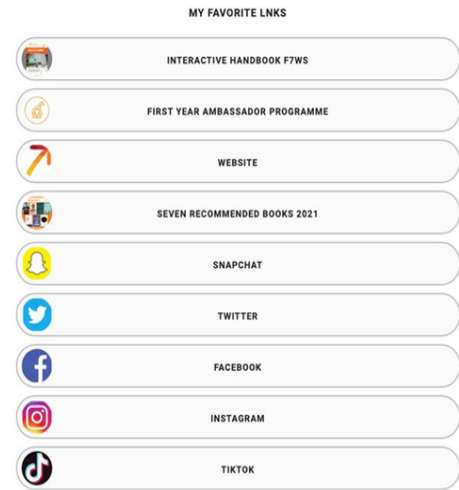## Student Engagement

The First Seven Weeks 2021

During the Autumn semester of 2021 the First Seven Weeks programme was delivered online using 5 different social media platforms.

On Campus Support

Acknowledging the difficulties and challenges that second-year students experienced last year due to the global pandemic, the support of Directional Guides on campus was extended. A total of 60 guides were available during the first five weeks of the semester to help students navigate their way around campus.
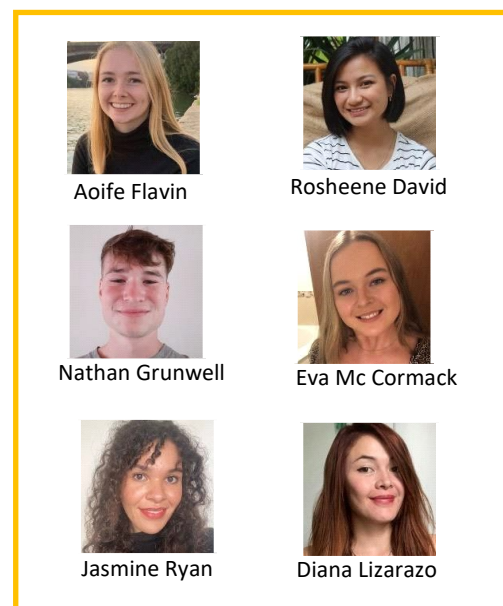
Enhanced Online Support

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and Tiktok were the main channels of communication with students. All information about workshops and online activities, hosted by different departments within UL through Zoom and MS teams, were available on multiple channels.

MY FAVORITE LNKS

INTERACTIVE HANDBOOK F7WS

FIRST YEAR AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

WEBSITE

SEVEN RECOMMENDED BOOKS 2021

SNAPCHAT

TWITTER

FACEBOOK

INSTAGRAM

TIKTOK

https://lnk.bio/FkOW

Social Media Guides 2021

Aoife Flavin

Rosheene David

Nathan Grunwell

Eva Mc Cormack

Jasmine Ryan

Diana Lizarazo

The programme was delivered with the support of 5 social media guides who were available online from 9:00 to 17:00 daily for the 12 weeks of semester.

Social media guides were responsible for creating informative content and staying in contact with first-year students. The content included information about upcoming events and workshops, videos of how to reach different places on campus, tutorials on how to use different digital tools, tips for study or healthy meals, and competitions.

