

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

The Graduate Attributes Programme #ThisIsCommunity #ThisIsUCC Campaign



University College Cork
Graduate Attributes Programme

Student Stories during Covid_19



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My name is **Tadgh Connery** and I'm a second year Applied Psychology student at @universitycollejecork

The last few months have been strange. We have all made sacrifices and adjusted our lives to suit the current climate. While it presented its challenges, I found this time to be an enriching one. While exams and lectures moved online, I adjusted to a new way of learning. As meet-ups with classmates at @ucclibrary to discuss assignments was no longer viable, we Zoom-ed our discussions instead. Lecturers assured us that they were only an email away too. It was comforting to know that there was always someone there to whom I could reach out a (virtual) hand. My house became my workplace and, like many households, distractions were common. However, my **ambition** made sure I kept my head down until all my exams were finished. Though there were days when my bed seemed more appealing than my desk, my end-goal encouraged me to kick off the bedsheets and face the days of work head-on. #COVID19 tested my **resilience**, but I came out all the stronger. Alongside exams and learning, the @uccpsychsoc AGM moved online. With the academic year finished and little to distract us, we used our ample free time to brainstorm. We had to be **creative** in coming up with viable events that respect **social** distancing and public health guidelines. The excess free time also afforded me time for self-improvement. I'm an active member of @ucctaeqwondoclub and I'm lucky to have had months to enhance my technique. Not only that, this period allowed me to slow my life down and enjoy the little things. It afforded me time for reflection and made me **compassionate** to those who have lost a loved one, a business or a job to #COVID19. I realise, now, how meagre my sacrifices were, compared to theirs. Though this period seemed daunting at first, I got through it. Though some of us felt alone at times, we never really were. Life did not stop. It merely threw us a curveball - one that we could all hit once we adapted to the new normal. It has proved to me that no matter how big a challenge seems, if you hold firm and face it head-on with a smile, you will conquer it.

My name is **Fiona Keeley**, and I am studying BA Digital Humanities & IT @universitycollejecork. In March, halfway through my placement with @pwc_ireland, I moved back to Cork to work from home. **Attributes** like **ambition** that I had learned at UCC helped me through this process and I was able to help others as they adjusted to this massive change in their work environments. I had to develop a new set of online skills and work with my team to help others develop their **digital skills**. It was a time when all my friends on placement exchanged ideas about how to improve our digital skills and #WorkFromHome skills. The **ambition** instilled in me while at UCC had taught me to work competently and during COVID-19 I used this value to develop new skills as I started to work remotely. The world of digital has become paramount for keeping in contact with my friends and the UCC **community**. The once-innocent phrase "Let's meet f coffee" had left my vocabulary and I was welcomed into a reality where 'zooming' had become a verb and Google Meet had become the new conference room. I believe wherever you find opposition there has to be some form of opportunity, even if it does try to disguise itself. Despite the upheaval, COVID-19 brought about a rapid change in the quality of digital tools on the market. As the country entered lockdown it became a necessity to find new ways to communicate online. To keep solid relationships with my colleagues in the workplace, with my friends, and with my college contacts by using online tools. I did not have all the answers, but that **ambition** and willingness to learn greatly influenced how I scrutinized information during #COVID19. I learned while being able to use digital tools was important, making sure there was constant **communication** within a team was even more important. It wasn't as simply as meeting in person, people now had to allow for things like technology malfunctioning and digital training programs. I discovered the potential of my UCC email account and all the features attached to it. My ambition to use my time to my advantage helped me to redevelop my a good **work ethic** in a changing tech environment.



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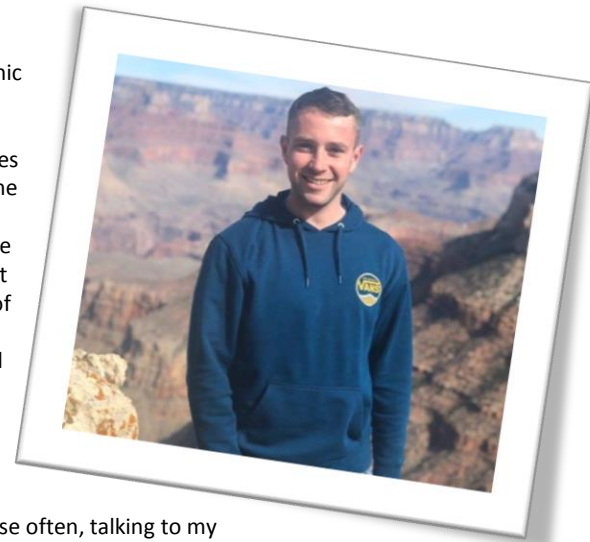
My name is **Daragh Crowley** and I am going into my fourth year of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at @universitycollegecork.

I spent third year studying abroad at the University of California, Los Angeles. My year abroad was cut short by Covid19 and I came home in March. I continued my @ucla classes from home and was very lucky to have lecturers that were willing to accommodate for the 8 hour time difference. The sudden move to online learning brought a lot of challenges, like losing out on face to face interaction with lecturers and missing out on the **social** side of going to college. Because most of my lectures were recorded it was difficult to interact with the lecturers. The transition to online learning showed me that I am more capable of **independent thinking** than I realised before. In UCC, I was encouraged to think **independently** and this helped to prepare me for the new normal that we have all found ourselves in.

After finishing my UCLA exams online I began a remote internship at Xilinx doing electronics design. Having spent 10 weeks studying in online classes I found myself well prepared for a remote job.

During the online classes I found that some simple things like getting fresh air and exercise often, talking to my friends and taking frequent coffee breaks away from my computer really helped my **resilience**. These things continue to help me to stay motivated and productive during the workday.

