Healthy UL
Framework 2025 - 2027

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

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Healthy UL

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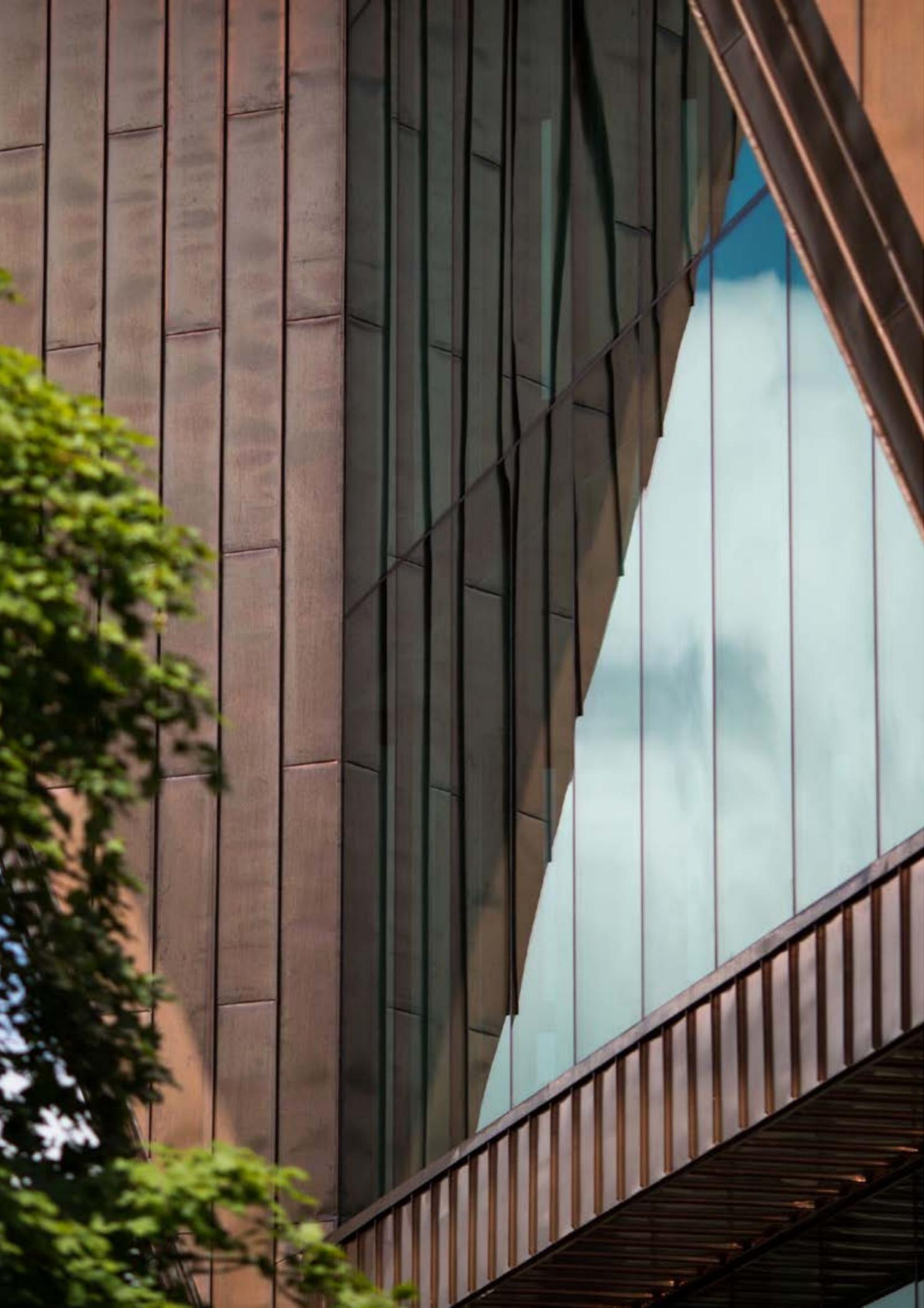
Glossary of terms

In line with the WHO, Healthy Ireland – A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013–2025 and the Healthy UL Framework adopts a holistic view of health and wellbeing.

Health

Health means everyone achieving his or her potential to enjoy complete physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Healthy people contribute to the health and quality of the society in which they live, work and play. Health is much more than an absence of disease or disability, and individual health, and that of the country, affects the quality of everyone's lived experience. Health is an essential resource for everyday life, a public good, and an asset for health and human development (WHO 1946, 1986).

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is an integral part of this definition of health. It reflects the quality of life and the various factors which can influence it over the course of a person's life (WHO, Health 2020).

Wellbeing also reflects the concept of positive mental health, in which a person can realise his or her own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and be able to make a contribution to his or her community (WHO, 2001). Consideration of health and wellbeing requires a shift in focus from what can go wrong in people's lives, to focusing on what makes their lives go well (Aked, 2010).

Foreword

The national Healthy Campus Charter and Framework, launched by Minister Simon Harris in 2021 and published by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), was a call to action to all Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Ireland. Its mission is to support and recognise the work of HEIs in improving the health and wellbeing of their campus communities; to be completed in a holistic, sustainable, and equitable way that is embedded, in time, into the everyday functions of the third level sector.

Since its inception in 2019, Healthy UL has been a beacon of health promotion, aligning with national and international initiatives such as Healthy Ireland, the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework, and the International Health Promoting Campuses Network. Our journey has been marked by significant achievements, driven by the collective efforts of our students, staff, and external partners. Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the global pandemic, our community has demonstrated resilience and adaptability, ensuring that health and wellbeing remain at the forefront of our priorities.

Healthy UL 2.0 extends our original framework and represents a renewed and invigorated approach, structured around three pillars: Healthy Systems, Healthy Engagement, and Healthy People & Environments. This framework is the result of extensive consultation and collaboration, reflecting the diverse needs and perspectives of our campus community. It encompasses a comprehensive set of actionable items aimed at addressing core themes such as mental health, healthy eating, physical activity, sexual health, and substance use and gambling support.

Our commitment to health and wellbeing is not just about meeting immediate needs but also about embedding these values into the very fabric of our university culture. By fostering collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, leveraging research and innovation, and promoting sustainable practices, we aim to create an environment where every individual can thrive.

As a community, we extend our appreciation to the dedicated members of the Healthy UL Steering Group, Sub-Group Leads, and all participants for their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment. Your contributions have been instrumental in shaping the success of Healthy UL initiatives to date. I also wish to thank the broader campus community and the Executive Committee for their steadfast support.

As we embark on this next phase, I invite all members of our campus community to engage with the Healthy UL 2.0 framework. Together, we can continue to set new standards of excellence in health promotion and wellbeing, ensuring that University of Limerick remains a leader in creating a healthy, supportive, and thriving campus environment.

During 2025, University of Limerick will host the International Health Promoting Campuses Conference. Competing against national and international bids to host this prestigious event, UL will see delegates from across the globe travel to our campus to progress the efforts of the third level sector collectively to maximise the health and wellbeing of campus communities worldwide.

UL will lead on the renewal of the Okanagan Charter and emphasise the influence and potential to address current challenges using sustainable and equitable methods. The HEA and the Department of Health are supporting this conference, endorsing UL's role as leaders in this space.

However, the achievement of a campus environment and community that strives to promote health and wellbeing for all is no small task, and as documented in this new framework requires collective effort from the whole community to be successful.

I look forward to the implementation of this new framework and to the continued success of Healthy UL.

Shane Kilcommins
UL President / Provost

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Introduction

In consultation with staff, students and the wider University of Limerick (UL) community, a comprehensive Healthy UL framework was developed and launched in 2019. This was in response to Healthy Ireland's call to action and vision "that everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility." (Healthy Ireland Framework, pg. 5).

The aim of Healthy UL is to make 'the healthy choice, the easy choice', as well investing in the determinants of health for the university's greatest asset, its staff, students and wider community. The 2019 framework recommended 30 actions which underpinned UL's ambition to be a leading university in its promotion of health and wellbeing.

Since then, the Healthy UL community in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, and in partnership with national agencies has implemented 80 % of its actions, at a time of unprecedented change, and through a global pandemic. Ongoing evaluation of the impact and reach of Healthy UL is central to its implementation process, with data-driven decision making ensuring that, where possible, evidence-based or evidence-informed actions are continually prioritised.

In July 2021, the Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris, jointly launched Ireland's National Healthy Campus Charter and Framework. Healthy UL was exemplified at the time, as a leading Higher Education Institution striving to embed health and wellbeing into campus life for its staff and students.

Healthy UL continues to advocate for a high quality, multidisciplinary approach to promoting health and wellbeing. This commitment is evident in our new Healthy UL 2.0 framework, as we renew our dedication to the National Healthy Campus Charter and Framework, with 35 further considered actions, and as we continue to build on the successes of Healthy UL 1.0.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Healthy UL Steering Group and subgroup members, the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences, all who work tirelessly to drive this important agenda. We acknowledge our UL colleagues and students who have engaged with and support this whole campus approach and undertake our Healthy UL Surveys to ensure we keep on track. We appreciate the efforts of our external colleagues in the wider Midwest region who continue to work with us to deliver on Healthy UL, in the health education, transport planning and environmental systems - our thanks to all.

From left to right:
Prof Audrey Tierne (Vice Chair), Prof Catherine Woods(Chair), Assoc Prof Catherine Norton (Vice Chair), Sarah Kennedy (Healthy UL Manager), Aoife Noonan (Healthy UL PhD Candidate)

Signed (alphabetical order)

Sarah Kennedy (Healthy UL Manager)
Aoife Noonan (Healthy UL PhD Candidate)
Catherine Norton (Healthy UL Co-Deputy Chair)
Audrey Tierney (Healthy UL Co-Deputy Chair)
Catherine Woods (Healthy UL Chair)

Executive Summary

The University of Limerick (UL) has embarked on a transformative journey to establish a comprehensive framework for health promotion, aligning with national and international initiatives such as Healthy Ireland, the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework, and the International Health Promoting Campuses Network. This initiative, Healthy UL, reflects a collective, steadfast commitment to prioritising and promoting health and wellbeing within our vibrant campus community.

Since its inception in 2019, Healthy UL has made significant strides in fostering a culture of health and wellbeing among students, staff, and visitors. Endorsed by UL's Governing Authority and Executive Committee, Healthy UL has championed initiatives aimed at ensuring that the healthy choice is the easy choice for all members of the UL community.

Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the global pandemic, Healthy UL has exhibited resilience and adaptability in continuing its vital work. Through collaborative engagement within and across the university, as well as with external stakeholders, Healthy UL has remained steadfast in delivering on the key objectives outlined in its original framework. Achievements underscore the success of Healthy UL, and these are evidenced throughout this document.

Moreover, UL's proactive commitment to the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework and to the International Healthy Campus Network symbolises its dedication to integrating health and wellbeing into every facet of campus life. The endorsement of the Charter by President Mey in 2023 exemplifies UL's pledge to implementing evidence-based practices and continuously improving efforts in prioritising and promoting health and wellbeing.

Looking towards the future, Healthy UL envisions building upon its achievements to further enhance the health and wellbeing of the UL community. With the unwavering support of internal and external stakeholders, Healthy UL 2.0 is poised to continue prioritising health promotion and fostering a supportive environment for physical, mental, and social wellbeing.

This new Healthy UL Framework is structured around its three pillars: Healthy Systems, Healthy Engagement, and Healthy People and Environments. Built on campus-wide consultation a comprehensive set of 30 actionable items have been identified, addressing the Healthy UL core themes of Healthy Environment, Sexual Health and Wellbeing, Substance Use and Gambling Support, Mental Health, Healthy Eating, and Physical Activity (Figure 1).

In addition to domain-specific actions, UL's commitment to embedding wellbeing within its cultural fabric remains resolute. This is evidenced in its focus on implementation, long-term sustainability and governance structures. By fostering collaboration with stakeholders and leveraging available resources effectively, UL aims to solidify its position as a trailblazer in promoting health and wellbeing within the higher education landscape globally.

