

Section 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIVERSITY

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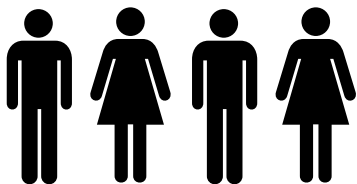
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Background To the University

The University of Ulster was founded in 1984 by Royal Charter as a result of a petition from The New University of Ulster and the Ulster Polytechnic. The University is based on four campuses, at Belfast, Coleraine, Jordanstown, and Magee College, Londonderry. Online courses are delivered using the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Student and Staff Population

The student population has grown from 11,182 in 1984/85 to 25,339 in 2010/11.

The 2010/11 population, broken down by mode of attendance and by campus is as follows:

	Full Time	Part Time	Total
Belfast	1,413	327	1,740
Coleraine	4,178	1,242	5,420
Jordanstown	8,195	5,836	14,031
Magee	3,289	859	4,148
Total	17,075	8,264	25,339

There are also approximately 5,000 students on University of Ulster courses at recognised institutions.

At February 2011 the University employed over 3,280 staff (approximately 1,324 academic and research staff and 1,956 support staff).

The University's Vision

“To be a university with a national and international reputation for excellence, innovation and regional engagement”

The University's Core Values (under review)

The core values of the University are to:

- see all students and members of staff as individuals with their own needs;
- provide quality learning and development for students and staff;
- respect ourselves and those we deal with and to be accountable for what we say and do;
- work together with trust, openness and honesty; value diversity and inclusiveness and see everyone as equal;
- be creative and adapt to the challenges of change; and
- take pride in how we do our work.

Corporate Plan 2006/07 to 2010/11 is currently being updated for the period 2011/12 – 2015/16

The Corporate Plan sets out the University's overall Vision, Core Strategic Aims, Cross-cutting Aims and key supporting objectives for a five year period. It is produced following extensive engagement with staff in faculties and departments and reflects the shared vision for the University.

www.ulster.ac.uk/corporateplan/corporate-plan.html

University Governance

The University's constitutional framework is derived from its Charter, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations.

The Court

The Court includes representatives of a wide range of interests throughout Northern Ireland. As well as appointing the Chancellor, the Pro-Chancellors and the Honorary Treasurer, the Court meets at least once a year to receive reports from the Vice-Chancellor on the working of the University, and the audited accounts from the Honorary Treasurer. Members of the Court are also consulted on strategic developments at the University.

The Council

The Council is the governing body of the University and is responsible for the management and administration of the revenue, staff and property of the University and has general control over the conduct of the affairs of the University. Its membership includes academic and non-academic staff, students and persons external to the University. The Council has five committees:- Resources Committee, Audit Committee, Strategy and Governance Committee, Communications and External Affairs Committee and Remuneration Committee.

The Senate

The Senate has responsibility for the ordering of the University's academic affairs in teaching and research and for the regulation and supervision of the education of its students. The Senate is composed mainly of academic staff, with provision for representation of non-academic staff and students. The Senate works through a number of committees, including the Academic Development and Enhancement Committee, the Teaching and Learning Committee, the Research and Innovation Committee, the Library, Information and Student Administrative Services Committee and the Student Services and Sport Committee.

University Management Structure

Officers

The Chancellor is the Head of the University and presides over meetings of the Court, and has power to confer degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic distinctions.

The Vice-Chancellor is the chief academic and administrative officer of the University and is Chairman of Senate and the Senior Management Group. The Vice-Chancellor is also the Accounting Officer for the University and is responsible to parliament for the expenditure of public funds received by the University.

There are four Pro-Vice-Chancellors with University-wide responsibilities in the areas of Educational Partnerships and International Affairs, Communication and External Affairs, Teaching and Learning, and Research and Innovation. There are Deans of Academic Development (Magee) and Campus Development (Coleraine) and each campus's affairs are managed by a Provost with a particular interest in promoting links with the local community.

Faculties and Schools

The University organises its academic activity in six Faculties (Arts, Art, Design and the Built Environment, Computing and Engineering, Life and Health Sciences, Social Sciences and Ulster Business School). The academic staff, within Faculties, are grouped by cognate subject areas; these groupings, of which

there are 30, are called schools. (In the Ulster Business School, the schools are called departments). Each Faculty also has a research graduate school.

