





Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Shared Success	2
3.0	Student Success	10
4.0	Transformational Ideas	16
5.0	Inspiring Change	21

Cork University Business School

Cork University Business School is committed to providing a dynamic and supportive learning and research environment, which recognises the diverse backgrounds and interests of both students and staff.

Cork University Business School

University College Cork,
Ireland,
T12 K8AF

P: 021 490 3880

E: business-school@ucc.ie

W: cubsucc.com



Dean's Welcome

We need responsible leaders – people not only with vision but who also possess the knowledge, motivation and skills required to deliver a more inclusive and sustainable world for all.

Cork University Business School aspires to advance our vision to **shape leaders for a sustainable future**, through our commitment to research that offers value to society and progressive programmes that combined will help shape the leaders that the world requires. As such our focus explicitly aligns with the ambitious [UCC Strategy](#) and its research prioritisation focus as exemplified under [UCC Futures](#).

Our strategic research agenda in CUBS is directly aligned with UCC Futures' aim to produce impactful research that will support our society to thrive and to secure a sustainable future for all.

The progress reported here evidences our collective efforts in embedding the principles of responsible leadership and sustainability which are increasingly at the heart of all that we do in our research, programmes and operations.

As leaders in education and research, we are fully committed to the continuous process of change and development that ensures excellence; nurturing graduates that can adapt to changing environments and deliver organisational and societal change.

The CUBS Annual Report is an opportunity to revisit the achievements of the previous year and reinforce our ambition to be known as a globally renowned school in how we shape leaders to deliver a more sustainable future for all.

It is my great honour to serve as Interim Dean of Ireland's largest business school, with over 4,000 students, during this time of change.

While this annual report celebrates the achievements of our faculty, staff and students over the last year, we hope you will join us in looking ahead as we build collaborative new relationships that will strengthen us all. I encourage you to reach out to us to discuss avenues for mutual support and cooperation to advance our vision ■

Professor Anthony McDonnell
Cork University Business School,
Interim Dean



Professor Anthony McDonnell
CUBS Interim Dean

“
Our strategic research agenda in CUBS is directly aligned with UCC Futures' aim to produce impactful research that will support our society to thrive and to secure a sustainable future for all.
”

2.0 Shared Success

These successes reflect the shared journey and efforts of CUBS staff and students, working together to create opportunities and in recognition of the combined work of everyone at CUBS.

2.1 | A tribute to Professor Thia Hennessy, Dean of CUBS 2018-2023

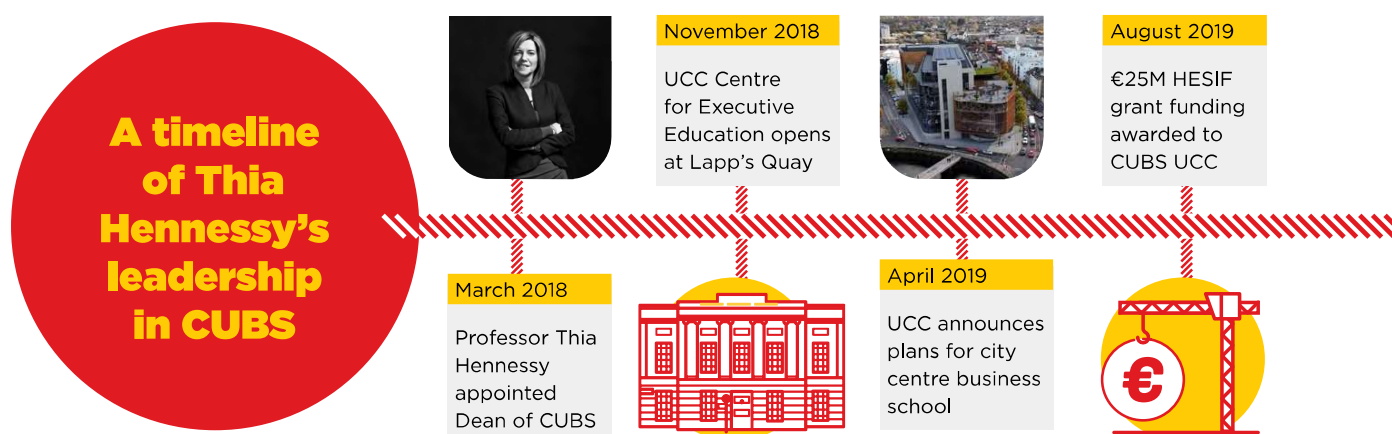
The ambition in CUBS to become a triple-accredited Business School at University College Cork is within sight. Nearly a decade in the making, the journey began with the launch of Cork University Business School (CUBS) in 2015.

Now reaching turning point with the recruitment of new school leadership and initiation of the EQUIS accreditation process, we review highlights of Professor Thia Hennessy's tenure as Dean of CUBS from 2018-2023.

Over the past 6 years, Professor Hennessy has overseen one of the most significant accreditation and change management programmes of work in University College Cork to date.

Her appointment came at an exciting time for everyone associated with the school, which brought together 5 departments in UCC. With this, CUBS became the largest provider of business education at undergraduate level in Ireland and the second largest at postgraduate level. Working in partnership with UCC's Irish Management Institute (IMI), IMI/CUBS is also the premier executive education provider in Ireland, ranked 60th worldwide according to the FT rankings.