Examples of this campuswide collaboration include initiatives such as the Food Philosophy, the CycUL scheme and the Students Designated Contact Persons Panel, where we work with colleagues from the Centre for Sustainable Future and Innovations, and Equality Diversity and Inclusion. External to UL, Healthy UL members are collaborating nationally with other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). UL faculty members are poised to make significant

Figure 1. The six Healthy UL themes

Sexual Health

Mental Health

Substance use & Gambling

Healthy Eating

Healthy Environment

Physical Activity

contributions to national professional education and the development of implementation tool kits for healthy campuses across Ireland. Leveraging their expertise and research insights, UL faculty will play a pivotal role in shaping the future landscape of health promotion in higher education, driving positive change and establishing UL as a beacon of excellence in the field. International collaboration is also evident through UL's hosting of the prestigious International Health Promoting Campuses Conference, showcasing its leadership and commitment to advancing health and wellbeing within higher education globally. This event will serve as a platform for sharing best practices, fostering collaboration, and inspiring innovation in campus health promotion.

It is important to express heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated members of the Healthy UL Steering Group, Sub-Group Leads, and all participants for their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment

to advancing health and wellbeing within our campus community. Their invaluable contributions have been instrumental in shaping the success of Healthy UL initiatives to date. Additionally, we extend our sincere thanks to the broader campus community and the Executive Committee for their steadfast support and commitment in prioritising health. It is through our collective dedication and collaboration that we continue to foster a campus environment where the wellbeing of every individual is esteemed and supported.

In conclusion, as Healthy UL continues to evolve, it remains steadfast in its mission to create a campus community where every individual can thrive. We invite all campus members to engage with this new Healthy UL framework (2.0) in pursuit of health and wellbeing. Healthy UL 2.0 is primed to continue its mission of creating a campus community where every individual thrives, setting new standards of excellence in health promotion and wellbeing.

Healthy Ireland, Healthy Campus Charter and Framework

Health and wellbeing are affected by many factors; economic status, education, housing, the physical environment in which people live and work. A number of national policies and strategies have been developed to support the Healthy Ireland vision in the keys areas of physical activity, obesity, tobacco, sexual health, mental health and drugs and alcohol. The HEA Higher Education Healthy Campus Charter and Framework is one such initiative; it is a framework through which Higher Education Institutions can address locally identified needs and national health priorities using a whole campus approach.

Healthy Ireland

Healthy Ireland is a government-led initiative with the goal of improving the health and well-being of the Irish population. It aims to address various health issues and promote healthier lifestyles. Recognising the significant role that higher education institutions (HEIs) play in the lives of students and staff; Healthy Ireland acknowledges the importance of promoting health and wellbeing within these institutions, using a settings-based approach. By integrating and embedding health promotion into the higher education sector, Healthy Ireland aims to create a supportive atmosphere that fosters the wellbeing of their whole community. These efforts not only contribute to the overall health of individuals but also help in reducing health inequalities and creating a healthier society.

National Healthy Campus Charter & Framework

The Healthy Ireland Healthy Campus Charter and Framework (Higher Education Healthy Campus Charter & Framework for Ireland 2020–2025), launched on July 2, 2021, jointly by Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly TD and by Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris TD, had as its aim to 'create a shared understanding of a Healthy Campus to guide and inspire action by Higher Education Institutions' (p3). The Charter and Framework are a scaffold for HEIs to integrate health and wellbeing into all aspects of campus life, including policies, programs, and environments. By committing to the charter, institutions pledge to create an environment that supports the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of staff, students, and the surrounding community.

International Healthy Campus Movement

The Healthy Campus Charter and Framework aligns with the Okanagan Charter, an international charter for health-promoting universities and colleges (Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges. 2015). It endorses a whole campus approach, including leadership strategy and governance, campus environments, campus culture and communications, as well as personal and professional development.

A Healthy Campus Advisory Group was established to oversee the national implementation, including representatives from the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS), the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Higher Education Authority (HEA), the Union of Students Ireland, the Technological Higher Education Association (THEA), and the Irish Universities Association (IUA).

A national Healthy Campus Coordinator was appointed to support HEIs in signing and delivering on the Healthy Campus Charter, develop and manage a national Irish Healthy Campus Network, to coordinate events and communications among members, and to represent the Higher Education Authority (HEA) in the International Health and Wellbeing Promoting Universities and Colleges (IHPUC) network. In 2022, HEIs were invited to commit to the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework and develop an Action Plan for implementation. UL was selected as an exemplar of a Healthy Campus, and Professor Catherine Woods presented the university's pioneering framework and initiatives at the inaugural network event. In January 2022, under the national framework, Healthy UL (University of Limerick) received €18,000 in funding to support the delivery of the Healthy Campus Charter.

Figure 2 displays the Healthy Campus Process; An inclusive, co-ordinated approach to improving health and wellbeing which includes 5 stages: Commit, Co-ordinate, Consult, Create and Celebrate and Continue. The process is cyclical and provides a 'how to' when implementing the Framework Higher Education Healthy Campus Charter & Framework for Ireland 2020 – 2025. The principles underpinning the HEA charter are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The principles underpinning the HEA Healthy Campus Charter
(Healthy Campus Charter and Framework, 2021)

Participation

Where student, staff and the wider campus community are actively engaged in deciding on and implementing health and wellbeing promotion actions.

Partnership

Where trans-disciplinary collaborations and cross-sector partnerships are fostered to create connections between health, learning and the campus structure.

Evidence based

Where formulation of policies and practices are guided by evidence, and where knowledge is created through action and research.
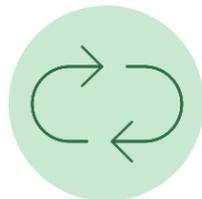
Sustainability

Where health and wellbeing of the campus community is infused in the everyday policies, teaching and learning, and research and innovation.

Healthy UL

The Journey So Far

Healthy UL was developed and launched in 2019. Its development involved **consultation** and **collaboration** with various stakeholders within and beyond the University community, including students, staff, faculty, administrators, and other community members. By engaging these stakeholders, the Healthy UL Framework reflected the diverse needs and perspectives of the community, increasing its effectiveness and relevance.

The endorsement by, and support, of the Governing Authority and Executive Committee of the University, and the appointment of a Healthy UL Manager demonstrated UL's **commitment** to **co-ordinate** and deliver on Healthy UL. In January 2023, President Mey signed the Healthy Campus Charter on behalf of the University of Limerick, signifying ongoing commitment to implementing a campus-wide approach to evidence-based practices and **continuous** improvement in promoting and **celebrating** health and well-being across the institution.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, Healthy UL has continued its work through collaborative engagement within and across the University, as well as with external stakeholders. One hundred percent of deliverables identified in Healthy UL 1.0 have been actioned, and 80% have been achieved. This significant benchmark is due to the tireless work of the Healthy UL Community, with the support of our colleagues in UL who engaged to promote health and wellbeing for all. In addition, external stakeholders have advocated and supported the Healthy UL agenda since its inception. This supported the overarching goal of embedding wellbeing campus-wide and within the culture of UL, and we continue with our mission to make the healthy choice, the easy choice, as we embark on Healthy UL 2.0.
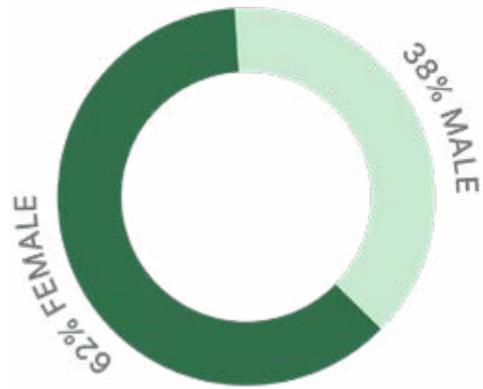
Student and Staff Demographics
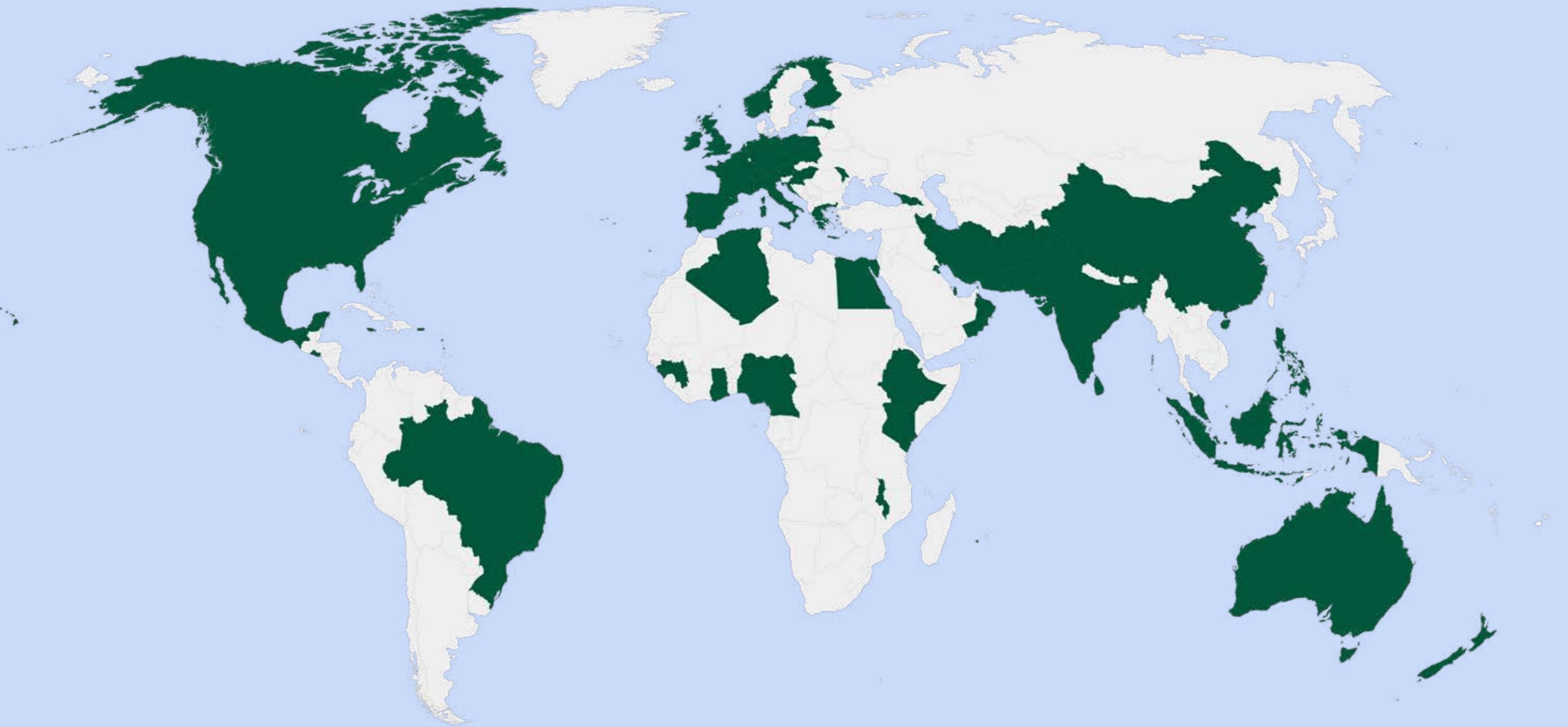
Selected
Not-selected