Deans of Faculties are directly accountable to the Vice-Chancellor for the academic and administrative leadership of their Faculties. The Heads of Schools within each Faculty assist with the co-ordination of the work of the Faculty under the leadership of the Dean. Heads of Schools are responsible to the Dean for all matters relating to the teaching and research activities in their Schools.

Course management

Each course is administered by a course committee, comprising staff who contribute significantly to the teaching of the course. Members of the course committee may be drawn from a number of schools and faculties. Each course has a Course Director who chairs the course committee that is responsible to the Faculty Board for the organisation and effective management of the course.

The course committee puts in place arrangements for student support and guidance, in accordance with University and Faculty policy, in particular with regard to student induction, studies advice and access to staff and student consultation.

The course committee, with the external examiner(s), becomes the board of examiners for the course and as such determines the assessment results and academic progression of students.

In certain undergraduate subjects where major, main or minor strands may be combined to form Honours degrees, a subject committee and subject director take on these roles. If you are studying for a combined Honours degree, two or three subject committees will be involved in the delivery of your particular course. A campus co-ordinating group looks after inter-subject matters and a campus board determines progress and award in the light of assessment results informed by the subject board of examiners.

The delivery of individual modules is managed by module co-coordinators. Further information is contained in Sections 4 and 6.

Course Structure and Delivery

The University's award-bearing courses are modular in structure and are delivered in semesters. Modules are generally taught and assessed within one semester but some run across two semesters. The minimum requirements for each award (degree, diploma, or certificate) are specified regulations in terms of entry qualifications, duration, credit points, level and standard of achievement. Further information is contained in section 4.

Access and Distributed Learning (ADL)

Access & Distributed Learning (ADL) has a University-wide remit to promote and support flexible and distributed access to higher education. Working with Faculties, local industry and the community, ADL aims to provide and promote a range of educational

opportunities which support 'learning for all of your life'. A key focus of the work of ADL is the exploitation of advances in information and communication technologies to deliver more flexible learning opportunities and improve access to learning. ADL is also working with Faculties to explore ways in which emerging mobile technologies (SMS, social networking etc.) can be used to enhance the student experience. ADL also supports and maintains the University of Ulster's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), offering flexible online learning opportunities to students all over the world. There is an expanding portfolio of courses offered online ranging from full postgraduate degrees through to short business-focused training, all designed using robust technologies and underpinned by high quality and instructionally sound online teaching material. You may find that some of your lectures are 'blended' in nature with campus based activities supported online using the VLE.

<http://adl.ulster.ac.uk/>

Student Charter

The University has a Student Charter which explains what you can expect from the University in terms of the academic and other services available. The Charter also explains what the University expects of students. In addition, the University has developed a range of other Charters for specific services or for students groups with different needs. These Charters include performance targets against which performance is measured and reviewed so that we can make improvements and meet higher targets in future.

Separate Charters have been developed for:

- Teaching and Learning
- Information Services (this includes the library and IT facilities)
- Student Support (which includes counselling services and services for students with disabilities)
- Career Development Centre
- Residential Services
- International Students
- Research Students
- E-learning (for those studying fully online courses)

www.ulster.ac.uk/studentcharter

Personal Development Planning

Personal Development Planning (PDP) is a process designed to assist you to get the most from your time at University and help you to plan and reflect upon the knowledge and skills you are developing. It will record your progress as you plan activities to enhance your skill-set, assisting with career planning and increasing your employability.

The University's Professional and Career Enhancement (PACE) system (**<http://pace.ulster.ac.uk>**) has been developed to help you record all your achievements in one place. The System is secure, confidential and user friendly and enables you to:

- Link to the student record system
- Record and store evidence, thoughts and plans
- Create career, personal and academic action plans
- Communicate with course teams
- Check exam results
- Build multiple CVs
- Maintain a Personal Journal/Diary
- Create and share an e-portfolio

Why do it?

Employers are increasingly expecting graduate recruits to have a good degree and equally importantly a well-rounded CV. Employers are more likely to employ a graduate who can show evidence of having developed a number of key transferable skills which have been acquired across a number of settings.

Many professional bodies have established standards which require you to clearly show your continuing PDP. After your graduation this process is often referred to as continuing professional development (CPD) and it follows a similar process as your PDP.

How do you participate?

You will be introduced to PDP at your programme induction and directed to the PACE system which you can access from the University portal.