The First Seven Weeks Programme 2021

Handbook for First Year Students

This year an interactive handbook was created and designed for first-year students. In this handbook, students can find updated, relevant information including services, tools, locations and contact information about different areas within UL.
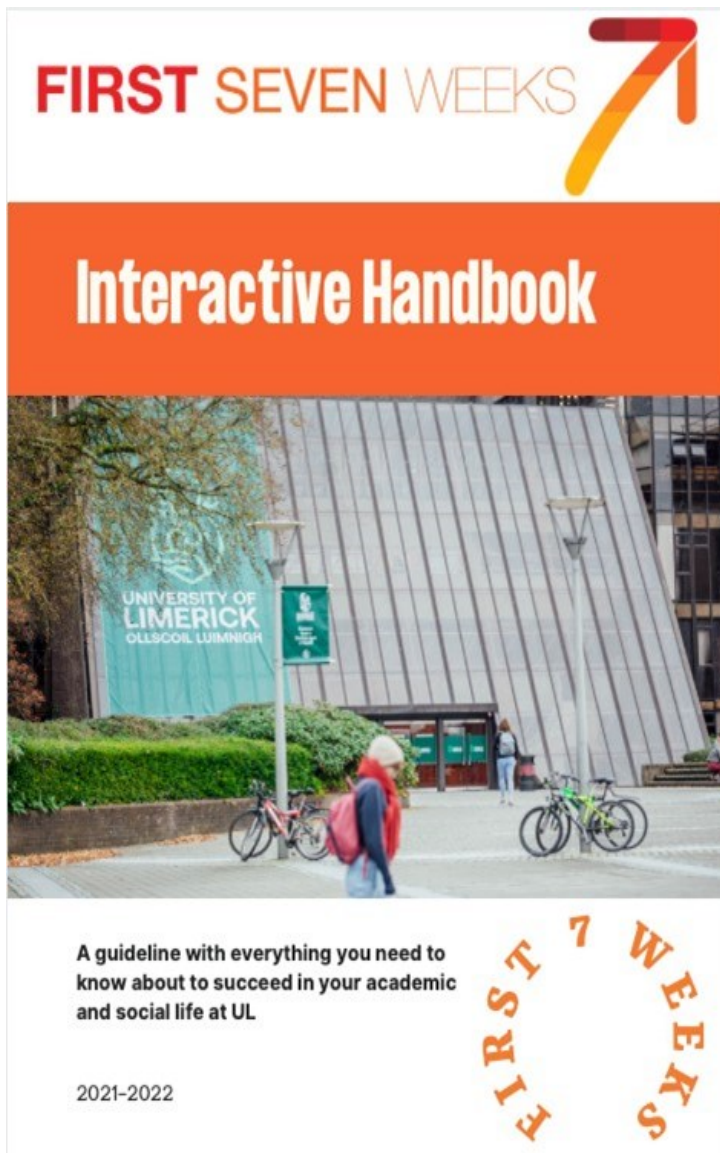
First Year Ambassador Programme

As a way of engaging with first-year students the First Year Ambassador Programme was launched this year. This programme aims to promote the participation of first-year students through the development of audio-visual content: podcasts, Blogs and Vlogs.

First-year students have the opportunity to share their experiences of university life with other first-year students in a digital format. The programme aims to encourage the development of digital skills and a sense of empowerment and agency among students.

We currently have 4 Ambassadors and their exciting blogs which include 7 tips to keep up with studies and 7 reasons to live on campus

Kaprissia Djuhadi

Course: Biological and Chemical Sciences

Ciaran Kelly

Course: BA Arts (German and Linguistics)

Sandra Nantumbwe

Course: MSc in Public Health

Ilya Miklashevitch

Course: BA Financial Mathematics

UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

First Year Experience - Virtual Orientation

This year's FYE involved 3 Sessions Delivered by Virtual Guides. The content delivered in Session 1 & 2 aimed to ensure each student could complete some basic administrative tasks that are central to getting started in UL, while getting to know their class-mates. Virtual guides assisted first years in understanding what is required of them, navigating their timetable, knowing how to access available supports and helped to drive interaction in the group. Session 3 saw the guides host an interactive group session centred around the 'Making the Leap' module, which aims to support students in their transition to higher education.

Overall, the initiative was successful and gauging from the feedback from the virtual guides and SSOs, the sessions were well received by the majority of first year students. Feedback surveys have been sent to the guides, to gather their views on the initiative. Feedback surveys have also been sent to first year students. The data will be evaluated and used to inform and evolve, an enhanced experience for next year's students. The feedback will also allow for comparison with last year's results in order to measure engagement levels for the 2021 FYE program.

OICEP

The Irish Conference for Engaging Pedagogy which focussed on 'Student Engagement- Sustaining Inclusive Practice' took place on 14th December, co-chaired by Dr Mary Fitzpatrick (UL) and Karen Buckley (DCU). A keynote was provided by Prof Alison Cook Sather on sustaining student partnership.

Prof Alison Cook Sather

Learning Analytics for Student Success

National Seminar Series: Using student feedback and learning analytics in your professional development, Friday 17th December, 2021

This workshop, funded through the National Seminar Series call, was an opportunity for participants to experience and work with a suite of online structured resources which seek to support teaching staff in attending to feedback from student evaluations of teaching and the prospects learning analytics afford. The workshop will be facilitated by Dr Edd Pitt (University of Kent) and showcased the guidance documents and scenario-based resources that have been created as part of the STELA (*STudent Evaluation and Learning Analytics*) project. There was a strong emphasis placed upon reflection and active approaches from participants throughout the workshop.