Students

Gender Distribution

*OTHER GENDER IDENTITIES EXCLUDED TO PRESERVE ANONYMITY

- 38% MALE
- 62% FEMALE

Course Distribution

- 89% UNDERGRADUATE
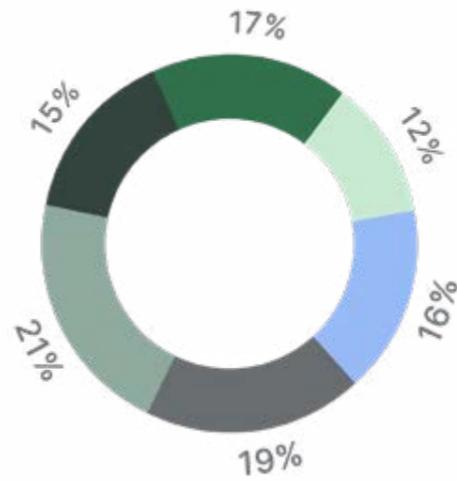- 11% POSTGRADUATE
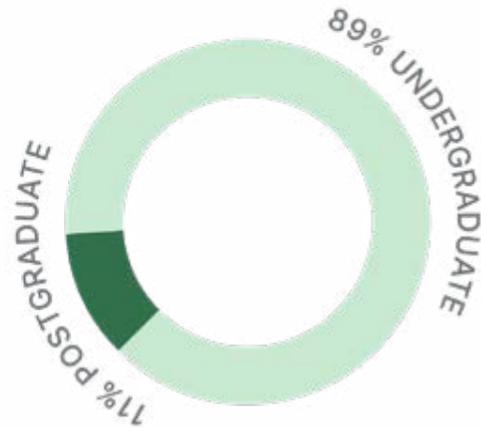
Distribution by household income

- 12% < €20,000
- 16% €20,000 - €35,000
- 19% €35,000 - €50,000
- 21% €50,000 - €70,000
- 15% €70,000 - €90,000
- 17% > €90,000

(Donut chart: 17%, 12%, 16%, 19%, 21%, 15%)

Distribution by Faculty

- 20% KEMMY BUSINESS SCHOOL
- 30% SCIENCE & ENGINEERING
- 19% EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES
- 21% ARTS, HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

(Donut chart: 20%, 30%, 28%, 22%)
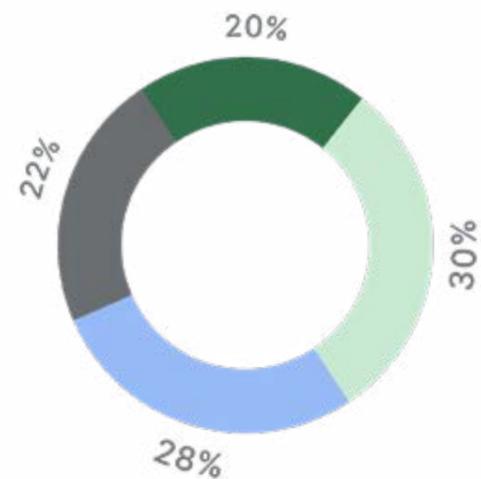
Staff

Gender Distribution

- FEMALE
- MALE

- 29% MALE
- 71% FEMALE

Year	Female	Male
2019	66%	34%
2020	75%	25%
2021	68%	32%
2022	72%	28%
2023	74%	26%
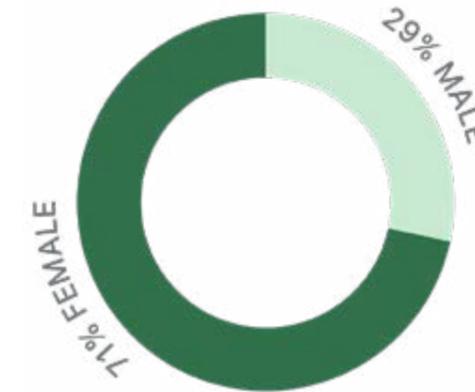
FOUBERT & HARMON (2013). HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY - EUROSTUDENT SURVEY (ADAPTED)
NOTE: ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS REPORTED "OTHER" / "PREFER NOT TO SAY"

Distribution of Staff Across Academic Fields 2019 - 2023

Field	Count
Health & Welfare (including medicine, nursing, he...)	338
Science, Mathmatics &Computing	283
Humanities & Arts	230
Social Sciences, Business & Law	182
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	166
Education & Teacher Training	109
Sports & Excercise related	101
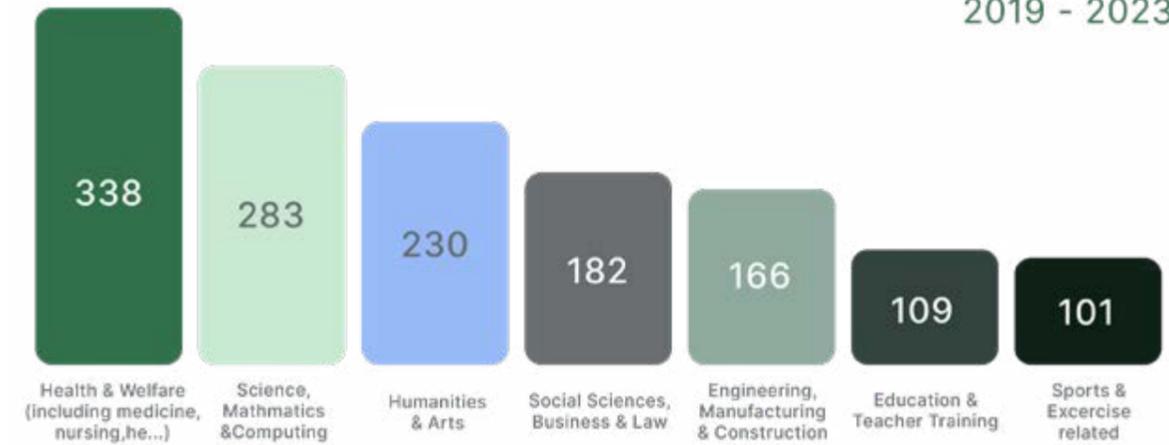
Length of Time Working at UL

- 29% 0 - 2 YEARS
- 16% 3 - 5 YEARS
- 14% 6 - 10 YEARS
- 13% 10 - 15 YEARS
- 28% 16+ YEARS

(Donut chart: 29%, 16%, 14%, 13%, 28%)
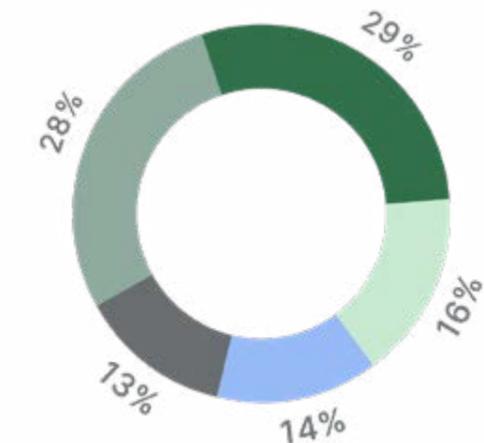
The Next Steps for Healthy UL: A Fork in the Road

The revised Healthy UL framework has carefully considered the transformative changes and new dynamics prompted by a demographic shift and rapid expansion of our campus community. Nationally, the university sector has experienced significant growth and expansion. Locally, since the initiation of the Healthy UL framework in 2018/2019 academic year, our university has undergone a remarkable 12% increase in its student population from 16,300 to over 18,300 in the 2022/2023 academic year. Notably, 3,300 of these students are engaged in annual international mobility highlighting substantial global reach.

Across five distinct faculties, the University presently facilitates over 70 undergraduate programs and over 200 postgraduate programs spanning graduate diplomas, taught and research masters, structured PhDs, and professional doctorates. Attracting students from over 100 countries, the University has a growing international student population, with 15% of the current student body coming from outside Ireland. This diversity is increasingly reflected across the university campus. Additionally, the University has a global network of over 120,000 alumni worldwide, enabling it to build robust international connections and partnerships.

In tandem with the growth of the student body, there has been a 29% increase in staff totalling 1965 academic and non-academic personnel as of 2022/23. Staff maintain a pivotal role in fostering an overall supportive and inclusive environment that enhances the overall university experience.

In addition to academic pursuits, the university offers cultural and arts facilities, recreational opportunities, conferences, cafes, and restaurants which welcome hundreds of thousands of guests annually. This provides a populated and stimulating campus environment all year round.

The University of Limerick continues its mission to promote educational excellence, innovation, societal engagement, inclusivity, entrepreneurship, civic engagement, sustainability, and employability. Aligning with its mission, UL continues to maintain its partnerships with universities both within and outside the European Union. These partnerships provide a range of study abroad options including Erasmus exchange, non-EU exchange, international cooperative education, short term, and dual degree programs. The revised Healthy UL framework is carefully considering the transformative changes and new dynamics prompted by this demographic shift and rapid expansion.

The Healthy Campus movement adopts a holistic understanding of health and advocates a whole-of-campus approach to create a learning environment, and organisational culture that enhances and promotes the health and wellbeing of its community. Given the changing landscape, locally, nationally and internationally, our institutional response needs to be agile, responsive and reflective of the dynamic environment. This is required to enable people to achieve their full potential. Following a thorough reflection on the implementation and impact of Healthy UL 1.0, along with extensive consultations with the Healthy UL community and stakeholders, we reaffirm our belief that Healthy UL 2.0 represents the most effective path forward in this dynamic environment.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS vs ACADEMIC YEAR
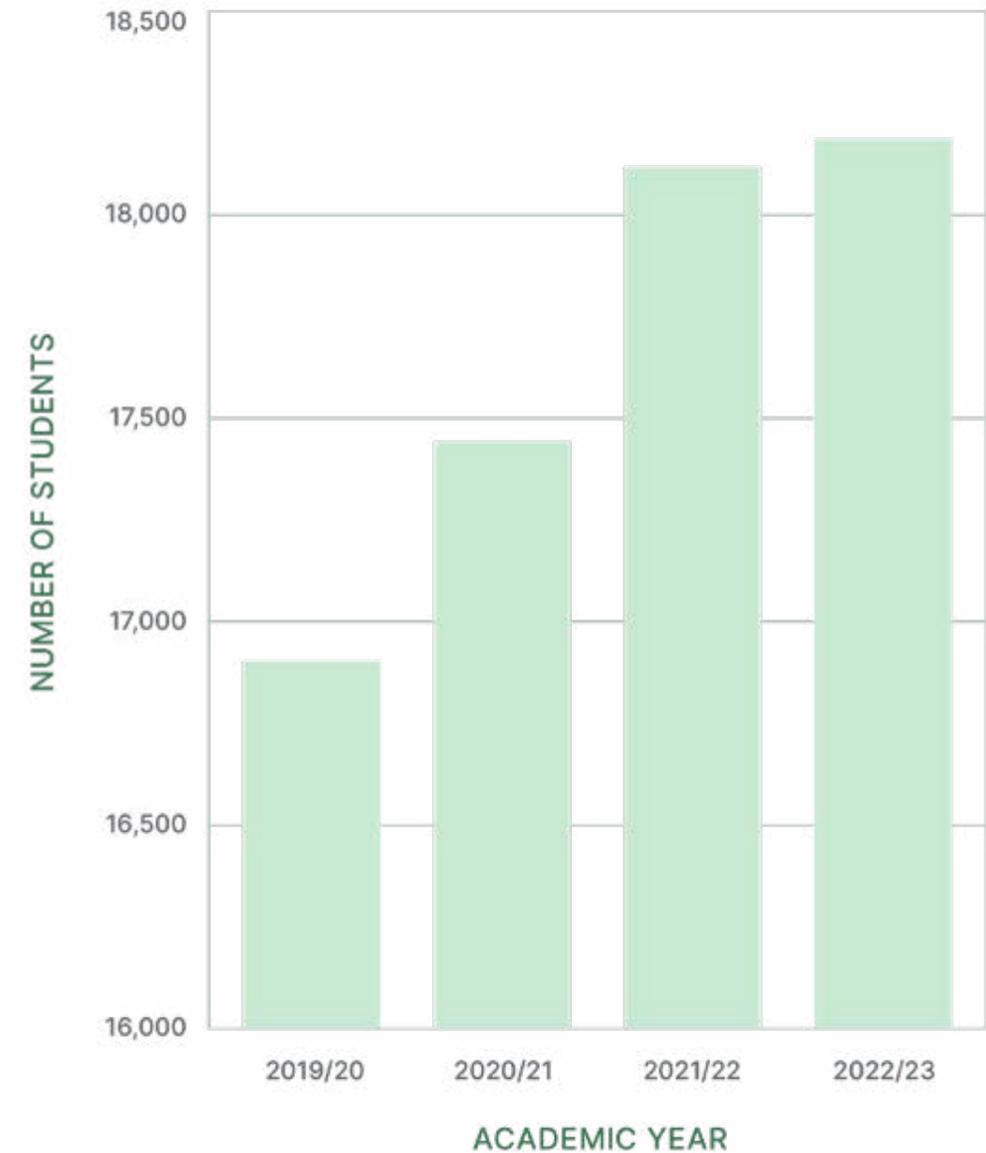
Healthy UL 2.0 Framework

Figure 4. Helthy UL 2.0 Framework

Reflective of The Healthy Campus Process which outlines an inclusive, coordinated approach to improving health and wellbeing through 5 stages (Commit, Co-ordinate, Consult, Create and Celebrate and Continue), the Healthy UL 2.0 framework has engaged with the continuation, consultation and creation phases in the preparation of Healthy UL 2.0.