Throughout this period the school achieved rapid growth in student numbers and income, now with 4,000 students enrolled annually. Already known for its excellence in research, CUBS also accounts for 50% of all non-EU postgraduate students in UCC. In her first major



project as Dean, Thia oversaw the re- development of the former Cork Savings Bank on Lapps Quay, which opened in late 2018 as the UCC Centre for Executive Education in the heart of Cork's business district. Development of the school and a new focus on philanthropy have been cornerstones of Thia's tenure.

In April 2019, UCC announced plans for city centre business school building and shortly thereafter an unnamed benefactor to the school made a generous €1 million donation to CUBS. This came in the form of an unrestricted gift, which enabled the Dean to allocate funding to crucial projects that enhanced the student experience, and supporting entrepreneurship and learning. The first of several major industry partnerships was announced in 2021, putting in place a 5-year partnership with KPMG for the business school.

During Thia's term she worked with employers such as Carbery, Ornua, FDC Group, Glanbia, and Teagasc to develop new scholarship programmes for students, reflecting her deep roots in our indigenous food industry. The CUBS External Advisory board also added leaders from Glanbia, Kerry Group and Musgraves, strengthening our integration with local and international business alike.

Industry partners have engaged with CUBS across flagship events, excellence in research, placement programmes and more. This has seen CUBS launch a series of multi-year partnerships with prominent corporate sponsors.

During 2021 Thia worked with KPMG to develop an important partnership deal, which reinforces their commitment to excellence in business education in Ireland. Later that year saw the UCC CUBS Executive MBA programme awarded AMBA accreditation, the first of CUBS's international accreditations achieved during Thia's deanship.

A key milestone has been the close partnership with Colin Hunt, CEO of AIB, which pledged €1.25 million to CUBS over five years to establish the AIB Professor of Sustainable Business. Exemplifying the Business School's strategy, this strengthens a shared objective of creating a sustainability culture in UCC that is student-led, research-informed, and practice-focused. A high point was undoubtedly announcing when CUBS obtained AACSB accreditation in April 2022, after more than 5 years of hard work by all involved.

“This commitment to excellence has seen CUBS faculty triple the number of high-impact publications achieved since 2017 and grow our research community...”



The faculty and professional staff in CUBS have grown considerably during this time, with Professor Hennessy leading 15 senior faculty hires, and a further 10 posts in the area of sustainability through the UCC Futures programme. In addition, the school has implemented a new professional staff structure and supported 14+ staff promotions as part of this.

This commitment to excellence has seen CUBS faculty triple the number of high-impact publications achieved since 2017 and grow our research community by increasing the number of PhD students by 16% alongside senior appointments that significantly internationalise the faculty.

News of the accreditation came quickly after UCC appointed RKD Architects to design and construct a new building for the delivery of world class business education.

Plans for development of the new building have proceeded steadily, with planning permission now in place to develop our 15,675m² multi-storey academic building at Copley Street in the city centre. It is envisioned that major CUBS events established by Professor Hennessy, such as the Food & Beverage Finance Summit and the Sustainable Aviation Conference, will bring industry leaders not just to UCC, but to our business school in the heart of Cork City.

The pace of change at CUBS only accelerated in 2023 as the European Investment Bank (EIB) confirmed that it will provide EUR 50 million for development of the CUBS building. The building has also received backing from the State to the order of €25 million in the form of a capital grant.

In her final announcement as Dean, Thia met with partners in Deloitte to launch a new multi-year agreement which renews their longstanding connection with UCC. This provides funding and professional expertise to CUBS educational programmes and is one of number of opportunities under discussion.

Commenting Professor Thia Hennessy, Dean of CUBS stated, “It has been the greatest honour and privilege of my career to date to lead CUBS through this extraordinary period of development. Thanks to the hard-work, dedication and tremendous collegiality of the entire team across CUBS, we have made significant progress and have many successes to celebrate. From my position now as Head of College of Business and Law in UCC, I look forward to supporting CUBS as we begin to realise the benefits of developing a world class business school in Cork, and focus on enabling us to jointly create a sustainable future.”

Our ambitions only start with achieving triple accreditation – in CUBS we want to be known as a globally renowned school in how we shape leaders to deliver a more sustainable future for all. We will continue to deliver the essential talent pipeline to support economic growth in our region and beyond.

As more and more opportunities for philanthropic and corporate sponsorship emerge in the coming years, we are proud to continue to share our story, which has been significantly enhanced by the leadership of Professor Thia Hennessy as the second Dean of Cork University Business School ■

“
It has been the greatest honour and privilege of my career to date to lead CUBS through this extraordinary period of development...
”



Professor Thia Hennessy
Dean of CUBS 2018-2023

2.2 | Planning and Funding Advances for New Cork University Business School

Major progress has been achieved over the past twelve months in the University College Cork (UCC) development of a new building for Cork University Business School (CUBS). This year has seen planning permission secured for the development of a world class business school in the centre of Cork City.

Shortly thereafter, the European Investment Bank (EIB) confirmed it will provide a €50 million loan to UCC in support of the development of the new building.

