MSc/Graduate Diploma Digital Policy

One Year Full Time or Two Years Part Time
Full remote attendance now available

Introduction

The MSc/Graduate Diploma is designed to offer graduates the opportunity to study some of the core topical, theoretical and methodological Digital Policy issues arising today. We situate concepts in perspectives such as platform capitalism and governance, data infrastructures, information analytics, interface critique, privacy and data processing, online safety and cybersecurity, child protection online and AI regulation, welcoming a series of industry-based stakeholders and professional speakers on these topics.

Digital policy issues include investigating the institutional and public policy dimensions of the prevalence of digital technologies, digital infrastructure, and data processing in all dimensions of life. This programme allows students to study the underlying social conditions (economic, political, and culture) that give rise to and influence such technologies and their governance, as well as the multiple public sector and commercial contexts where policy is made and enacted.

Taking an interdisciplinary approach, our innovative programme mixes theoretical and applied methods. We introduce basic concepts and issues in digital policy, providing historical, contextual, regulatory and critical knowledge on how to theorise digital technologies and environments.

Programme Highlight

With support from Microsoft Ireland, UCD's School of Information and Communication studies presents the Microsoft-UCD Digital Policy Programme with the goal of building digital policy training and capability.

The proposed Graduate Diploma/ MSc course, in addition to related initiatives, builds on existing expertise and infrastructure across government, industry, civil society and academia to address the increased demand for digital policy knowledge and skills.

Programme Content and Structure

MSc				Graduate Diploma
90 Credits Taught Masters	=	**60 Credits** Core Modules	+ **30 Credits** Thesis	**60 Credits** Core Modules

Core Modules:
- Research Theory and Practice
- Data & Society
- Digital Policy I
- Digital Policy II
- Regulation and Emerging Technology
- Digital Policy Thesis (MSc Only)

Option Modules: (choose 3)
- Quantitative Data Analysis
- Research Methods
- AI & Ethics
- Platform Governance
- Digital Media Literacy
- Applied Data Wrangling and Visualisation

The Graduate Diploma is 60 credits with no thesis requirement. Choose three modules alongside the core modules. Our modules are designed to provide students the option to join remotely if they can't attend our on-campus modules.

All modules are subject to change. Please see www.ucd.ie/graduateadmissions for a full list of modules.

Why study at UCD?

Graduate Education
Ireland's leader in postgraduate education with over 12,000 graduate students

Graduate Employability
Ranked no. 1 in Ireland in QS Graduate Employability ranking

Global Careers
Dedicated careers support; 2 year stayback visa to work in Ireland for international students

Global Community
Over 9,000 international students and over 310,000 alumni networked across 185 countries

Global Profile
UCD is ranked in the top 1% of higher education institutions worldwide

Sustainability
Modern parkland campus with 24hr security; wide range of facilities, clubs, societies and supports

Career Opportunities

Our MSc degree and Graduate Diploma aims to produce future professionals with a deep understanding of both theoretical and applied issues in digital policy. On graduating, our students will be able to embark on a variety of careers in IT and the Tech industry, government and civil society roles and non-governmental organisations in Ireland, the EU and globally. The degree paves the way towards a PhD in this area or careers in government, civil society and tech industry. We also encourage and help our students to turn their theses into publications.

Our Digital Policy programme is designed to prepare graduates for careers in evaluating, implementing, and studying core topical, theoretical, and methodological issues that arise in digital policy today.

Applicant Requirements

- Applicants should present with a primary (bachelor's) degree in any subject with an overall score of 2.1 or higher.
- Names and contact details of two referees who can assess their intellectual ability, maturity and motivation.
- Applicants whose first language is not English must also demonstrate English language proficiency of IELTS 6.5 (no band less than 6.0 in each element), or Equivalent.
- While applications are accepted up to August of the year of entry, offers are made to suitably qualified candidates on a first-come-first-served basis. Early application is recommended as entry to the programmes is very competitive and the number of places is limited.

Programme Testimonies

"For me, the MSc Digital Policy provided an ideal grounding from which to explore contemporary technology policy questions. I really enjoyed how interdisciplinary the programme was, drawing on political, legal, ethical and socio-technical perspectives. The combination of topical case studies, industry-leading guest speakers, and practical assignments that reflect current digital policy challenges made for a highly relevant curriculum, with the flexibility to zero in on specific policy areas of interest. The faculty were engaging and supportive throughout. I would highly recommend the programme."
MSc alumni

"Microsoft is delighted to support the UCD Digital Policy Masters programme as it brings a unique mix of academic disciplines, government expertise, industry insights and crucial civil society voices to the conversation. Numerous Microsoft colleagues and other industry and Trade Association executives have taken the courses and all have positive feedback"
Ciarán Conlon
Director of Public Policy, Microsoft Ireland/WE

Fees and Scholarships

Tuition fee information is available on www.ucd.ie/fees. Please note that UCD offers a number of graduate scholarships for full-time, self-funding international students, holding an offer of a place on a UCD masters programme. Please see **www.ucd.ie/global/scholarships** for further information.
Our Centre offers a number of scholarships for EU students applying to the MSc.

Related Educational Offering
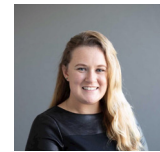
Professional Certificate in Digital Policy
Running in the autumn term from September to December, this one term module is offered fully online Wednesdays from 2 - 4 pm. It is developed as both an introduction to Digital 4.0 policy concepts or an opportunity to upskill.

Academic Profiles

Dr Elizabeth Farries
Programme Director
Dr Elizabeth Farries is Programme Director of the MSc, Graduate Diploma and Professional Certificate programmes in Digital Policy, Director of the UCD Centre for Digital Policy (with Prof Siapera), an assistant professor in the school of Information and Communities Studies. Liz is a fellow with the International Network of Civil Liberties Organizations, qualified as a barrister and solicitor in Canada, and is commencing EU Horizon Funded research in successful AI regulation (2025 - 27).

Molly Newell
Graduate
The MSc Digital Policy at University College Dublin has been an incredible academic experience. It built on my background in technology policy research and gave me a strong global perspective. The modules were engaging, with many practical assignments that let me dive into my individual policy interests. I really enjoyed getting to learn from both academic experts and industry leaders, whose insights on emerging technology trends helped us understand the perspectives shaping the global innovation ecosystem.

Throughout the year, I always felt supported by my lecturers and the whole UCD community, which made a huge difference. The program helped me forge connections that have led to amazing job opportunities where I could put my learning into practice even ahead of graduation.

Living in Dublin has been fantastic too, allowing me to immerse myself into Ireland's exciting tech culture while giving me access to great cultural events, amazing hiking, and friends from all over the world.