Consultation and Creation

Continually reviewing and updating Healthy UL's framework, its aims, objectives, pillars, infrastructure and actions is an important aspect of maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of this health and wellbeing initiative. It allows for ongoing improvement and adaptation to changing circumstances, ensuring that Healthy UL remains a valuable and impactful resource for the UL community.

The development of Healthy UL 2.0 was informed by surveying students, staff and campus-wide stakeholders to identify common themes, concerns and priorities. This approach garnered the collective wisdom and insights of the UL community to reflect on the aims, objectives and structure of the Healthy UL 1.0, and provide feedback through open ended question format.

Data were analysed (N=1759 staff, 3289 students; see appendix A for summary results) and used to inform the agenda and discussions at a Strategy Day, Healthy UL 2.0, 'The Roadmap', which took place May 5th, 2023 (N=35, with representatives from students union, senior management, all subgroups and Steering Group members). The purpose of this consultation was to reflect on past achievements, evaluate ongoing efforts, and plan for the future.

The survey results and the Roadmap combined provided the scaffolding for Healthy UL 2.0 framework. Consensus was that the original framework remained relevant. Specific objectives were outlined, measurable targets, and timelines for implementation were suggested.

Outcomes of the Consultation Process

- There was consensus that the existing Healthy UL Framework was relevant, well-suited to UL community's evolving needs and priorities and the emphasis should be put on commitment to ongoing improvement and growth. The Healthy UL wheel remains representative of the framework and will be maintained.
- The 'Healthy UL' pillar was revised and renamed 'Healthy Engagement' as it was felt this more accurately reflected this pillar's work.
- Modifications were made to the existing objectives and actions to better align with the current demographics and needs of the community.

Objectives of Healthy UL 2.0

The specific objectives of Healthy UL 2.0 include:

1. **Objective 1:** To improve human and environmental health and wellbeing, which are determinants of learning, productivity, and engagement.

2. **Objective 2:** To build on UL's strengths, identifying and supporting existing actions to improve health and wellbeing across the University.

3. **Objective 3:** To consolidate and collectively enhance these actions, while simultaneously ensuring that UL has a comprehensive response to the Higher Education Authority's Healthy Campus Charter, aligning our actions with national and university strategies

4. **Objective 4:** To promote research, innovation and evidence-informed action.

5. **Objective 5:** To strengthen relationships, partnerships and collaborations with local authorities, communities, health authorities and other partners.

6. **Objective 6:** To ensure students are equipped for the challenges of transitioning to third-level education, and optimise their success using a whole systems approach.

To achieve these objectives, Healthy UL will continue to develop its three pillars, namely **Healthy Systems, Healthy Engagement and Healthy People and Environment.**

GOVERNANCE

HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES

PLATFORMS FOR INTERACTION

MONITORING & INTELLIGENCE

1. CREATE HEALTHY SYSTEMS

2. CREATE HEALTHY ENGAGEMENT

LEADERSHIP

FUNDING & RESOURCES

HEALTHY EATING

MENTAL HEALTH

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

3. CREATE HEALTHY PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENTS

SEXUAL HEALTH

ENVIRONMENT

ADDICTIONS
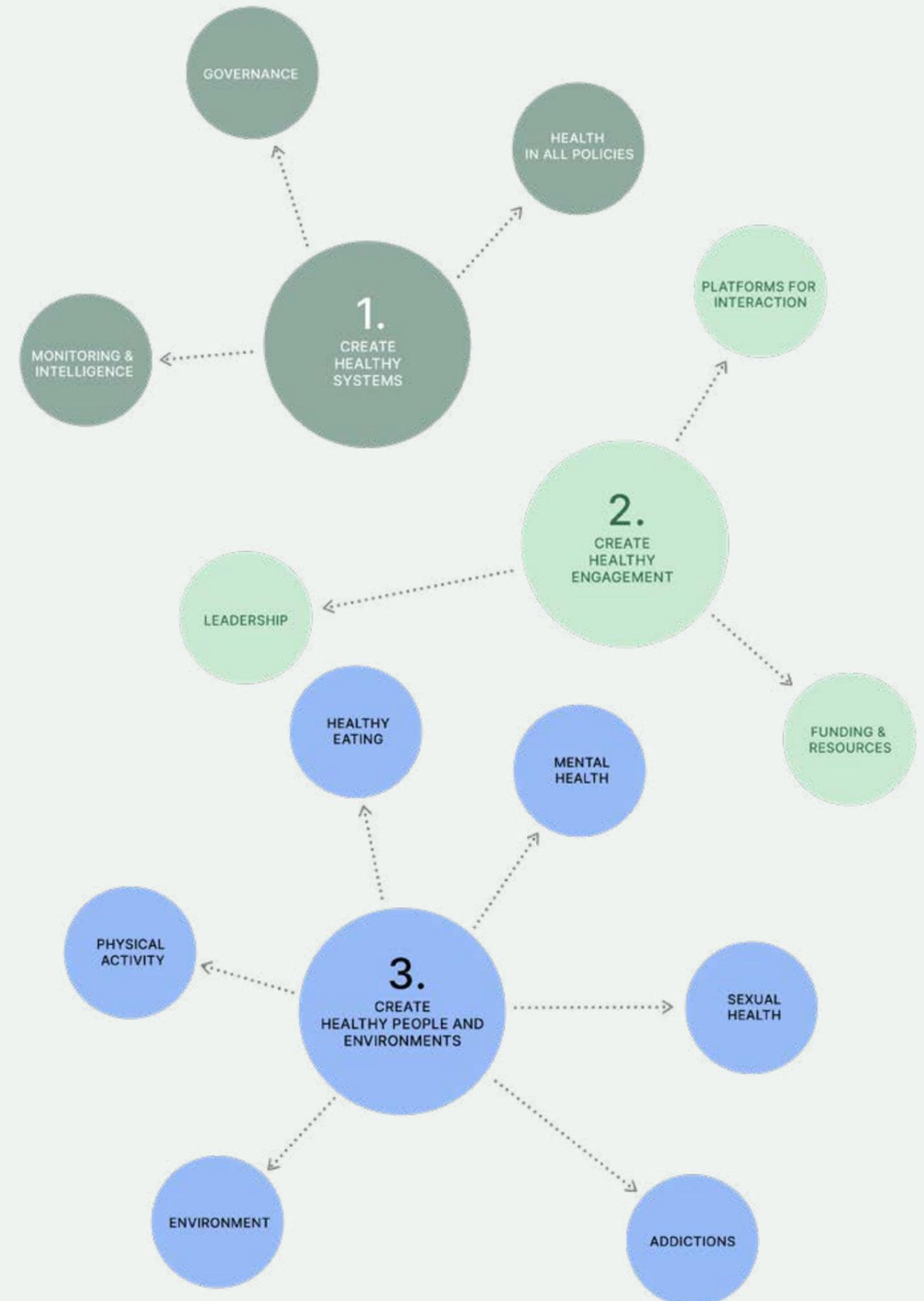
Pillar 1: Healthy Systems
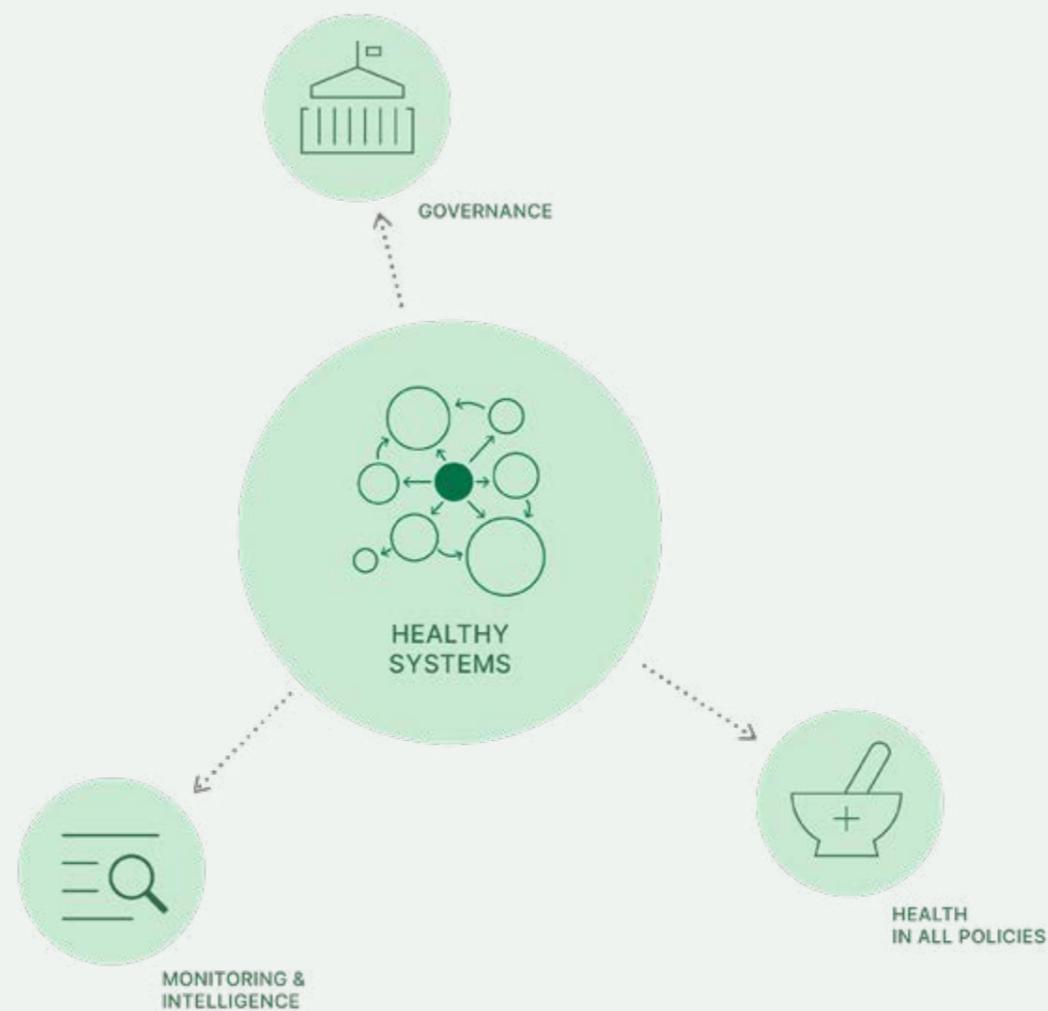
The original Healthy UL Framework developed a robust infrastructure and systems approach that has proven crucial for the successful implementation and long-term sustainability of Healthy UL.

GOVERNANCE

HEALTHY SYSTEMS

MONITORING & INTELLIGENCE

HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES

Healthy Systems will remain unchanged, consisting of three domains: **Governance; Monitoring and Intelligence;** and **Health-in-All Policies.** By aligning governance, monitoring and intelligence, and health in all policies, Healthy UL can effectively implement, monitor, and evaluate its initiatives while fostering and embedding a culture of health and wellbeing in university culture.