Commenting Professor John O'Halloran President of UCC, expressed gratitude for the EIB's support, saying, "We are developing a stunning addition to Cork City. Business schools act as dynamic hubs of learning, innovation and entrepreneurship in cities and we are excited to develop a new home for our future business students. We have a track record of working with the EIB and developing a global business school for Cork will lead to lasting benefits for our city, region and nation."

"The EIB is delighted to support Cork University Business School's pursuit of academic and business excellence and support new investment to provide students and staff with a world-class facility that fosters collaboration, creativity, and knowledge exchange," said Ricardo Mourinho Félix, European Investment Bank Vice-President.



“
This investment in Cork University Business School will greatly benefit not only the students and staff but also the broader economy...
 ”



Located in Cork City centre, UCC's CUBS building is designed by a team led by RKD architects.

UCC sees the new CUBS building as a contribution to a 'higher education quarter', which will complement the existing cluster of education buildings in this part of Cork city.

The development will provide an economic boost to the area by bringing over 4,500 students and 225 staff into the city centre every day. It is anticipated that construction of the new building will commence in late 2024.

Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris TD, highlighted the significance of this investment for the education sector in Ireland, stating, "The EIB's continued support for Irish universities is instrumental in driving educational excellence and providing students with world-class learning environments. This investment in Cork University Business School will greatly benefit not only the students and staff but also the broader economy as it contributes to producing highly skilled graduates and fostering entrepreneurship."

In addition to the EIB loan announced today, the €115 million CUBS Development Project will be financed via exchequer support and a €25 million Higher Education Strategic Infrastructure Fund (HESIF) award.

The Cork University Foundation will spearhead a philanthropy campaign to raise the remaining funds.

For further information please contact foundation@ucc.ie ■

2.3 | Showcasing our Professional Staff

Proud Partners in Business Education

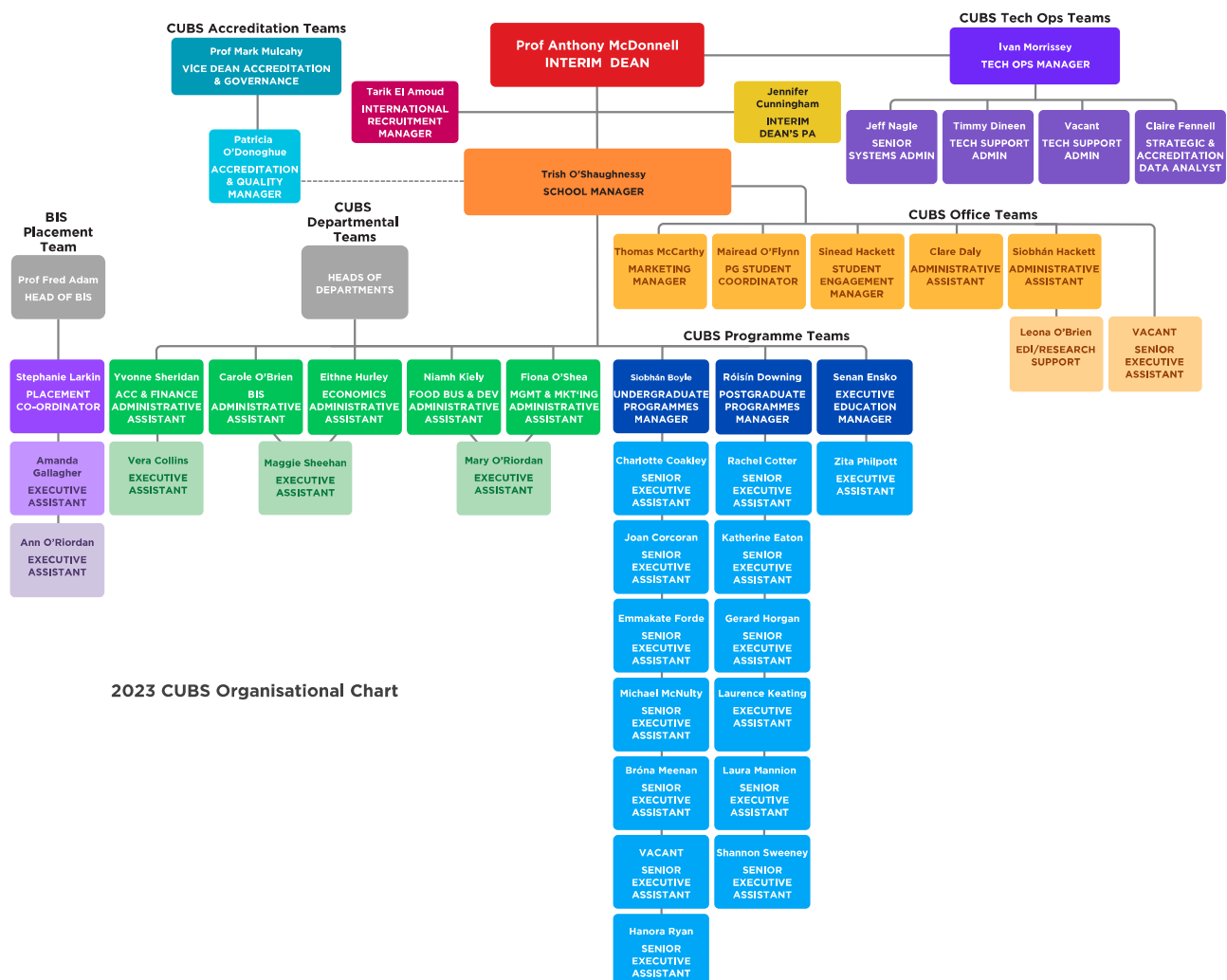
Across the Business School, academic and research faculty work in partnership with our professional services staff in CUBS.

