



Students on access schemes 'do better'

Katherine Donnelly

DISADVANTAGED students who enter colleges on special support schemes are more likely to complete their university degree than students from similar backgrounds studying outside of these programmes, according to a new report.

A student getting support under a special scheme at University College Dublin (UCD) is 10pc to 15pc more likely to graduate than a similarly disadvantaged student who was unable to participate in the scheme.

Dr Kevin Denny from the UCD School of Economics is one of the authors of the report, which evaluates the impact of the UCD New ERA Initiative.

The scheme is aimed at widening participation at UCD.

The research also shows that this type of access and support scheme also increases the chances of disadvantaged students scoring higher grades.

More than 500 students have graduated from UCD through New ERA since it was first established in 1997, and it currently supports 400 students from 36 schools.

Dr Denny said that their findings also suggested that another scheme for disadvantaged students, the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR), also leads to more disadvantaged students scoring higher grades and completing their studies.

"For our society to prosper, it is essential that the skills and talents of disadvantaged young people are not wasted, just as a firm needs to ensure that its resources are used to the fullest extent," Mr Denny said.