This involves ensuring that there are adequate human resources, such as dedicated staff and volunteers; financial resources allocated to support the programs and activities associated with Healthy UL. While environmental resources, such as sustainable physical spaces and organisational resources that align policies and procedures to support the objectives of Healthy UL will help integrate it into the overall culture and strategic plan. Drawing on a wide range of individuals and organisations ensures that Healthy UL benefits from diverse perspectives, expertise, and resources. This collaborative approach strengthens the implementation of Healthy UL initiatives, enhances the impact on the UL community, and promotes a comprehensive and integrated approach to health and well-being.

By establishing this infrastructure, Healthy UL can effectively address the health and wellbeing needs of the UL community, promote positive behaviour change, and promote and foster a culture of wellbeing on campus. The Healthy Systems pillar sets the stage for long-term success and ensures that the initiative can adapt and evolve to meet the changing needs and challenges of the UL community over time and provides a mechanism for organising resources, allocating responsibilities, and facilitating collaboration among different

stakeholders involved in the Healthy UL initiative. It puts systems in place to support the collection and analysis of relevant data and information. This data helps measure the impact of Healthy UL initiatives, identify areas of improvement, and make data-driven decisions for future planning and implementation. Monitoring systems play a crucial role in tracking progress, evaluating outcomes, and identifying trends or patterns that can inform the development of new strategies or interventions.

Under governance, the Executive Level Steering Group as well as the Healthy Campus manager strengthens the sustainability of Healthy UL. The Healthy Campus manager ensures that there is dedicated coordination and management as well as a central point of contact, facilitating collaboration among different stakeholders, and ensuring the effective implementation of Healthy UL initiatives. This renewed framework continues to build on Healthy Systems with these guiding actions.

As a research-intensive university, delivering on a research agenda is crucial for Healthy UL. Research serves multiple purposes, including benchmarking the current status of health and wellbeing within the UL community, setting realistic goals, and evaluating the effectiveness and sustainability of Healthy UL initiatives. Research helps identify areas of improvement, assess the impact of interventions, and guide evidence-based decision-making. By conducting rigorous research, Healthy UL is continuously improved and refined, ensuring that it remains relevant, impactful, and evidence informed. A research focus aligns with the monitoring and intelligence domain of the Healthy Systems pillar.
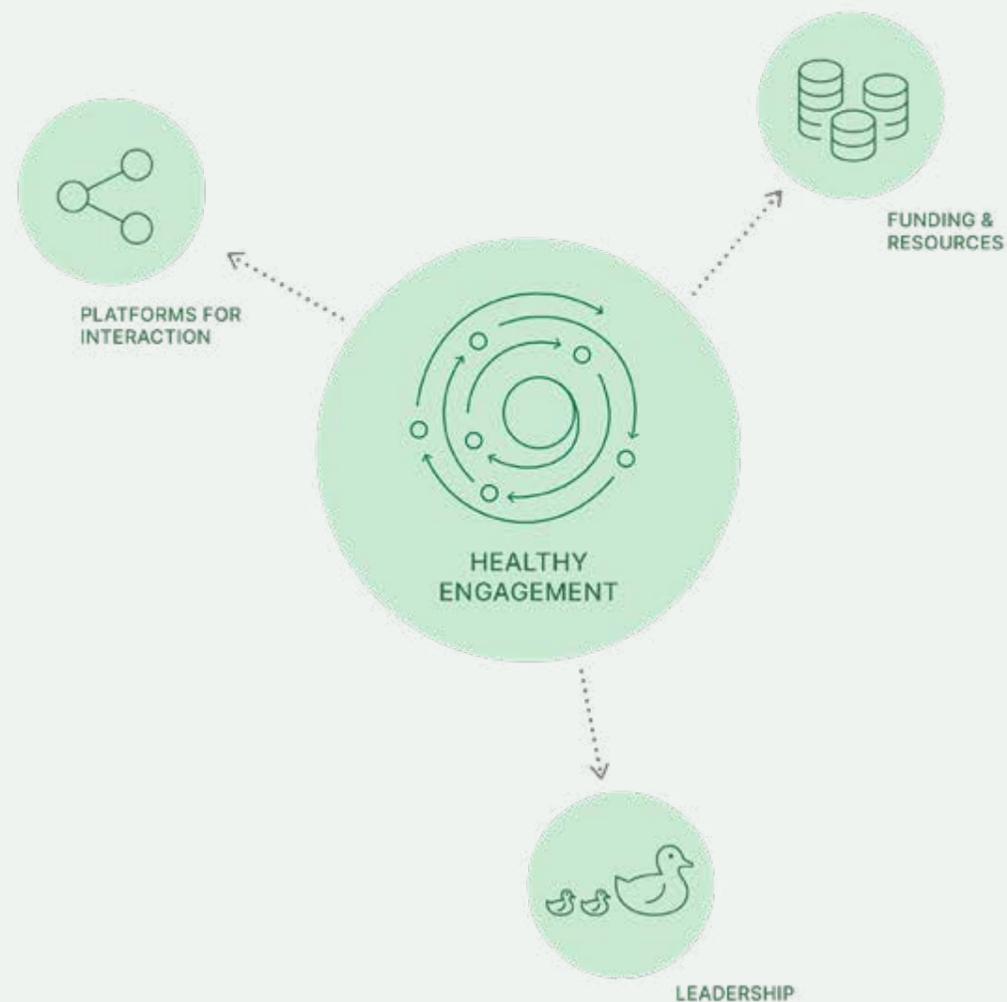
Table 1.1 : Healthy Systems

HEALTHY SYSTEMS PROPOSED ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
1.1 Governance: Continue to maintain governance structures to support project effectiveness and sustainability, and realisation of research opportunities	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long-term	**Healthy UL Steering Group** Healthy UL Manager Sub Group Leads University Leadership-EC, GA	Healthy UL Chair and Vice chair roles maintained. Healthy UL Manager post renewed. Steering Group maintained. Subgroup Leads and Subgroups continue. Terms of Reference for Steering Group and Subgroups reviewed as appropriate.
1.2 Metrics: Maintain quantifiable monitoring processes to support continued implementation of Healthy UL	Human Financial Organisational	Long-term	**Healthy UL Manager** Healthy UL Research team	Minutes, Project plan and Action Register updated on Sharepoint. Continue HUL surveys, data analysis and write up.
1.3 Health-in-all Policies: Monitor implementation of existing policies. Update existing policies and develop new policies that embed health and wellbeing within the culture of the campus community Continue to audit and advocate for Health-in-All policies	Human Organisational	Long-term	**Healthy UL Manager,** Campus Wide Stakeholders, Steering Group, Subgroup leads	Nutrition Policy, Sexual Health and Wellbeing Policy, Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

HEALTHY SYSTEMS PROPOSED ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
1.4 Leadership: Ensure continued support for Healthy UL at executive level	Human Financial Organisational	Long-term	**Executive Committee,** Governing Authority Steering Group Subgroup Leads HUL Manager	Adequate staffing of Healthy UL team. Ancillary budget for initiatives and event promoting health & wellbeing

Under timeframe: Shortterm = 6 months, Medium term = 12 months and Long term = 3 years.

Pillar 2: Healthy Engagement:

PLATFORMS FOR
INTERACTION

FUNDING &
RESOURCES

HEALTHY
ENGAGEMENT

LEADERSHIP

The Healthy Engagment pillar aims to foster a community where making the healthy choice is easier and supported, promoting overall health and wellbeing. "Engaging" the community is crucial in achieving this goal, and emphasis on communication and visibility is a powerful way to foster engagement and drive positive change.

By prioritising a whole-of-campus approach to communication and visibility campaigns, the message and benefits of Healthy UL reach a wider audience. This approach aims to create a shared understanding and collective responsibility for promoting health and well-being across all aspects of campus life.

The Healthy UL survey, disseminated annually since 2019 plays a vital role in this engagement process. By continually seeking input from students and staff on how best to support them, a commitment to listening and responding to their needs will be maintained. This feedback will facilitate tailored initiatives and educational campaigns to address

the specific trends, preferences, and challenges identified by the UL community. This personalised approach increases the relevance and effectiveness of initiatives, as they directly align with the needs and aspirations of the people they aim to support and ensure that Healthy UL remains responsive, adaptable, and focused on promoting the most impactful initiatives. This approach hopes to foster a sense of ownership and participation among the UL community, as they see their input being actively considered and implemented.

Overall, the emphasis on communication, visibility, and engagement through the Healthy UL survey and other mechanisms is a powerful strategy to build a community-supported culture of health and well-being, where individuals are empowered to make healthy choices and actively contribute to the overall well-being of the campus.

Key actions for the 'Healthy Engagement' pillar include:

Table 2.1 : Healthy Engagement

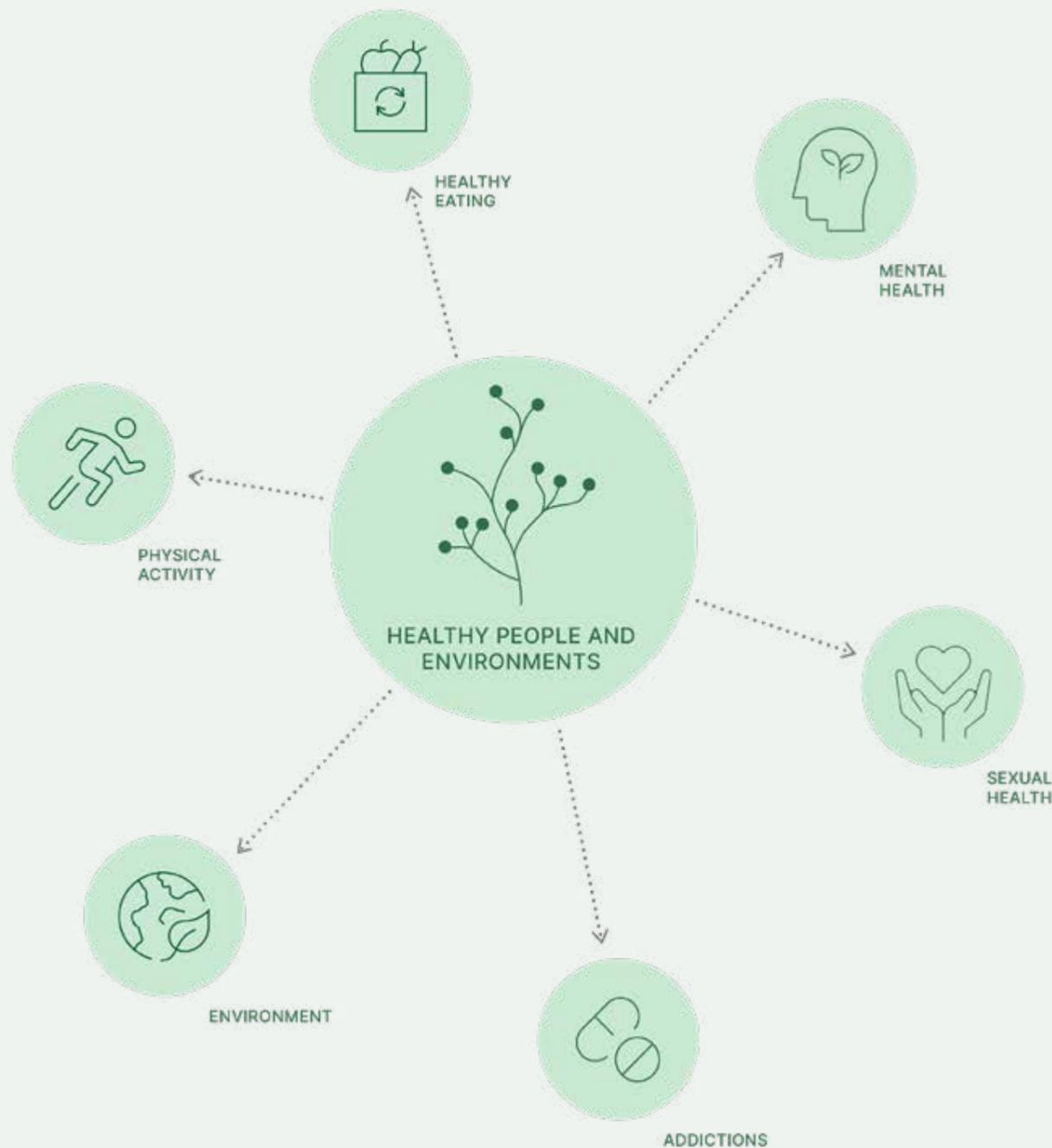| HEALTHY ENGAGEMENT PROPOSED ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
2.1 Communications & Visibility Plan: Write a Healthy UL 2.0 communications plan.	Human Financial Organisational	Short / Medium term	**Healthy UL Manager** Marketing and Communications; Students Union Departments and Services	Publish Healthy UL communication Plan (Short-term) Establish a wellbeing hub for Healthy UL team (Long-term)
2.2 Website expansion: Develop the Healthy UL website to house and signpost all wellbeing initiatives and resources.	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**Healthy UL Manager** Coop Student Subgroup leads Marcomms team	Interactive wellbeing platform (UWell) including interactive website
2.3 Embed health and wellbeing into teaching & curriculum: Develop new, enhance and scale up new engagement programmes for staff and students.	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**AVPSE** Student Life Healthy UL Manager Academic Departments Services	Integrate new evidence-based programmes to optimise student successes, e.g. : Advocate for Life Skills module, peer led transition programme, promote existing PCHEI led initiatives among teaching staff