The professional structure was established in 2021 and fully reviewed in 2023 following a complete and successful

implementation. The establishment of this structure has led to many exciting new positions within the school as well as 14 promotional opportunities and significant investment in the development of our staff. Two key areas that have become increasingly important to the development of the business school and CUBS strategy have

been internationalisation and external industry engagement such as our extensive placement programmes.

In this section we profile the career development and personal journeys of two of our professional staff demonstrating the depth and breadth of our student engagement ■



2023 CUBS Organisational Chart

Tarik El Amoud, International Recruitment Manager

Since 2017, I have been leading CUBS' international student recruitment agenda by building partnership in Nigeri, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Turkey, China, and Mexico.

This has led to significant growth in international student numbers at CUBS, from 44 in 2016 to 488 in 2023.

My journey to CUBS is an interesting one, as I started out as a non-EU student in Europe myself. Originally from Morocco, I completed the equivalent of the Leaving Certificate in French and Arabic with English. Then at 18, I moved to Granada, Spain, where I earned my primary qualification in business.

Upon graduation I was hired by a major multinational and offered a financial services job in Cork. Over the course of a decade, I worked my way up to managing a multinational team and a loan book worth \$55+ million. I also completed a part-time degree in Computing and IT with the Open University during this time.

Following this, I moved to international business development. Working with Irish SMEs enabled me to leverage my skill for building meaningful partnerships with my multilingual abilities. I negotiated multimillion euro contracts with the oil & gas sector, brought groups from Libya and Kuwait to Cork for specialised training, and gained procurement experience in China, Taiwan and Malaysia with the pharmaceutical sector.

In my role CUBS, I now integrate the wide range of experiences and skills developed throughout my career to date. Lifelong learning is important to me, and during Covid I completed the UCC Postgraduate Diploma in Innovation through Design Thinking.

It is this passion for the transformative power of education, as well as a wide range of multicultural competencies, that help me to convince students from all over the world to come to study in CUBS.

International Student Journey

One student's journey that I am particularly proud to be part of is that of Chike, a man I first met at a recruitment fair in Lagos, Nigeria in 2018.

Chike attended the fair with his parents looking for options for postgraduate study abroad. His parents were initially reluctant to send Chike to Ireland given that they knew relatively little about the country.

Eventually, I convinced Chike that CUBS would be the best option for him and he ultimately graduated with an MSc in Innovation, Commercialisation and Entrepreneurship in 2019. Chike moved to Dublin after graduation where he now works as a senior analyst for Bank of America and lives with his wife and child.

Last summer, while visiting their son in Dublin, Chike's parents travelled to UCC specifically to meet me and thank me for convincing them that CUBS was the right choice for their son. In the space of such a short few years, they shared how



**Tarik El Amoud,
International Recruitment
Manager**

“Building partnerships... has led to significant growth in international student numbers at CUBS, from 44 in 2016 to 488 in 2023.”

they witnessed their son build both a career and a life for himself in Ireland that stemmed from just one fateful conversation with me at a fair in Lagos.

Chike is just one student whose journey has been impacted by meeting me – there are hundreds more from all around the world ■

Stephanie Larkin, BIS Placement Manager

I feel I know UCC from many angles as over the last 25 years I have been both a student and an employee, sometimes at the same time. I first came to UCC in 1992 to do a Masters in history having completed a BA in History and Politics at UCD.

Since then, I have been a full-time, part-time, night-time and online student in UCC. My first role was in the forerunner of the UCC Visitors Centre, the UCC Downtown Centre on the Grand Parade. It's aim was to link UCC and the city; we also created and published the UCC Campus Diary. Looking back now I see it was my first guidance role, advising those with an interest in studying in UCC.

I later moved into a financial role with the School of Education on main campus, then joined Business Information Systems in a similar capacity in 2014. The BIS placement programme was a key focus for the department; I applied and was successful in securing the programme coordinator role. Our team has since placed over 1,300 BIS students in organisations across Ireland, the UK, US and Europe, working with up to 60 companies annually.

The career theory of planned happenstance is a central feature of my career and how I work with BIS students as their placement manager. Unplanned and chance events play an important role in how our careers (and lives) unfold. I advise students on how to recognise and capitalise on these opportunities. Another career turning point occurred when I found myself in the classroom teaching 145 BIS

students, due to the unexpected leave of my manager. This proved to be the catalyst for a journey of learning and professional development, which is still ongoing. Facilitated by BIS, I have earned PG Diplomas in Teaching & Learning, and Adult Guidance Counselling. Now, I am contributing to research on how assessment and feedback practices support the development of engaged and agentic (career) learners.

Developing Student Supports

At the core of my work is listening to what students say they need to succeed and determining how we can support that. An example of this is how many students found it difficult to engage with people after the physical isolation imposed by Covid. Upon return from their student placements, this cohort of students reported they struggled to speak in online meeting environments and make an impact. This meant their voice and insights were being lost, which struck me as being so disempowering that it required a way to address it.

