



DARE helps disabled students

UCC is playing its part in knocking down the barriers to education for students with disabilities.

By KIERAN DINEEN

The college is one of 11 taking part in the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) programme, which has set aside more than 1,000 higher education places around the country for students with disabilities.

The supplementary admissions scheme recognises the impact of disability on educational attainment and on progression to higher education.

Approximately 300 students accepted places through DARE in 2009. The 11 participating colleges aim to greatly increase the number this year by offering on average 5% of first year places on a reduced points basis.

Mary O'Grady, UCC disability officer and spokesperson for the DARE scheme, explained there has been a huge emphasis in higher education in recent years on providing equality of educational opportunity for students with disabilities through dedicated disability support services.

These services focus on supporting

the student's transition from second to third level as well as the provision of supports based on individualised needs assessments to enable access and full participation by all students with a disability.

Anne Marie Scarry, psychology masters student at UCC, is one of those students who has been helped to reach her educational potential by the college.

She said: "During the course of my studies I received Assistive Technology, additional tuition and copies of overhead lecture notes.

"I have achieved my initial goal of completing an undergraduate degree and as it was such a positive experience I decided to pursue a postgraduate qualification."

School leavers can apply for the DARE scheme as part of the CAO application process from November 3 until February 1.

UCC will be holding an open day on DARE on November 17 from 3pm in UCC. For more info go to www.accesscollege.ie