*Note: Under timeframe: S=Short term 6 months, M=Medium term 12 months and L=Long term 3 years.
*PCHEI: Psychological Counsellors in Higher Education of Ireland
*AVPSE: Associate Vice President of Student Engagement

Pillar 3: Healthy People & Environments

HEALTHY EATING

MENTAL HEALTH

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

HEALTHY PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENTS

SEXUAL HEALTH

ENVIRONMENT

ADDICTIONS

This pillar focuses on addressing key lifestyle factors through high-quality services, programmes, and opportunities. The six themes of this pillar are:

Sexual Health and Wellbeing: Promoting sexual health education and providing resources for sexual well-being.

Substance Use and Gambling Support: Raising awareness and providing support for substance use and gambling-related issues.

Healthy Environment: Creating and maintaining a healthy and sustainable environment.

Mental Health and Wellbeing: Addressing mental health issues and promoting well-being.

Healthy Eating: Promoting and supporting healthy eating habits and nutrition.

Physical Activity: Promoting and encouraging physical activity to improve overall health and well-being.

The Healthy People and Environment of Healthy UL recommends prioritising resources for those most in need and targeting university-wide initiatives. It also aims to improve and consolidate existing programs while developing new ones to enhance impact.

Each theme is managed by a Healthy UL subgroup and within the framework the rationale, national context, and highlights or key achievements from Healthy UL is reported. Actions and deliverables associated with the thematic plan of work are outlined for Healthy 2.0.

Overall, this component aims to improve the overall health and well-being of the university community by addressing key lifestyle factors through comprehensive strategies and initiatives.

Sexual Health and Wellbeing

University is a critical period for students in the establishment of their adult personal lives. During the transition from secondary school to university, students develop many new relationships, some platonic and some sexual in nature. They also experiment more with their sexuality in a newly found independent living space in which they find themselves. This can present many challenges in terms of making good choices in relation to their sexual health and wellbeing. Although most primary and secondary school systems have education programmes around sexual awareness, they tend to have focussed on the biological aspects rather than on healthy relationships to date.

Following a strategy day held in May 2023 and extensive consultation with the Healthy UL community, previous initiatives of the Sexual Health and Wellbeing (SHW) subgroup underwent revisions and updates to align with recent advancements in the field and to prioritise key areas of focus for promoting sexual health and wellbeing for all for Healthy UL 2.0. This will involve working collaboratively with other subgroups to enhance overall health and wellbeing within the wider UL community. The actions of the SHW subgroup are delineated below and will be supplemented by collaborative endeavours across subgroups.

Following consultation with the Consent Framework Steering Group (a subsidiary of EDI) and the Healthy UL Steering Group, it was decided that the work of the Consent Framework Policy Review Group (PRG) and the SHW Group were sufficiently aligned to warrant their amalgamation into a single entity: the SHW Group. This amalgamation has taken place following the formal approval of the Sexual Violence & Harassment Policy, and the SHW policy for Staff & Students. Bringing together these working groups will enhance the effectiveness of initiatives such as awareness campaigns and educational efforts.

What are the national policies that influence this:

- A large-scale funded research project, led by NUIG has provided some very useful insights and a framework for a suitable education programme for third level students around Smart Consent. Full report and other relevant documentation is available at: www. nuigalway. ie/smartconsent

- Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions: Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions.

SEXUAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROPOSED ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.1.1 Continue to roll out Active*Consent workshops, with emphasis on promotion and awareness, to all students	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**SHW Sub Group** Healthy UL Manager Student Affairs Orientation Officer CTL ULSU Faculties	Over 10,000 students have attended workshops to date, and will continue to be rolled out on an annual basis.
3.1.2 Lobby for the opening of a SATU in UHL (Sexual Assault Treatment Unit) in University Hospital Limerick	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Short term Long term	Healthy UL Manager **SHW Subgroup** Sexual Health and Wellbeing Sub Group Student Affairs ULSU School of Law	Outpatient SATU follow up service launched on campus 28th January. SATU Cork will be available on campus once a month on an ongoing basis to Midwest community. SATU facility in the Mid-West Area.
3.1.3: Awareness and Education Campaigns Promote SHW annually during the academic terms- 4 annual thematic days, student led volunteers for initiatives (passion for projects), Consent ambassadors	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**SHW Subgroup** Healthy UL manager Marcomms Services Student Life	Consent Ambassadors recruited. Awareness and Education Campaigns ongoing.

SEXUAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROPOSED ACTION	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.1.4 Continue to develop regional partnerships with relevant external organisations; e.g: SATU Cork, Active Consent, Rape Crisis Centre	Human Organisational	Short term	**SHW Sub Group** HR-EDI	Collaborations AY 24/25 to include sexual health promotion initiatives with: Active Consent Bystander Intervention Programme UCC SATU Cork Rape Crisis Centre MidWest Galway Rape Crisis Centre GOSHH Shoutout
3.1.5: Launch student designated contact persons panel.	Human Financial Organisational	Short term	**HR-EDI**	Panel of staff convened and launched in October 2023. Available to staff and students.
3.1.6: Develop Healthy UL SHW policy & implementation Plan	Human Financial Organisational	Short term	**SHW Sub Group**	Policy drafted and approved by Governing Authority 24th September 2024. Formal launch of RespectfUL Campus Campaign scheduled for 5th March 2024.

*Note: Under timeframe: S=Short term 6 months, M=Medium term 12 months and L=Long term 3 years.
CTL=Centre for Teaching and Learning, ULSU=UL Students' Union, HR=Human Resources,
EDI=Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, SATU=Sexual Assault Treatment Unit

Substance Use and Gambling Support (SUGS)

The behaviours of gambling, and use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco/vaping are highly prevalent within Irish society. These behaviours can adversely impact upon individuals, communities, and society. To support a behaviour change, there is a need to develop interventions at a community level and that are setting appropriate, such as within university structures in accordance with national strategies. To date, the Substance Use and Gambling Awareness Subgroup and Officer (SUGSO) have been very active with a campus wide approach.

What are the national policies that influence this :

There are several national policies relevant to this area including.

- Department of Health (2017) Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery: A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025 https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Reducing-Harm-Supporting-Recovery-2017-2025.pdf

- Department of Education and Skills (2020) Framework for Response to the Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education Based on the Report of the Rapid Response Group (RRG) on Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/d3e6a0-framework-for-response-to-the-use-of-illicit-substances-in-higher-ed/

- Department of Health (2015) Tobacco Free Ireland Action Plan, 2015: Dublin. https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Tobacco-Free-Ireland-Action-Plan.pdf

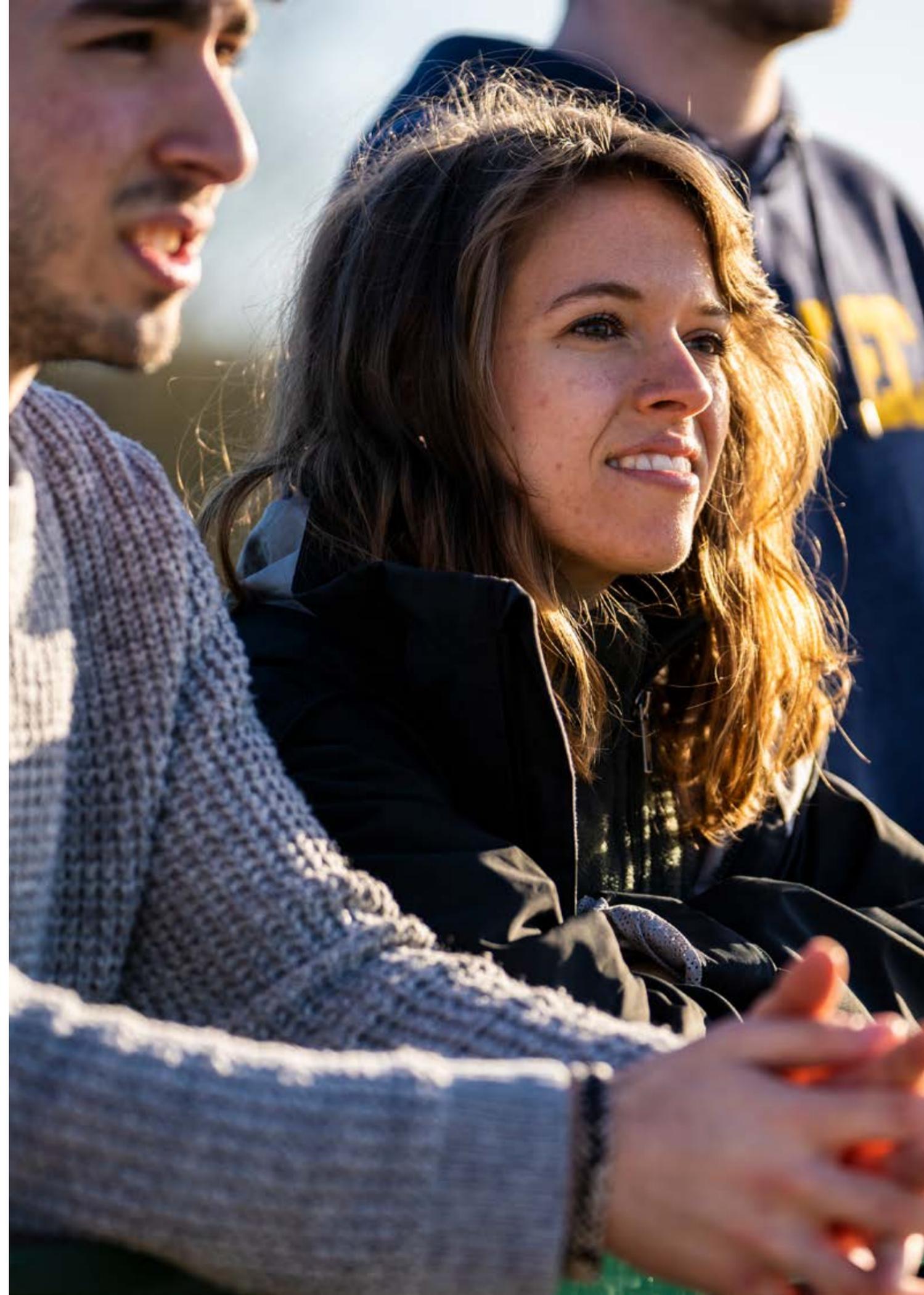- Department of Health (2013) Healthy Ireland - a framework for improved health and wellbeing 2013 - 2025. https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/HealthyIrelandBrochureWA2.pdf

PROPOSED ACTION SUBSTANCE USE AND GAMBLING SUPPORT	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.2.1 Pilot and evaluate a drug/alcohol/ gambling/ support and signposting drop-in service(s). This service will be led by the Substance Use and Gambling Support Officer (SUGSO) from a health promotion perspective. It is not a counselling or treatment service. The SUGSO will develop pathways to specialist services connected to the HSE and Community based services.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Short term	**SUGSO** HSE Mid-West Regional Drug and Alcohol Forum Community networks	Soft launch of a hybrid service, followed by establishment of drop in service with dedicated space. Evaluation of service to follow
3.2.2 Evaluate the online support services for staff and students, update as appropriate and develop appropriate screening tools.	Human Financial Organisational	Short term	**SUGSO** Healthy UL Manager Subgroup lead	Evaluation completed, resources and supports up to date.
3.2.3 Explore ways of upskilling/training students and staff on crisis management as it applies to drugs and alcohol.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	**Healthy UL Manager** SUGSO Subgroup lead Services	Liaise with the UL protocol crisis management group to ensure that drug/alcohol crisis issues are addressed. Create guidelines and protocol for crisis situations in relation to drugs and alcohol

PROPOSED ACTION SUBSTANCE USE AND GAMBLING SUPPORT	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.2.4 Review and update the Student Substance Use and Misuse Policy as appropriate.	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**SUGSO** Healthy UL Manager Subgroup Lead	Policies updated for 2024

*Note: Under timeframe: S=Short term 6 months, M=Medium term 12 months and L=Long term 3 years.