As students returned to classrooms, I offered an opportunity to experience embodied communication through a series of Performing Communication workshops developed in conjunction with the Department of Theatre and CIRTL in UCC.

Acknowledging that we all learn in different ways, we drew on the theory of multiple intelligences. The workshops were designed for students to explore and experience communication in a bodily kinaesthetic way and not just in a linguistic way. We used the metaphor of performance, bringing



**Stephanie Larkin,
BIS Placement Manager**

students into the theatre lab where we presented communication training. Using the guise of performance, the tools of the theatre could be applied to perform job roles, project the voice, and work with stage fright.

Feedback from the workshops has been very positive, with students commenting the exercises helped develop confidence and feel encouraged to step outside their comfort zone, speak louder and to new people ■

“
Our team has since placed over 1,300 BIS students in organisations across Ireland, the UK, US and Europe, working with up to 60 companies annually.
”



3. Student Success

Our students, our future leaders, are the focus of all our efforts and we are delighted that CUBS and UCC as a whole, are able to enable students through various financial and support mechanisms to achieve the most from their time with us.

1

3.1 | Experiencing University life



1 BSc Food Marketing and Entrepreneurship students participated in the Bord Bia Origin Green sustainability certification programme, L-R: Amy Cronin; Mark Cronin; Niall McWhinney; Eddie O'Mahony; Olan Gribbon

2 BComm students at the International Case Competition in Florida with faculty mentor, Dr Ed Shinnick

3 Postgrad students attend the CUBS Global Café

4 Musgraves Entrepreneurship Programme event

5 Executive MBA students on the MBA Study Trip to Brussels

STUDENT BLOG: HEAVENER INTERNATIONAL CASE COMPETITION IN FLORIDA

My name is Rose Goggin, I am a final year BComm student and recently represented CUBS in Florida at the Heavener International Case Competition with my teammates Ellen O'Brien, Ciara McKeon and Jennifer Hanafin. It was by far one of the best things I've got involved in during my four years in UCC.

We got to put our academic learnings to practice as we had to research, come up with solutions and create a presentation on our findings within short time frames. After the first three rounds we

topped our division and got to the finals, where we presented our final presentation for the final judging panel. We could not have done it without the support and guidance of our Coach, Professor Ed Shinnick, who spent the weeks leading up to the trip preparing and training us with practice cases.

We were delighted to place 4th out of 20th international teams. The standard was incredibly high and getting to the finals was an amazing end to the week. Time absolutely flew out there, we had socials and different activities on in between the cases, so it was a jam-packed week. I know I will always look back on this experience as a highlight of my years in UCC! ■



UCC CUBS EXECUTIVE MBA STUDENTS TAKE STUDY VISIT TO BRUSSELS

Students on the UCC CUBS Executive MBA commenced their final semester of their programme with a study visit to Brussels, beginning with a visit to the European Commission.

The second day saw students visit Health House which is a world class experience centre where students engaged in an immersive insight into the future of healthcare, and saw hands on how technology will have an impact on the future of our healthcare. A visit to Nike's innovation logistic training centre followed where students toured Nike's primary distribution centre in Europe and were given an insight into the construction of the building from a sustainability perspective.

The final day saw students visit students visit the KU Leuven Brussels Campus where they undertook a Corporate Sustainability case study on the Samsung Group with the group's Corporate Sustainability Lead.

The international study visit is an important element in the UCC CUBS Executive MBA experience - an opportunity for students to put into practice their programme learning; critically analysing management issues within an international context ■

MUSGRAVE EXPAND FOOD BUSINESS STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME AT CUBS UCC



Musgrave, Ireland's leading food retail, wholesale and foodservice company announces the return of its Food Business Student Entrepreneurship programme for 2023.

Now in its third year, the Musgrave Food Business Student Entrepreneurship programme works with Food Academy producers, giving students in the CUBS BSc Food Marketing and Entrepreneurship Degree the opportunity to gain direct practical experience of what it means to be an entrepreneur within the Irish food industry.

Dr. Alan Collins, Programme Co Director states: This initiative has greatly broadened how and what our students learn by giving them the exciting opportunity to work together in teams across all years of the degree to resolve the challenges that emergent entrepreneurs face. Interacting with the producers provides our students with a unique window into the world of entrepreneurship and the opportunity to apply what they are learning in class to solve real world challenges.

These have ranged from expanding food entrepreneurs' social media presence to build customer engagement and brand awareness, developing new markets and sales channels, to applying learnings from their Food and Nutritional Science modules in areas such as sensory analysis to establish preferred recipes, and packaging and labelling redesign to improve on shelf visibility.

To date, the programme has seen significant success with over 130 students taking part alongside 24 Irish food producers ■

“Interacting with the producers provides our students with a unique window into the world of entrepreneurship and the opportunity to apply what they are learning in class to solve real world challenges.”

3.2 | Scholars and Scholarships

Our students are recognised for their holistic achievements, in their coursework, in the exams and in their community work.