Even though no one could ever have predicted what has come in the past few months I found that by **embracing the core UCC graduate attributes** I was able to take on every **challenge** that came my way.



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My name is **Alison O'Shea** and I am a 4th year medical student at @universitycollegecork. Undoubtedly, #COVID19 and subsequent restrictions have led to a challenging period for all students at UCC, however the experience has also been rewarding and served to highlight a real sense of **solidarity** and togetherness within UCC. Initially it was difficult for me to adapt to studying course material online, at a time where the medicine course is largely clinical-based and geared towards practical aspects and face-to-face interaction with patients in hospital settings. On a personal level I wasn't sure at first how this form of teaching and learning could be replicated online. However, a combination of **adaptability and perseverance**, along with the collective effort of staff and students at UCC meant that we were able to make a success of a situation which appeared very challenging at the outset. Everybody stuck together and made sure that we overcame the challenges which presented themselves, and this really showed the essence of the UCC community. Personally, UCC has always inspired me to be **innovative** and **creative**. This approach was vitally important during the lockdown period. As part of my role on the @surgeonnoonan committee, I was due to travel to Malawi in June to volunteer in Nkhoma Hospital. Once UCC shut its doors in March however, it meant that all of our fundraising efforts were put on hold indefinitely. Both individually and as a committee we were determined to fulfil our fundraising ambitions for the charity, as the money raised annually goes a long way in helping those who need it most. I decided to take fundraising into my own hands and pledged to run 5km a day for 50 days in order to raise money for the charity. After 250km, I had raised €1,200, which, when added to the amazing efforts of our other committee members and UCC students, resulted in one of the most successful fundraising campaigns the society has ever run. This was an extremely rewarding experience as it once again showed that by **working together** and utilising our collective **perseverance** and **strength**, we can overcome any obstacle and achieve our goals.

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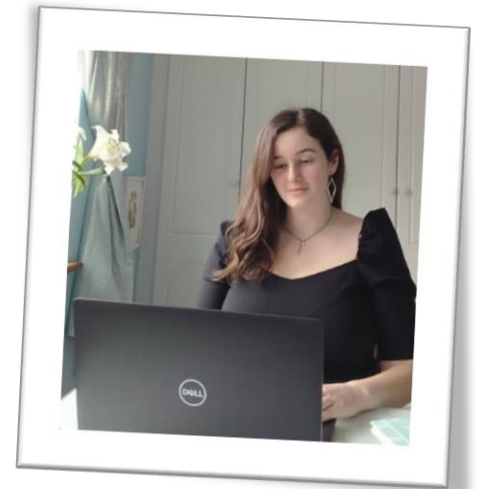


My name is **Cleidi Hearn**, and I am a final year applied psychology student at @universitycollegecork. I am from Brazil, but have I have been living in Ireland since 2015. Just like most students, I have found the last few months quite **challenging**. The world, as we knew it, changed so dramatically that our resilience was truly tested. As a full-time student, I spend most of my days at UCC. When the university closed, I really missed the campus, my classmates and the whole UCC community. It was not easy to adjust to quarantine life. Despite the disruption, I was very touched by the remarkable efforts of everyone at UCC to help students through this time of crisis. It taught me a valuable lesson about compassion and the power of solidarity. UCC has encouraged me to be **ambitious** and to challenge myself to become a **positive** influence in our **community**. Although our academic routine had changed, I decided to apply for the Student Inc. programme this summer. Being accepted into the programme was the highlight of my quarantine. With the **support** of UCC, I am currently working full-time time on my start-up and I am absolutely thrilled to develop my **entrepreneurial skills**. The same **values** that I learned in my academic life, I am now applying professionally as a budding entrepreneur. My journey at UCC has showed me that **respect** and **integrity** are essential to succeed in life and in business.

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My name is **Emily Duffy** (@emilytduffy), and I am 3rd year Commerce student at @UCC. I wake up at seven and start getting ready for the day. By five to nine I'm at my desk ready to get to work. While this seems normal it is not exactly how I thought my work placement would be. I started my six month work placement with @dell not from the Dublin office like I had planned, but from my bedroom in Limerick. While my internship isn't how I expected it to be that doesn't mean I received a lesser experience. In fact, my remote internship with Dell Technologies has created **experiences** and **opportunities** that I wouldn't have gotten in a traditional work placement. I've found that remote internships can be highly **rewarding**. It has pushed me to take the **communication** and **presentation** skills I have learned in my degree and translating them into digital skills. This **digital fluency** is another skill I can use in my future career. This experience has shown me that I am more **resilient** than I thought and I am capable of adapting in times of change. By embracing digital fluency and **resilience** have been able to not only excel in my remote placement but it has also shown me that I was be able to survive and **thrive** in whatever life throws at me.

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My name is **Harry McCann**, I am a @quercusucc scholar, and a final year Digital Humanities and IT student at @universitycollegecork. My day starts with a run. I then booth-up my laptop, make myself a coffee, and start my day of work. As an entrepreneur, no two days are the same, even during #COVID19. There is a lot less structure to my day, but I am still working on a number of really exciting projects including @mymoneyjar and @trendster_media.

While I remain as **ambitious** as ever, I have really tried to embrace the **value** of **resilience** throughout the lockdown and restrictions. I have been focusing more on my **personal well-being**, and have put a real emphasis on **personal growth**. I am reading more, exercising more, and enjoying the break from the usual busyness of the day-to-day. The opportunity to slow down and relax has been great. It has been challenging, but I can honestly say that I am a better person having learned what I have learned over the last few months.

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