STELA Live - Implementing Learning Analytics for Student Success

'STELA Live' is funded under the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning SATLE 2020 call and builds on the new *Policy on the Use of Data to Enhance Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Learning Analytics)* and Student Privacy Notice at UL, and the products of the cross-campus consultation conducted as part of the STELA project. The project is led by Dr Angelica Rísquez (Educational Technologies and Learning Analytics Lead) and Sarah Gibbons (Student Experience Lead, currently on leave, with Clare Halpin in this role). STELA Live aims to:

i.   (I) Complete a consultation process with UL relevant data owners and gatekeepers (Academic Registry, Data Protection Officer, Business Intelligence Unit, Quality Office, and Registrar) to scope and resource access and extraction of student success data and seek approval for use, informed through the national ORLA Data Conceptual model February-October 2021

ii.   (II) Baseline analysis of the variables that best predict performance and progression in 3/4 selected modules, accessing and triangulating existing data including information in SIand relevant learning platforms.

iii.   (III) Design of a protocol for intervention to improve the academic experience of students through the delivery of timely, personalised, and actionable student feedback which is informed by teachers, students, and relevant support services at UL.

Towards Digital Education

LevUL up Digital Skills Development Programme

LevUL Up is a digital skills development programme for UL students coordinated by CTL in collaboration with the Glucksman Library and the Information Technology Division (ITD). This Autumn semester, LevUL Up comprised two parts, a Digital Skills Awareness Course, hosted on Sulis, plus a calendar of 21 live online workshops focusing on a range of digital skills and literacies.

Workshops were offered during a 6-week timeframe and repeated on a few occasions amounting to 74 workshop instances in total. The workshops were delivered by both staff and students at UL, recorded, and subsequently made available for all UL staff and students to watch back on a single channel.

At the end of this semester, almost 600 people are enrolled in the student role on the Digital Skills Awareness Course, and almost 1,700 people registered for live online workshops.

Quick Tips for Teaching Online Blog Series

This semester the Quick Tips for Teaching Online blogging series coordinated by through the LTF have focused on the dissemination of the intellectual outputs from the Erasmus+ project 'SHaring Open educational practices Using Technology For Higher Education' (SHOUT4HE). Videos are showcased covering a wide variety of disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical experience around technology-enhanced teaching practice.

Learning Technology Forum

As part of the LTF professional development series, the summer and Autumn 2021 offered multiple opportunities for learning about the principles of effective online teaching, online student engagement, module design, content creation, good practices with online assessment and technical sessions. A variety of workshops were organised and delivered from CTL in collaboration with other colleagues in the LTF. The series was attended by over 350 participants and as always, recorded events have been archived in the Resources and the Supported tools sections of the LTF website. During the month of November 7,289 views have been recorded in the LTF website.

National and International Events

VALUING IRELAND'S TEACHING & LEARNING

VIT&L

VIT&L

[Valuing Ireland's Teaching and Learning (VIT&L) Week](#) ran from 8th to the 12th of November 2021, with events across the sector continued until 30 November. During this period the higher education community came together through local and national events to consider how teaching and learning is valued and what the future of education will look like for the students of tomorrow. As part of VIT&L, CTL led the following events:

[Gasta Talk](#) :**Towards a Devolved Model of Management of OER? The Case of the Irish Higher Education Sector.**

Launch of #UDL_UL Universal Design for Learning Community of Practice

To celebrate the launch of UDL at UL, Universal Design for Learning Community of Practice, Dr Sean Bracken (University of Worcester) delivered a keynote on 'Developing UDL Professional Learning Communities to Enhance Cross Campus Inclusion'. The launch took place online on Thursday 25th November at 12 noon as an opportunity to learn about the emerging UDL Community of Practice (CoP) and to join UDL at UL. The event was sponsored through the VIT&L National Forum week. To find out more about UDL at UL, go to the [UDL CoP Homepage](#). Follow us on Twitter @UDL_UL.

Dr Sean Bracken

Reimagining Assessment—Community of Practice

Reimagining Assessment: Reflecting the views of learners and educators, an [interactive resource](#), which was developed through a national collaborative community of practice led by UL and DCU, and funded by the SATLE19 fund, was launched by Prof Susan Deeley, University of Glasgow who delivered a keynote on *Student-staff partnerships in learning and assessment.*

National and International Events

At a national level as part of the Scholarship Call issued by the National Forum for VIT&L week (Valuing Ireland's Teaching and Learning), several digital posters were accepted which showcased key projects led by CTL personnel:

Reimagining Assessment: An Irish Community of Practice**- Fiona O'Riordan and Mary Fitzpatrick**

- *LevUL up: A Digital Skills Development Programme for Students at the University of Limerick*, **David Moloney, Michelle Breen and Anna Maria Gildea.**

