEAR scheme. We therefore have a cohort of students who have been accessed as being socio-economically disadvantaged and in need of financial support in order to succeed at third-level and being liable for large fees.

The University has a requirement that all students who are liable for fees must pay 60% of these before they can complete their college registration. This measure impacts almost exclusively on this cohort of students. Due to time delays in clarifying their legal status and difficulties in accessing the funds to pay these fees a number of our students were unable to complete their registration until late November 2011. The problem reoccurs in semester 2 if students do not pay all outstanding fees before the set date. The Access Service has closely monitored this situation through the 2011/12 academic year, of the 18 fee paying students who commenced their studies 2/3 have failed one or more exams with 50% of them have failed three or more exams and are accessed to be at serious risk of failing the year. This is significantly higher than normal Access fail rates for the first sitting of exams.

Aside from the ethnicity of Access students they are a diverse group coming from all counties in Ireland with other challenges. Finance would be the primary issue for most students due to family circumstances there would be a much higher proportion of students coming from backgrounds where a social welfare payment is the only source of income in the family. Aside from finance, issues of parental addiction (alcohol, drugs and gambling), mental and ill health problems are very prevalent and impact on students ability to perform well.

As with the general student body access students are not a homogenous group and some face great challenges than others the service has:

- Students who are orphaned
- Asylum Seekers who entered the country as unaccompanied minors.
- Young lone parents
- Students who are in the care of the HSE and/or fostered
- Students who have disabilities (physical, sensory, motor, mental health)
- Students that are the main carers in their families
- Students whom due to their status even though they may have received almost all their primary and secondary education in Ireland are liable for EU level fees.

Despite all this there are many positives. Research undertaken by the Access Service in 2010/11 for the 21st anniversary[9] of the Service found that despite almost 70% of Access students entering DCU on reduced points they are out performing their peers academically. Over 61% of Access students got a first or high class second last honour over an eight year period compared to just under 57% of the general student cohort. The difference widens further to 89.5% and 79.7% respectively when all grades of honours are taken into account. The research also found that even in the current difficult climate there was only a 4% unemployment rate with 53% of former students going onto to further studies after completing their degrees. We also know that our students are high achievers in other spheres of life[10]. Access students are active members of DCU Clubs and Societies and are participating in sport as every level; both national and international.

Access Student Testimonials

"I found the access programme to be very good and helped me meet so many people from all around the world and all around Dublin."

"Access has been one of the most helpful and friendly services of my college experience, and I genuinely do not think I'd be here without them."

"Access was an extremely important part of college for me. Initially it helped me engage more with the college experience and gave me a chance to get an idea of what to expect in college. It has provided many opportunities to volunteer and become a well rounded college community member "

"Wouldn't be here without Access and will always be grateful."

" I would like to thank Access as it is with their help and support that I got a chance to go to University."

"I found being an Access student a great advantage over the last 4 years, and am completely grateful for all th help and support during my time in DCU."

"…..It's great knowing that there's a friendly office to visit in the event of difficulty and need of support and guidance."

"Nice to know you have someone to turn to when it all gets a little too stressful ☺"

Because of Access,I'll be graduating with a top degree. College wouldn't of happened only for Access. from this it's evident that Access plays a major role for people with poorer backgrounds to getting a degree. The support over the years in priceless, from personal support to tuition.

---

[9] http://www4.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/pdfs/DCU_21Publication.pdf
[10] [10], two out of three students shortlisted for this year's President's Award for Civic Engagement and Volunteering are Access students. In the award's inaugural year 2011 the winner Karina Korotkevica was a final year access student. This year Abdul Ali Hassan a third year Access student won the Barnardos **Helping Hands Young Volunteer award**, a special award that recognises the contribution that a young person is making in the community

Students Registered with the Disability Office

These statistics are taken from the DLSS records which are reports run in the actual year.

Student Type	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Undergraduates	224	297	329
Postgraduates	54	57	51
Oscail	19	17	15
Ryan Academy	0	2	2
Total	**297**	**373**	**397**

Since 2009 there has been a particular increase in the number of students presenting with specific learning difficulties. Almost 50% of students registered in 2011/2012 come within this category this is up from 46% in 2009/2010. At the same time the number of students with a physical/mobility, blind/visually impaired or deaf cohort has remained the same in number 61 which in overall terms means a percentage reduction from 20% to 15%.

