

Your go-to guide to Open days

What should you know about our third-level colleges? What is life on campus like? And what can you find out at open days?



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UCD

When: November 8th, 10am-4pm
Life on campus: Ireland's largest university, with more than 30,000 students, UCD has in recent years opened a new student centre, which includes a 50m swimming pool, a 3D cinema, two gyms and extensive student facilities. There are more than 150 clubs and societies to choose from. UCD was the first college to allow students to choose study areas outside their chosen discipline. It has partnerships with leading universities from around the globe. There are more than 6,000 international students at UCD, while more than a fifth of the student population study in partner universities across Europe, North and South America, Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, New Zealand and Singapore. The 135-hectare Belfield campus can be daunting; there's no really a unifying aesthetic and it's a bit of a concrete jungle. That said, there are some nice leafy parts.

Academic strengths: UCD has a variety of courses, but it's particularly known for computer science, agriculture, veterinary

brick campus in north Dublin. Work experience and internships are a central and hugely useful part of DCU's courses. The Helix is a major venue for arts and entertainment, including on-campus balls and parties. Students receive credits for involvement in clubs, societies and student life. DCU is also steadily gaining a reputation as the best college for sports, with many county-level GAA players having studied there in recent years.

Strengths: Steadily gaining a reputation as a particularly innovative university, DCU is ranked among the top 50 young universities worldwide. It is particularly strong on computing, business, technology, journalism and communications, biomedical science and sports science. As part of its Univesen module, DCU gives credits to students for involvement in extracurricular activities, including clubs, societies, charity work, student media and student politics, and there is a strong emphasis on encouraging students to develop their personal skills as well as their academic qualifications.

Don't miss: DCU's augmented reality app, Welcome to DCU, will give students a better understanding of courses and campus life. A self-guided campus tour is available for Android and iOS.

What's new: A new arts degree comes on stream from 2015, as does a common entry programme for engineering. There will also be a new BSc in Problem Solving and Software Development, designed to pro-