- Virtual Orientation: Enhancing The First Year Experience**- Denis Murphy, Jesse Waters, Sarah Gibbons and Claire Halpin**

- Badge of honour? An exploration of the use of digital badges to support a partnership approach to faculty development**- Angelica Risquez, Dara Cassidy and Gearoid O'Suilleabhain.**

- Emerging Issues IV: Changing Times, Changing Contexts **– Margaret Keane, Ide O'Sullivan and Claire McAvinia.**

- Towards a developed model of management of OER? The Case of the Irish Higher Education Sector**- Angelica Risquez, Claire McAvinia, Yvonne Desmond, Catherine Bruen, Deirdre Ryan and Ann Coughlan**

- Flexible Pathways to Professional Development-**- Gwen Moore, Emma O'Brien, Mary Fitzpatrick, Ide O'Sullivan, Laura Costelloe, Martin Fitzgerald and Sarah O'Toole.**

Creating a Framework for Talking about Writing for the Facilitation of Writing Transfer: Focus on STEM Writing-
Lawrence Cleary and Kathy Bradley

Creating a Framework for Talking about Writing for the Facilitation of Writing Transfer: Focus on STEM Writing

Lawrence Cleary, Director Regional Writing Centre, University of Limerick
Kathy Bradley, Head of the Skills Centre, University College Cork

Aims
- To make obstacles to, and strategies for, writing transfer visible
- To test the value of an analytical framework for assessing writing situations, available/necessary processes of production and potential strategies for overcoming obstacles
- To create a suite of didactic video for tutor/teacher professional development
- To identify the components necessary to a writing pedagogy
- To incorporate and trail those components in a pedagogy for writing transfer

Initial Findings
The study is still ongoing, but there are some initial findings:
1. In every case, an analytical framework for assessing and understanding writing situations, processes and strategies for overcoming obstacles to successful text production were enthusiastically welcomed.
2. The vocabulary emerging from the interviews when talking about writing is varied and often vague, undefined or non-descript, suggesting that such conversations are not often articulated.
3. Threshold concepts that inform current writing practices seem to be varied, unexpected and experienced on a highly personal level.
4. Interviews did not yield the articulation of a coherent conceptualisation of a writing pedagogy that would lead to writing transfer knowledge.

Anticipated Impact
Yancey, et al. (2014) proposed a writing course that emphasised writing about writing as a way to teach students to transfer writing knowledge from one context to another. It is anticipated that INEW's study will identify elements emerging in a pedagogy for writing transfer. Once those elements are trialled in writing centres and classrooms, equipped with a pedagogical framework for teaching writing that transfers, INEW members will be better positioned to work with subject specialists to infuse writing activities into disciplines, better preparing writers for new contexts for writing. There is a potential for this framework and pedagogy to be taken up by communications specialists in industry as well.

Writing Specialists conversing with writers in various STEM writing contexts

Students talking

RWCUL's Framework for Talking about Writing

Subject specialists talking

Employers talking

Recent graduate employees talking (forthcoming)

What the Study Is About
"While certain surface-level writing skills are 'portable' across diverse contexts, such skills are less important to making a successful transition as a writer than coping with the unfamiliar epistemological, social, and organizational characteristics of a new context. A writer in such a context is in many ways 'illiterate' until he or she begins to understand these characteristics and their manifestation in written texts" (Anson and Forsberg 1990, p.201).
The purpose of the research is to provide a framework that will facilitate that goal.

References
Anson, C.M. and Forsberg (1990) 'Moving Beyond the Academic Community' in Written Communication, in Written Communication, 7(2), pp.200-231
Yancey, K., Robertson, L., & Taczak, K. (2014). Writing across contexts: Transfer, composition, and sites of writing. University Press of Colorado.

VIT&L Teaching & Learning Showcase 2021

Development of Framework for a Digital Learner Support Hub (DLSH)- **James Murphy and Clem O'Donnell.**

Development of a Framework for a Digital Learner Support Hub (DLSH)

Authors
Clem O'Donnell, ICT Learning Centre, University of Limerick (UL)
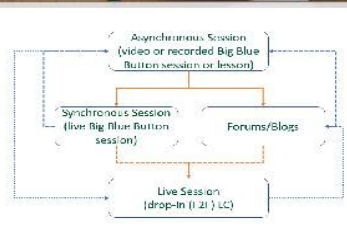James Murphy, Regional Peer-Supported Learning Centre (LC), UL

Aims
DLSH is a framework that allows content to be deployed easily and sustainably, acting as a 'one-stop-shop' for the LCs academic support services to UL's students. Conceived to address the increasing need to provide a more flexible, responsive learner support, it ensures UL's commitment to a HE accessible to all types of learners, including part-time, mature, study-abroad, and those students with disabilities.