*Note: SUGSO: Substance Use and Gambling Support Officer

Healthy Environment

The interconnection between health and the environment is widely recognised and supported by a plethora of scientific research. Recognising the interconnectedness of health and the environment allows for integrated approaches that promote both. Policies and initiatives that prioritise clean air and water, preserve natural spaces, encourage active transportation, and promote sustainable behaviours can result in positive impacts on both individual wellbeing and the overall health of the planet. These approaches can contribute to a healthier and more sustainable future for both current and future generations. By fostering partnerships and engaging with external entities, universities can contribute to a larger movement towards sustainable development and a greener environment.

Nurturing a culture of sustainability and health during time at university, can promote and enable students to develop attitudes, behaviours, and problem-solving skills that will benefit their personal and professional development as they transition out to the workforce and beyond. As they enter their careers and engage in various sectors of society, they can apply their knowledge and values to bring about positive change.

Universities have a unique opportunity to leverage the synergy between the environment and health to create positive outcomes on an individual and societal scale. By integrating sustainability and health into the curriculum, implementing campus sustainability initiatives, empowering students, and supporting research and innovation, universities can inspire and equip the next generation of leaders to drive a societal transition towards a more sustainable future. Healthy Environment is a subsidiary of Envirocom, a UL group of Faculty, staff and students, that advise the Executive on environmental issues and promotes environmental awareness on campus. The achievements and agenda outlined below are driven by Envirocom, this highly motivated and effective group.

What are the national policies that influence this:

- Climate Action Plan 2024

- Smarter Travel: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020

- A Resource Opportunity: Waste Policy for Ireland

- National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017:2021

- Irelands Energy Efficiency Action Plan

- Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy

PROPOSED ACTION HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.3.1 Promote Smarter Travel Increase number and visibility of bicycle parking spaces, car sharing schemes, dockless public bikes, electric vehicle charging points, improved access to campus for cyclists and pedestrians, additional bus routes/stops.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	**Healthy UL Manager Envirocom, Buildings and Estates** Smarter Travel Coordinator Limerick City and County Council Bus Service Providers	A documented increase year-on-year for active transport infrastructure, its ease of access and visibility Student bike rental scheme (CycUL) and IScycle project are sustained Car sharing schemes on wellbeing website, shuttle bus services across city
3.3.2 Reduce Pollution and Waste Water refill stations and phase out single use plastics. Reduce noise pollution	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Short term	**Envirocom** Buildings and Estates ISCycle Project Team	43 water bottle refill stations to be implemented. Single use plastics phased out, compostable cups and composting bins to be introduced. Mitigation of Noise Pollution Plan Audit of current vehicles, to be replaced with cargo ebikes/ trikes where feasible and e vehicles.

PROPOSED ACTION HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.3.3 Landscape development/ management plan to be developed To protect and enhance biodiversity on campus.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	**Envirocom Buildings and Estates** Envirocom	Beginners Bee keeping Program, Inter University Environmental Bash annually Introduction to Organic Gardening Roof Garden Green Campus Reaccreditation

*Note: Under timeframe: S=Short term 6 months, M=Medium term 12 months and L=Long term 3 years.
ISCycle=Inclusive Sustainable Cycling https://www.iscycle.ie

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHW) Subgroup has continued to focus on promoting and supporting positive mental health among the UL Community, in challenging times, particularly during and after the global pandemic. This, along with a cost-of-living crisis, has brought additional stressors on our students and staff. The findings from the World Health Organisation's World Mental Health International College Student Initiative (2018), highlight that Mental ill health problems affect a significant proportion of college and university students worldwide. Rates of mental distress among students appear to be increasing over time in many countries. Factors contributing to student mental health challenges include academic pressures, financial worries, social isolation, and adjusting to independent living.

The Healthy UL Student and Staff Survey also indicated the impact of Covid-19 on the wider community's mental health and wellbeing (See Appendix A). The USI Mental Health Survey (2019), reported extremely high rates of anxiety (38.4%), depression (29.9%), and stress (17.3%) among students in Ireland. Over 32% of students have had a formal diagnosis of a mental health condition at some point. 20.9% of students lack someone to talk to about personal/emotional difficulties. Most students (35.3%) learn about support services through their student union. Students utilise both on-campus and off-campus mental health services. Free on-campus counseling is an important resource. Working commitments can negatively impact students' ability to socialise. Engaging in extracurricular activities is associated with better mental health

The My World Survey-2 (2019) highlights a complex landscape for young people, revealing both challenges and improvements. While levels of anxiety and depression have risen, some risk factors—such as alcohol use, bullying, and financial stress—have shown a decline. However, this is contrasted by a troubling decrease in self-esteem, optimism, and life satisfaction among students. On a more positive note, access to supportive adults in students' lives appears to have improved in some areas. Thus, supports and access play a vital role in reinforcing positive mental health amongst our student population.

Surveys like these are invaluable for understanding the mental health and well-being of students in Ireland. They provide critical insights into levels of distress, coping strategies and help-seeking, alcohol use and risk and protective factors. With this data, local initiatives can be informed and adapted to better meet the needs of students, ultimately fostering a supportive environment that promotes mental health and resilience. By using evidence-based strategies, communities can more effectively address the challenges students face and embrace their overall well-being.

The data also highlights critical gaps, like a significant proportion of students lacking someone to confide in. But it's positive to see that many students are able to access on-campus counselling and that involvement in campus life is linked to better wellbeing.

Addressing this crisis will require a multi-pronged approach - expanding access to affordable, quality mental health services; reducing stigma;

promoting work-life balance; and fostering more supportive, connected campus communities. Universities, policymakers, and society as a whole have an urgent responsibility to prioritise student mental health and wellbeing.

This data continues to inform the key agenda of the Mental Health subgroup, with aims to prioritise key issues as highlighted above in advocating for positive mental health.

The Department of Health's 'Connecting for Life – Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide' includes a framework for Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. Irish HEIs are to develop strategies to implement this framework.   In response to this framework UL has recently established UL Mental health Committee. The Committee aims to develop a Student Mental Health and Well-being Policy.

The Healthy UL Framework will through its own specific agenda strive to support the Mental Health Committee in achieving this.

What are the national policies that influence this:

- UL has been represented on and is an active participant in the Mid-West Suicide Intervention plan, 2017-20, which is part of the national suicide prevention strategy, Connecting for Life (CFL)'.

- The National Mental Health Framework and Suicide Prevention Plan, along with the Implementation Plan are consistent with international best practice regarding primary mental health care services and supports.

- Furthermore, our recommendations are in line with the findings from the My World Survey 2 (2019), a national study of youth mental health in Ireland, USI Student Mental Health Survey (2019) as outlined above and HOW COUNSELLING AND PEER-LED SERVICES CAN OPTIMISE STUDENT SUCCESS: An integrated approach to student mental health and wellbeing in higher education, 3 Set Report (2023).

PROPOSED ACTION MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.4.1 Continue to promote clinical delivery models to support students, eg: Silvercloud, Niteline & Togetherall, Student ambassadors & testimonials	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	UL EIST MHW Subgroup **Healthy UL Manager** AVPSE Student Life	Niteline service implement AY23/24, Volunteering on campus to be rolled out AY 24/25 Silvercloud to be re-procured for another 3 year term
3.4.2 Encourage activities that promote positive mental health. By linking with local/regional partners (LMHA), collaborating with other subgroups for annual activities, promoting the mental wellbeing benefits associated with other subgroup activities. Advocate for healthy non market-based spaces that encourage social interaction	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	UL EIST UL HR HSE Subgroups Student Life Services **MHW Subgroup**	Non market based spaces Green spaces Benches Life skills modules incorporating resilience and mindfulness within the curriculum where feasible
3.4.3: Work with university structures to ensure positive mental health is core to the ecology of learning, utilizing external supports such as Jigsaw and Niteline	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	UL EIST **Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs and Student Engagement** Healthy UL Manager MHW Subgroup Academic depts	Peer Led Transition Programme Life-Skills Module Development Wellness/Wellbeing Website

PROPOSED ACTION MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation: Monitoring implementation of the above actions and evaluation resources and uptake use satisfaction via Healthy UL Survey Statistical analysis of use of services Focus Groups	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**Healthy UL Manager** MHW Subgroup HUL research team	HUL Survey Research and publications Focus Groups

*Note: Under timeframe: S=Short term 6 months, M=Medium term 12 months and L=Long term 3 years.

*LMHA=limerick Mental Health Association, MHW=Mental Health and Wellbeing

Healthy Eating

Nutrition is fundamental to the overall health and well-being of individuals and communities. It directly impacts physical health, mental well-being, and academic performance. Healthy Eating plays a key role in maintaining a healthy weight as well as encouraging positive lifestyles generally. Emphasising healthy eating within the Healthy Campus and Healthy UL initiatives supports a holistic approach to health, acknowledging the intricate link between diet, lifestyle, and long-term health outcomes.

The findings of the Irish Adult and Children Nutrition surveys over the last ten years show that eating habits are not consistent with optimal health. Excess consumption of saturated and trans fats, sugars and salt and low consumption of fruit and vegetables are concerning trends in the Irish diet (IUNA 2001; IUNA 2017). A Healthy Ireland survey (Ipsos 2016) demonstrated that the Irish dietary guidelines (FSAI 1999) do not seem to be translated into daily food choices or dietary pattern population changes. In the 2016 Healthy Ireland summary report (Ipsos 2016), just 26% of the Irish population reported that they eat the recommended ≥5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily and 65% report that they consume snack foods or sugar-sweetened drinks daily. In the Student Activity and Sport Study Ireland (SASSI) survey of 8122 students from 31 third level institutes across Ireland, 48.5% of students (41% UL) surveyed reported never or rarely (1-3 times) consuming fresh food weekly. In contrast, approximately 1 in 5 students reported regularly consuming convenience food weekly (SASSI). Healthy Ireland have identified both achieving a healthy weight and a healthy diet as key performance indicators and targets in their framework. Informed by the extant literature and knowledge of current dietary practices among our community, the Healthy Campus project group workshop discussions identified 'Healthy Eating' as a core theme and an area of priority in the Healthy UL framework.

What are the national policies that influence this:

- The Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Policy Priority Programme was established in late 2016 with a remit to 'mobilise the health services to improve health and wellbeing by increasing the levels of physical activity, healthy diet and healthier weight across service users, staff and the population as a whole, with a focus on families and children'. The National Policy Priority Programme Team work to co-ordinate and lead activity across the health services to ensure implementation of primary policies. In relation to healthy eating the policy **'A Healthy Weight for Ireland: Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016 – 2025' objectives are to** increase the percentage of people in Ireland who are eating a healthier diet by increased consumption of fruit and vegetables, reduced consumption of foods high in fat, salt and sugar and achieving and maintaining a healthier weight. The Health Eating sub-group has identified specific tasks and policies with the HEAL Programme which include but are not limited to the updated Healthy Eating Guidelines, calorie posting at point of choice policy, healthier vending policy, Healthy Heart at Work policy, HIQA policy for caterers, as well as the national breastfeeding action plan.