Disability	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Blind	4	1	3
Vision Impairment	14	6	12
Deaf	4	4	5
Hard of Hearing	13	16	13
Specific Learning Difficulty	139	192	197
ADD/ADHD	11	9	11
Asperger's	5	11	18
Physical/Mobility Difficulty	26	35	28
Neurological	9	11	12
Mental Health Difficulty	23	32	37
Significant Ongoing Illness	49	56	61
Total	**299**	**373**	**397**

From the available information it would appear that no one Faculty is of more interest to this cohort of students. The increase in numbers is also reflected in each of the Faculties.

Faculty	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Engineering & Computing	49	67	71
Science & Health	80	106	128
Business	75*	92*	85*
Humanities	74	84	97
Oscail	19	17	15
Ryan Academy	0	2	2

- Some contain joint programmes with SALIS

DLSS Student Testimonials

As a first year student, you have many challenges. As a first year student with a disability, you have even more challenges but the DLSS helps you overcome those challenges. They are concerned for you welfare and respond quickly to any issues that arise. It is very easy to get on with life at DCU knowing that the DLSS is there." You can quote me on that! ;)

(undergraduate)

"College can be a daunting experience, especially if you have a disability. The DCU Disability Service was always there if I needed them, from technical assistance or just a place to go for support. The staff are excellent and helped to make my college experience enjoyable. Sometimes its just nice to have someone who understands, they made me feel comfortable, at ease, and supported, without being intrusive."
(postgraduate)

Without the support of DCU Disabilities Service I as a mature student would have not being able to achieve the results as I did. The services provided me with the opportunity to be on the same level playing field of all other students in my year.
(mature student)

The DCU Disability and Learning Support Service has offered me so much support over the last three years. From special software to help me with my learning difficulty to extra time in my exams. Their support was great in the beginning of my time in DCU to help me settle in and has continued to my final year".

(undergraduate)

If the country's motto is going to be "Is feider linn"; then mine is going to be "Is feider liom" changing from DISability to disABILITY.

(undergraduate)

As a dyslexic postgraduate student, new to DCU, I found the Disability and Learning Support Service to be invaluable. The staff are friendly, approachable and will go out of their way to accommodate the needs of students. They played a huge role in my success. I can't thank them enough.

(postgraduate)

I am a mature student . This is my second year at the college and I am proud to say how helpful and supportive the Disability & Learning Support Service section of DCU has been. Through one to one sessions and using the provided IT support my dyslexia has not materialised into the challenging hurdle that I initially thought it may. This in turn is providing the opportunity for to reach my potential.

*(mature student)*

Intergenerational Learning Programme

This project aims to bring together third level students and older learners in a third level learning environment so as to exchange knowledge and learn from each other. A major learning outcome is to enable the older learners to participate in the knowledge society through acquiring computer skills necessary to access the internet and use in their daily lives. This offers a unique opportunity for both the DCU students and the older learners to adopt the simultaneous role of both tutor and learner and in the process it opens a variety of learning opportunities at third level for both groups of learners to access a diversity of learning opportunities from experiential lived experience and academic learning.

Diversity Overview

From a small sample of participants who attended from October to December 2011 the following results were found:

There was a near even split between female and male with the majority of participants in the 65 to 74 age bracket