In partnership with local corporate organisations, CUBS is also proud to offer a number of scholarships to its most exceptional and promising students ■



- 1** Quercus Innovations and Entrepreneurship Scholarship recipient Alex Linehan with UCC President, Professor John O'Halloran
- 2** 2022-2023 winners of the CUBS Deans Scholar's List with the Dean of CUBS Professor Thia Hennessy and Head of College Professor Ursula Kilkelly
- 3** MSc Strategic Marketing and Practice Student of the Year Award winner Laura Healy presented by the Marketing Institute of Ireland
- 4** KPMG Scholarship prize winners at the CBL Awards and Prizes Ceremony
- 5** UCC CUBS Executive MBA Programme Directors celebrating with 2023 30% Club winner, Catherine Sheridan
- 6** BSc Food Marketing and Entrepreneurship programme participants on the Quad following the Aldi Food Entrepreneurship Challenge

3.3 | Leaders of Tomorrow



CUBS Leaders of Tomorrow recognises achievement beyond academic grades, allowing students to showcase their many talents, capabilities, and resulting impacts across several categories. Open to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, the 2022/23 recipients were celebrated at a ceremony at the Aula Maxima in UCC where they were presented with their awards by the previous Dean of Cork University Business School, Professor Thia Hennessy.

Outstanding Achievement Award Winners
shortlisted nominees



Neasa O Sullivan (BSc Finance4): won the **Global Citizen** category helping to create successful social enterprises that delivered positive impacts for both the environment and society, representing Ireland at the 2022 Enactus World Cup.



Sam Davies (BComm International French4): won the **Exceptional Journey** award for overcoming a sudden loss of vision. Sam empowered himself through his disability to achieve great experiences and educate people on the topic of accessibility



Margaret Lynch (MSc Human Resource Management): won the **Innovation & Entrepreneurship** category for managing nursing leadership of a 30-bed modular build in the Mercy University Hospital (MUH) to meet commitments for urgent cancer procedures.



Rose Goggin (BComm4): won the **Student's Choice**. As chairperson of UCC's Commerce Society, she supported the work of all committee members, organising the 1st BComm co-curricular event raising over €1600 for our local charity SHARE.



Alison McKeown (MSc Human Resource Management): won the **Learning Transformation** category for working with Bishopstown Scouts, incorporating the children using a 'Court of Honour' system to redevelop long-term skill development strategies and planning.



Emma Coffey (BComm4, Quercus Scholar): won the **Deans' Leadership** award for her work on the CUBS Conference, and her inclusion in the 2022 Sunday Independents 30 under 30 list as CEO/Founder at FinalBend, and co-founder at UGC.ie ■

4. Transformational Ideas

UCC Futures is an ambitious programme of research prioritisation across ten indicative areas of strategic importance.

In Cork University Business School, our internationally acclaimed researchers collaborate on projects that are global in scope and seek solutions to pressing societal challenges. Already known for our mission to shape leaders to better deliver a more sustainable future for all, our faculty have developed significant expertise in sustainability related areas.

As part of UCC Futures, over the past 12 months CUBS has successfully recruited 10 new hires working in the area of sustainability. We're pleased to welcome these excellent academics into the business school, adding to our strength in this area of interdisciplinary research ■

4.1 | CUBS Sustainability Cluster

Welcoming Our New Faculty

Dr Valeria Andreoni joined CUBS in 2023, here she answers our questions about starting in UCC. Her role as AIB Professor of Sustainable Business in CUBS is made possible thanks to AIB's support and is the first of its kind in Ireland, reflecting the Bank's commitment to fostering sustainable business practices and empowering the next generation of sustainable business leaders.

How have you found your welcome to UCC, as you engage with sustainable business in Ireland for the first time?

It's been a great transition so far, I have felt really welcomed into the research community in CUBS and UCC.

There is a lot of support available and a great, friendly atmosphere. Having previously worked in UK, I am pleased to find the teaching system is very similar. I am also really appreciating the calibre of students in UCC and the involvement of our Erasmus and Chinese students.

This will come as no surprise – over my first few months I've gone for a lot of coffees. Already I can tell that it will be quite easy to find future collaborators. I'm so interdisciplinary in my work that I am finding a lot of interest with

the faculty in UCC working in these areas.

Your research explores a wide range of urgent topics in sustainability, from emissions modelling to the circular economy, SDGs, and energy economics. What has guided your research interests to date?

This began for me many years ago, when I was a teenager and took a strong interest in sustainability. When I started in ecological economics, it was the first degree programme of its kind at the University of Pisa and so I became one of the earliest graduates in Italy to work in this field. It has been very rewarding to see the policy impact from my research work with the EU commission, where I started out my career. Some of my work is more controversial than others, particularly degrowth theory; as a researcher my job is to study it all.



Dr Valeria Andreoni

How are you approaching your appointment to the role as UCC Professor of Sustainable Business?

The priorities for me are very clearly excellence in research and teaching – this is a powerful opportunity to continue my interdisciplinary work in these areas. In terms of teaching, I'm really interested in how we can embed sustainability across the university in the design of the curriculum as this will have the biggest long-term impact on society.

I think that education has a very important role to play in the sustainability transition. One of the main ways is to allow students



L– R: Professor Thia Hennessey, Dr Colin Hunt, Professor John O'Halloran and Professor Valeria Andreoni

to experience knowledge and expertise across disciplines. Even within the business school, it's interesting to look at this in the economic department and other areas such as accounting and finance. I can see we are moving more towards developing a sustainability-based curriculum,

and interdisciplinary work will be an important part of this.