While supporting students more flexibly, the project addresses some of the constraints on accessibility, reachability, and sustainability of current F2F services offered by the LCs such as scheduling in a manner that suits both tutors and tutees, and resourcing in terms of tutors, physical space, and associated costs.

The LCs fashioned a framework based on literature, best practice, and feedback from our stakeholders that allowed each centre to offer the best blend of online support in an engaging, structured, and accessible way to students. What developed was a delivery framework based around blended learning with both passive and active learning elements to ensure a good mix of student-to-content, student-to-tutor, and student-to-student interaction.

Impact and Findings
The development, as part of this initiative, of an online portal within ULs VLE to operationalise the DLSH framework has given the LCs an effective and flexible tool to allow the LCs to deliver quality fully online and blended learning support that will have an impact into the future across the disciplines.

This project informed us how important it was to have multiple avenues to capture impact particularly in a student-centred project such as the DLSH. As the diverse nature of the students involved across the disciplines showed us that just as students within and across the disciples may have different learning styles, they can also have preferences in terms of providing feedback.

Some prefer direct involvement in focus groups and others prefer a more anonymous form such as surveys. Having these various mechanisms allowed us to capture a more complete picture of the students' perceptions of the project and where changes needed to be made.

The use of a video as the presentation output for the initiative resulted in team members learning how to present the overall project aims and impact through this medium. The SATLE support network meetings helped the DLSH team a great deal with this learning.

Involvement in this SATLE initiative and the development of the DLSH portal has allowed the LCs to change some staff-led synchronous online supports to be peer-led synchronous and asynchronous supports instead. The use of these peer-led supports was received positively by early-stage students (as evidenced in the focus group discussions) and we believe is highly sustainable into the future.

DLSH@UL eLearning Hub

Visuals
DLSH is built around a 3-tier model that allows different opportunities to help students while maintaining their self-learning

Asynchronous Session (video or recorded Big Blue Button session or lesson)

Synchronous Session (live Big Blue Button session)

Forums/Blogs

Live Session (drop-in (1-2-1) LC)

- "I used them as the DLSH supports ultimately enhanced my overall learning experience. The live sessions and burst videos reinforced my understanding of content covered in the lectures and certainly improved my overall programming confidence."
- "They initially taught the method in a clear and concise way, using one or two examples rather than using a million examples and me getting confused."
- "I needed help with maths as my lecture notes were too in depth, the DLSH provided me with accessible content."

Want to Learn More?
For more information on what DLSH is, how we implemented it, and what we learnt please visit our website (http://pslc.ul.ie/dlsh/), view our promo video (https://tinyurl.com/22udfxux) or email us at dlsh@ul.ie

VIT&L Teaching & Learning Showcase 2021
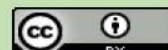
National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN)

As part of the programme published for National Academic Integrity Week by the National Academic Integrity Network (QQI), a UL panel with representation from academics,   Library, Writing Centre and CTL presented on the supports, challenges and approaches in relation to academic integrity on Thursday 21st October. The recording of the session has been curated together with a comprehensive collection of national and institutional resources for faculty and staff.

Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

As part of ALT Active Learning Special Interest Group seminar series, the UL approach to ABC Learning Design was presented on October 13th

Continuous Professional Development

Online Professional Development

- Introduction to Teaching in Higher Education for New Tutors.

- Shared Understanding of Assessment – the principles, terminology, methodology and standards of quality.

- Communities of Practice (CoPs) in Teaching & Learning in Higher Education .

- Writing Your Teaching Philosophy Statement.

Look out for webinars for 2022 on our Events page!

Peer Observation Network.

The peer observation network again proved very popular with UL lecturing staff engaging in peer observation of online asynchronous, synchronous and face to face teaching.

Grad Cert/Dip/MA in Teaching, Learning & Scholarship

There were 4 graduates from the Graduate Certificate, 15 graduates from the Graduate Diploma and 7 graduates from the MA in Teaching, Learning and Scholarship. Currently, participants on the programme are continuing to engage in an exciting blended and online delivery of the programme in order to build the skills, competencies, insights and capacities required to bring the highest quality teaching and learning experiences to their students, while also helping them to manage and progress their own scholarly careers.

Excellence in Teaching Awards

The UL and Regional Teaching Excellence Awards 2021/22 were launched with high number of nominations from across all faculties.