Data Breakdown[11]
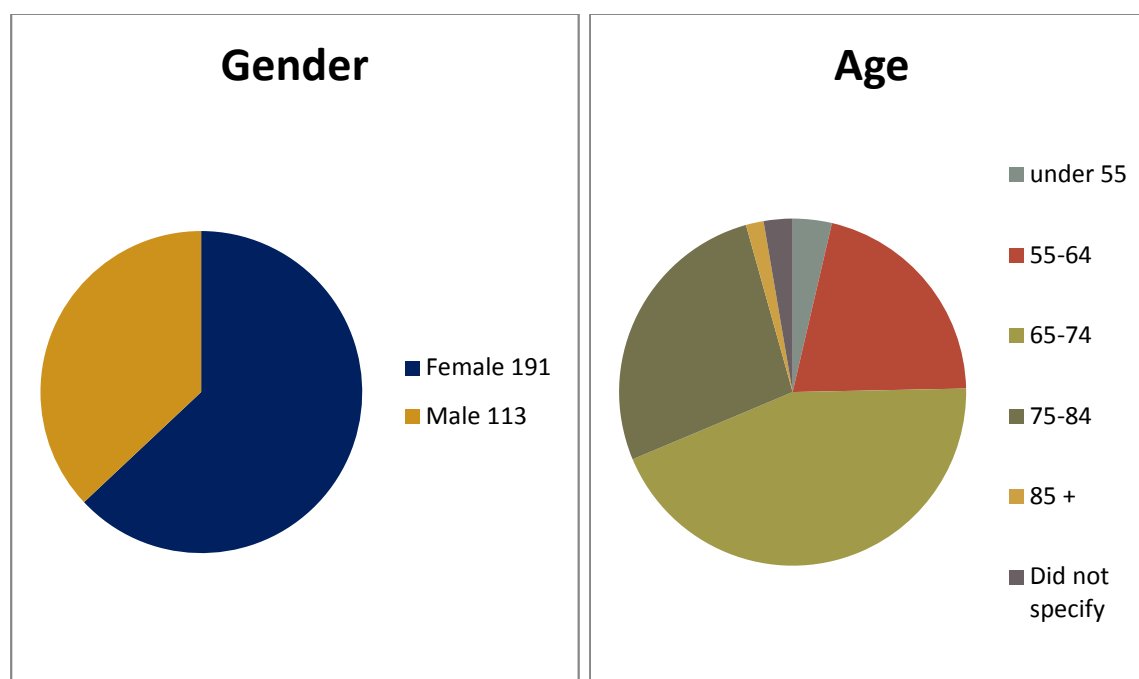
The most popular topics:

---

[11] 300 participants

- Browsing the Internet,
- Communication,
- email/facebook etc.
- Booking holidays

A common theme running through participant comments was the relaxed and friendly atmosphere in which the classes were conducted. All participants very much appreciated the DCU students involvement. Many people commented that they had tried to learn with the help of family members but lack of patience and understanding on the side of the 'teacher' meant that they had learned very little.

Participants who had attended computer classes elsewhere felt that the one on one engagement with volunteer students enhanced the learning experience considerably. Many people commented that they loved the idea of attending a course in a University environment.

Each participant received a total of six hours tuition and this limitation provided the only negative comment, in that most people felt six hours was not enough and that they would love to continue their learning through follow up courses.

For this particular phase of the Intergenerational Learning Programme which was funded by the Dept. of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, a total of 400 people signed up for the course. From October to April 2012 there were approximately 250 volunteers each of whom volunteered for 3 two hour sessions. A small percentage of them stayed with the programme throughout the two semesters.

The main disciplines involved were; Business, Psychology, Media and Communications-Marketing. One of the factors which led students to volunteer was that in some cases they required volunteering hours for their particular module. There was also an increase in the number of Masters student participants.

Appendix 1

Education Committee – January 2012

At its meeting of 1 July 2008, the University's Executive agreed to establish an Education Committee with senior-level representation which would be responsible for the shaping of University strategy in relation to academic affairs.

Academic Council – 2011/12

As specified in the Universities Act, 1997, Academic Council shall, subject to the financial constraints determined by the Governing Authority and to review by that authority, control the academic affairs of the University, including the curriculum of, and instruction and education provided by, the University.

The membership of the Academic Council is normally 131 but due to a vacancy that existed in 2011 the actual number for this period was 130. The gender breakdown for 2011/12 was 83 male and 47 female.

University Standards Committee – January 2012

The University Standards Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Council with responsibility for development, maintenance and review of University academic regulations and guidelines. The USC delegates discussion of matters pertaining to graduate research
to the Graduate Studies Board.

The remit of the USC includes oversight of the development and operation of University regulations and guidelines in relation to academic affairs, including being directly responsible for University-level regulatory issues, such as exam regulations and derogations to Marks and Standards.

Graduate Studies Board – November 2011

Academic Council, at its meeting of 13 June 2007, approved the creation of the University's Graduate Studies Board. The GSB's remit is to develop guidelines and good practice in the structure and delivery of postgraduate research at Masters and Doctoral level. Good practice in the structure and delivery of taught doctoral programmes falls within this remit.
The GSB will oversee and enhance postgraduate research studies and the postgraduate research student experience across the University, and will link with the Office of the Vice-President for Research and the Office of the Vice-President for Learning Innovation/Registrar in this regard

Governing Authority – May 2012

The Governing Authority is responsible for managing the affairs of the University; and is the body which ultimately approves all university policies and procedures including the Strategic Plan. The GA has 27 members including elected members, ex-officio members, student members and in attendance members.