One area I am really excited about is the new MSc International Sustainable Business, which is being developed here in CUBS. Next year I will be teaching the Environmental Economics and Sustainability

Policy module in our new masters programme focused on sustainable business.

Young people are redefining what sustainability actually means and we will see them co-creating the curriculum and guiding the discussion about sustainability ■

4.2 | CUBS joins UN Principles for Responsible Management Education

CUBS joined PRME Global www.unprme.org and initiated sustainability reporting during the 2022-23 Academic year. PRME's mission is to transform management education and develop the responsible decision-makers of tomorrow to advance sustainable development by aligning academic institutions with the work of the UN Global Compact.

The following are some of the achievements of CUBS as part of the PRME Network as Co-Leads of the All-Ireland local network of business schools with Queens University:

- A Guest Industry Speaker Series
- New shared portal for Industry Engagement
- All-Ireland Student Competitions
- CIRTIL-funded workshop series on Integrating Sustainability into Courses

PRME is a key initiative in both helping us and also recognising the work in furthering our ambition of embedding the principles of responsible leadership and sustainability increasingly at the heart of every activity and research project undertaken across Cork University Business School ■

Research Highlights from the 2022/23 Academic Year

OCTOBER 22

Eimear McGeown wins Best Paper in Entrepreneurial Finance for the second year in a row at the 2022 Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship Awards



NOVEMBER 22

Marketing Institute of Ireland hosts the Future of Marketing event at CUBS, with a keynote address by Dr Dave Alton



DECEMBER 22

CUBS faculty win big at CBL researcher awards, with 4 researchers and 1 research centre recognised

JANUARY 23

Professor Tom Garavan ranked first amongst Business and Management scholars in Ireland for 2023 by Research.com.



FEBRUARY 23

Dr Olive McCarthy and Dr Bridget Carroll address Joint Oireachtas Committee on Enterprise, Trade and Employment on the General Scheme of the Co-operative Societies Bill, 2022



MARCH 23

Healthy Workplace Ireland: A survey of Mental Health & Well-being Promotion in Irish Firms report launched by Dr Jane Bourke and Niamh Lenihan



MAY 23

Offshore renewable energy research report on Ireland, UK and Europe launched by EU SELKIE Project members Dr Mari O'Connor, Dr Justin Doran and Dr Frank Crowley



MAY 23

CUBS host the second annual Food and Beverage Finance Summit with 160+ attendees, sponsored by Goodbody, AIB, UCC, KPMG and A&L Goodbody



JUNE 23

Annual CUBS Postgraduate Research Symposium features PhD student research across a wide range of business disciplines.



AUGUST 23

More than 130 international experts convene in Cork for the 14th European Sport Economics Association Conference hosted by the Centre for Sports Economics and Law



4.3 | Faculty in the Media



A landmark study of 1,500 Irish employers reveals only one in five firms have a dedicated mental health budget

Jane Bourke and Niamh Lenihan, UCC

The research report was launched Dr Jane Bourke and Dr Niamh Lenihan at a prestigious industry event and panel discussion in UCC, and featured across National Media including: RTÉ Brainstorm, The Irish Examiner, Women Mean Business, and Morning Ireland.

The costs of poor employee mental health and well-being can be substantial both for employers and their employees. Yet the Healthy Workplace Ireland report reveals that Irish employers are more likely to implement mental health and well-being initiatives that do not involve a financial outlay.

Our landmark study provides the first comprehensive profile of mental health and well-being in Irish workplaces post-Covid. 1,501 Irish employers took part in the Workplace Mental Health

& Well-being in Ireland survey between September and December 2022. Telephone interviews were conducted with private sector employers with 10 or more employees, across all sectors and regions in Ireland.

The survey provides data on absenteeism for physical and mental ill-health reasons, presenteeism, and their impact on business performance, as well as differences in how employers are responding to these challenges. As the Healthy Workplace Ireland

report is part of a larger study, we benchmark workplace mental health promotion in Irish firms with a similar group of firms in England.

The study reveals that most employers in Ireland recognise their responsibility in supporting employee mental health, however, only one in five firms have a dedicated mental health budget. This suggests a disparity in employers' recognition of their responsibilities to and investment in workplace mental health and well-being.

For the first time, our study highlights the mental health and wellbeing supports provided in Irish workplaces. One in three employers has a mental health and well-being lead at senior or board level. Just over one in five firms have a mental health plan, and only one in 10 firms have employee mental health champions.

The proportions vary somewhat between sectors, but more significant differences are evident between larger and smaller firms – smaller firms are much less likely to be providing support for employee mental health and well-being than larger firms.

When we compare Irish workplaces with those in England, we find that firms in Ireland are less likely to support workplace health promotion than in England.

The OECD refers to the global increase in mental ill-health as a hidden pandemic, and our study shows that one in five Irish firms has experienced mental health-related issues in the past year and that mental health-related absenteeism is on the rise.

In our study, employers highlight the adverse impacts of absenteeism on business operations and performance. Presenteeism, working when ill, is also of concern, and we find presenteeism is higher in Irish businesses compared to in England, a pattern which is consistent across sectors and firm size bands. Irish employers report that the most common reason for presenteeism is the need to meet deadlines or client demands.

The COVID-19 pandemic transformed many working practices, particularly in relation to remote working. Our study finds that the number of Irish employers with employees working from home has increased three-fold since the COVID-19 pandemic, with almost one in three firms with employees

that WFH. Larger firms and those in the business services are more likely to have employees who WFH. The recent Work-Life Balance Bill allows all workers the right to request remote working.

Depending on the nature of the business, some businesses will lend themselves easily to hybrid or blended models with a combination of remote and onsite work practices.

While employers can't give their employees a work-life balance, they play an important role in supporting and encouraging employees to distinguish between work and leisure time when working remotely. In this study, employers report positives from remote or hybrid work for employees and employers alike, with respect to employee happiness and productivity.

From RTÉ Radio 1's Morning Ireland, UCC's Dr Jane Bourke on the impact of the pandemic on mental health of workers in Ireland <https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/clips/22231195/>

This report is a first step to understanding workplace mental health and wellness promotion in Irish workplaces. Although Irish employers generally recognise their responsibilities in this area, investment in and implementation of workplace mental health and well-being supports lag behind. It may be that the business case for investing in mental health and well-being is unclear to Irish businesses.

Next steps in this study involve investigating the link between employee mental health and well-being and productivity outcomes. We wish to understand the causal processes by which employers can support better mental health and well-being and at the same time boost productivity ■

18%

of Irish employers report employee absenteeism due to mental health reasons; this figure rises to 40% for firms with 50+ employees

53%

of these employers report that mental health absenteeism is increasing

64%

of employers report that absenteeism adversely impacts business performance

26%

Mental health sickness absence is higher in English firms at 26 per cent

27%

Presenteeism – i.e., working while unwell – is reported by 27 per cent of Irish employers.

21%

of English employers experience presenteeism

39%

of Irish employers report the need to meet deadlines or clients demand as a reason for presenteeism

5. Inspiring Change



Pictured: Dr Ronan Carbery UCC MBA Director, Amy White Janssen MBA Student of Year 2021 / 2022, Ronan Murray EY Cork, Professor John O'Halloran UCC President, Christopher Thomas Pfizer MBA Student of Year 2019 / 2020, Prof Michelle Carr UCC MBA Director.

5.1 | MBA Graduates of the Year

Amy White and Chris Thomas have been announced as EY UCC Executive MBA Graduates of the Year. The awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of graduates who have excelled in leadership development education.

Amy White is the Director, Network Strategy with the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson. The award recognises her academic achievements finishing top of the Executive MBA graduating class at Cork University Business School (CUBS) in 2021 – 2022 programme.

Chris Thomas is the Director of the Process Development Centre in Pfizer. He received the EY UCC award for finishing top of the 2019-20 Executive MBA graduating class at UCC, with his award ceremony delayed due to Covid restrictions.

Praising Amy and Chris's achievements, Ronan Murray, M&A Strategy and Transactions Partner, EY Ireland, said: "EY is honoured to be associated with these awards which recognise excellence in business leadership education. As both a past UCC Executive MBA graduate and recipient of this award, I'm particularly pleased to be presenting the award for outstanding contribution today."

UCC President Professor John O' Halloran, who hosted the award ceremony, paid tribute to EY's commitment to supporting business learning, in particular their

support for the UCC Executive MBA programme. Professor Michelle Carr and Dr Ronan Carbery, Directors of the Executive MBA at UCC, congratulated Amy and Chris for their academic achievements and their overall contributions across the two years of their programme.

Accepting her award, Amy White said: "I am proud to receive this award but in doing so must thank my fellow course participants for creating a growth environment driving valuable learning through some excellent in class discussions while not forgetting to have some fun. This was facilitated by top class lecturers from across the academic and business worlds and I especially thank all of you for your guidance and feedback throughout the two years. I am very grateful to Janssen and the Ringaskiddy site leadership team for their support and the biotherapeutics development team who leaned in to ensure we delivered core business. Finally, a huge thank you to my family for their never wavering encouragement."

Accepting his award, Chris Thomas said: "I am delighted to receive this award and would like to thank UCC, the MBA lecturers and my fellow course participants for their tremendous support and creating a truly collaborative environment which has fostered invaluable learnings applicable to my work in Pfizer. I am very grateful to Pfizer for investing in me and giving me this opportunity, and I want to say a huge thank you to my wife and family for their support and encouragement." ■

5.2 | A selection of updates from our entrepreneurial alumni

- Emma Coffey and Marion Cantillon were listed in the [Sunday Independent '30 under 30'](#) Emma was listed for her company [Final Bend](#) and Marion was listed for her company [Pitseal](#).
- Also huge congratulations to [Marion Cantillon](#), an alumna of IGNITE for winning the [Irish Student Entrepreneurship Forum \(ISEF\)](#) award! Marion is the founder of Pitseal.
- BSc Finance alumna Sharon Cunningham start up lands [€35M funding](#) ■



5.3 | Stay In Touch

Our school social media channels, on LinkedIn, Instagram and Tik Tok nurture a growing sense of community among CUBS Alumni and UCC Business alumni. In particular, our LinkedIn community continues to grow apace and we are so excited to see your updates and announcements come through. CUBS students continue to succeed on a national and global setting throughout 2023 ■



Cork University Business School

University College Cork,
Ireland,
T12 K8AF

P: 021 490 3880

E: business-school@ucc.ie

W: cubsucc.com