- Healthy Ireland Framework 2013-2025: This policy aims to improve the health and well-being of the population, emphasizing the need for healthy eating and nutrition as crucial components of public health.

- National Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016-2025: This policy focuses on reducing obesity levels in Ireland through promoting healthy diets, physical activity, and lifestyle changes.

- Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) Guidelines: The FSAI provides comprehensive guidelines on nutritional standards and food safety, which are essential for maintaining high standards in campus dining services.

- Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023: This policy by the Department of Education highlights the importance of student well-being, including nutrition, as a core element of the educational environment.

1. https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/
2. https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/healthy-eating-guidelines/
3. https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/calorie-posting/
4. https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/healthier-vending/
5. https://irishheart.ie/your-health/our-health-programmes/healthy-workplaces/healthy-eating-award/
6. https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/A-Healthy-Weight-for-Ireland-Obesity-Policy-and-Action-Plan-2016-2025.pdf
7. https://www.breastfeeding.ie/Uploads/breastfeeding-in-a-healthy-ireland.pdf

Following consultation with the campus community, we have revised and advanced activities for the next iteration of Healthy UL. Building on the successes of Healthy UL 1.0, the revised Healthy UL 2.0 strategy will enhance and expand healthy eating initiatives with the following activities:

Table 3.5: Healthy People and Environments: Healthy Eating

PROPOSED ACTION MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.5.1 Student-Led Health Initiatives: Empowering students to lead health and nutrition clubs, peer-to-peer support groups, and innovative projects that promote healthy eating practices among their peers.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Short term	**Healthy Eating Subgroup** Heathy UL Manager Student Unions	Development of a guide outlining structure, roles and responsibilities for student-led health and nutrition clubs; a series of interactive workshops led by students on nutrition related topics. Documentation of initiatives.
3.5.2 Expand Healthy Eating Services. Further diversification of healthy meal options in campus dining, including more plant-based and allergen-free choices.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	Healthy Eating Subgroup Healthy UL Manager Student Unions PCC **Commercial entities on Campus**	Meal and food offerings expanded to meet the diverse needs of the student and staff population.
3.5.3 Enhanced Nutritional Education Programmes: Introducing advanced and comprehensive nutritional education programs, focusing on practical skills and knowledge	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	**Healthy Eating Subgroup** Healthy UL Manager Student Unions PCC Commercial entities on Campus	Online Classes Interactive workshops Cooking classes HUL Demo Kitchen and pantry

Table 3.5: Healthy People and Environments: Healthy Eating

PROPOSED ACTION MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.5.4 Integration with Academic Programs: Collaborating with academic departments to integrate nutritional education into relevant curricula, promoting interdisciplinary learning and engagement.	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**Healthy Eating Subgroup** Academic staff Healthy UL Manager Student Unions	EOIs to relevant departments to collaborate; group and terms of reference to be established. Comprehensive framework to outline objectives and actions to achieve objectives developed.
3.5.5 Continuous Evaluation and Feedback Mechanisms: Establishing robust feedback systems to continually assess the effectiveness of healthy eating initiatives, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of the campus community.	Human Organisational	Short term	Healthy Eating Subgroup **PCC** **Healthy UL Manager** Academic staff	HUL Survey Research and publications Focus groups

*Note: Under timeframe: S=Short term 6 months, M=Medium term 12 months and L=Long term 3 years.
PCC=Plassey Catering Committee

Physical Activity

Physical activity contributes to reduced mortality (Ekelund et al, 2016), improved mental health outcomes (McDowell et al, 2019) and a lower burden of disease from non-communicable diseases (Katzmarzyk et al, 2022) and from infectious diseases (Sallis et al, 2021). The benefits of a physically active society are numerous and profound, with regular participation linked to social outcomes such as increased happiness (Fu et al, 2018) and social capital (Fu et al, 2018). Regular participation in health enhancing physical activity is a core theme of Healthy UL. *In Ireland, the new national physical activity guidelines recommend that adults should do:*

> "at least 2 hours and 30 minutes to 5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity; or you can do half as much vigorous intensity PA - at least 1 hour and 15 minutes to 2 hours and 30 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity; or a combination of both throughout the week".

In addition,

> "Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities at moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week". (Department of Health 2024).

UL is widely referred to as "Ireland's Sporting Campus", with many excellent existing initiatives and opportunities on campus for sport and physical activity. However, room for improvement in our policies, programmes and environment (particularly indoor physical activity spaces) lends an obvious synergy, where we can not only improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of our people, our environment and our wider campus community but also develop an international reputation and expertise in physical activity promotion and sport performance.

Reviews have reported that physical activity levels of students tend to vary across global regions, with around 50-60% reporting sufficient levels (Irwin 2004; Keating et al. 2005). In the Student Activity and Sport Study Ireland (SASSI) survey of 8122 students from 31 third level institutes across Ireland, 64% were sufficiently active to meet the national guidelines and subsequently get the health benefits associated with regular physical activity. From our own Healthy UL survey, final participants (N = 3221) had a mean age of 21.7 (SD = 6.45) with 50.5% identifying as female. Pre-pandemic (2019), 63.4% met national aerobic physical activity guidelines, compared to 50.3% (2020), 65.9% (2021) and 48.2% (2022) in subsequent years. Meeting muscle-strengthening activities guidelines did not change from 2019 - 2021 (55% - 56%) but increased to 62% post-confinements (2022). Among staff in UL, the 2022 data showed that 50% reported meeting the aerobic physical activity guidelines, 37% meeting the muscle strengthening recommendations for health and the majority (95%) indicating that participation in regular health enhancing physical activity could improve their lives. physical activity could improve their lives.

Through further consultation with the wider Healthy UL community, as well as relevant stakeholders, the physical activity actions for Healthy UL 2.O show areas for action and focus on a collaborative approach across all six thematic areas. See below:

Table 3.6: Healthy People and Environments: Physical Activity

PROPOSED ACTION MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.6.1 Prioritise Inactive: Continue to engage with students and staff who are inactive and uninterested in traditional service delivery options.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	**UL Sport** Healthy UL Manager Physical Activity Subgroup ULSU PESS Marketing and Comms	Provide programmes to assist in meeting physical activity guidelines for health
3.6.2 Programmes: Continue to consolidate existing and develop new programmes, where necessary, to support a physically active campus .	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Long term	**UL Sport** Healthy UL Manager Physical Activity Subgroup ULSU	Document programme number, target group and type
3.6.3 Research: Continue to research current levels of physical activity and barriers/ enablers to participation	Human Financial Organisational	Long term	**Healthy UL** research team Subgroup	Healthy UL Survey Final Year Projects via PESS
3.6.4: Create partnerships with national governing bodies and Limerick Sports Partnership to develop local Get Walking/ Swimming etc For example, through: Peer mentoring Internal platform to promote events Develop reward system Open access activities (drop in and play)	Human Organisational	Short term	**Physical Activity Subgroup** Healthy UL Manager UL Sport ULSU LSP	Wellness website/app Peer mentor programme Activity participation events

Table 3.6: Healthy People and Environments: Physical Activity

PROPOSED ACTION MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	TIME-FRAME*	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY PARTNERS	OUTCOME/DELIVERABLE
3.6.5: Accessible and affordable opportunities for the use of UL outdoor sport and physical activity facilities to be enhanced.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Medium term	**UL Sport** Healthy UL Manager Physical Activity Subgroup ULSU PESS Marketing and Comms	Data to show improvements in quantity, quality, affordability and accessibility of UL sport and physical activity facilities.
3.6.6 UL Indoor Facilities: Improve quality, quantity, breath affordability and accessibility of UL's indoor strength, conditioning and cardiovascular spaces for sport and physical activity for students and staff.	Human Financial Environmental Organisational	Medium term	**UL Sport** Healthy UL Manager Physical Activity Subgroup ULSU PESS Marketing and Comms	Data to show improvements in quantity, quality, affordability and accessibility of UL sport and physical activity facilities.

To advance the understanding and implementation of health and wellbeing initiatives at UL and beyond during the lifespan of this Framework 2.0, Healthy UL aims to embed the following principles within the culture and community of the campus:

- To implement sustainable practices and policies that promote health and wellbeing, taking into account the environmental impact
- To foster a culture of inclusivity, diversity, and equality in relation to health and wellbeing, ensuring that all members of the UL community have access to and benefit from health-promoting initiatives

- To continue to maintain monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness and impact of the implemented actions, allowing for continuous improvement
- To advocate for and contribute to the development of policies and practices that prioritize health and wellbeing in higher education institutions and in society as a whole
- To create a supportive and enabling physical and social environment that promotes healthy lifestyles and positive mental health for all members of the UL community

*Note: Under timeframe: S=Short term 6 months, M=Medium term 12 months and L=Long term 3 years.

Healthy UL Research: Outputs and Impact

UL aims to be a leading university in advancing health and wellbeing (SDG 3), focusing on system change, policies and initiatives that drive measurable improvements in health outcomes with impact. By conducting cutting-edge research that addresses critical health issues, UL seeks to enhance public health and contribute positively to the wellbeing of our communities. Following on from a gap analysis that was conducted in 2017 that informed the development of the Healthy UL Framework, a Healthy UL cross-sectional survey for students and staff that has been conducted annually since 2018. Over 1729 staff and 3289 students have completed the survey, providing in depth analysis of health behaviours of the wider UL community, as well as vital feedback on the impact of the Healthy Campus initiative. In 2022, Aoife Noonan was successful in her bid for the Healthy UL PhD scholarship and has endeavored to carry out in-depth data analysis on the 5 rounds of surveys conducted.

Aoife's work to date has included: developing, piloting and launch of the fourth and fifth years of the Healthy UL repeated cross sectional survey, harmonizing the data from year one to year four, analyzing the data and preparing manuscript for publication

- (Noonan, A., Tierney, A., Norton, C., Ng, K., Woods, C., (2024) Prevalence of Risky Health-Related Behaviors and Associated Factors in University Students: A 4-Year Repeated Cross-Sectional Study |BMJ Public Health In production).

Additionally, she has presented Healthy UL research at various national and international conferences which included the following published abstracts:

- **Prevalence, risk, and protective factors of health among Irish university students: a repeated cross-sectional study** (paper presented by Healthy UL PhD Candidate, Aoife Noonan, at the European Public Health Conference, Dublin, October 2023).

Aoifes research outputs to date are referenced further in Healthy UL Research Outputs to Date on page 103

The Role of Physical Activity and Strength Training on the Mental Health Outcomes of University Students Across the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Repeated Cross-Sectional Study
Aoife Noonan, Sarah Kennedy, Catherine Norton, Audrey Tierney, Kwok Ng, Catherine Woods
European Journal of Public Health, Volume 34, Issue Supplement_2, September 2024, ckae114.191, https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckae114.191
Paper presented by Healthy UL PhD Candidate, Aoife Noonan at the Health Enhancing Physical Activity Conference, Europe 2024.

Purpose

The COVID-19 pandemic heightened mental health challenges experienced by university students. While benefits of regular moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) and strength training physical activity (STPA) on mental health are well documented, confinements related to the pandemic restricted opportunities to engage. This paper aims to investigate associations between MVPA and STPA on the mental health and happiness of university students, prior to (2019), during (2020 & 2021) and post COVID-19 pandemic-related confinements (2022).

Methods

Data from an annual repeated cross-sectional survey over 4 years (2019-2022) were analyzed. Measures included MVPA (IPAQ-SF), STPA (item from CSSPA+YA), mental health (MHI-5: dichotomized as good vs poor), happiness (single item scored from 1-10 from SAPAS) and demographic items. All measures were previously validated in the context of university students. After post-stratification weighting, independent samples t-tests and chi-square tests were conducted using IBM SPSS 29. Associations between mental health outcomes of individuals meeting weekly MVPA (150 minutes) and STPA ($\geq$ 2 sessions) guidelines were compared to non-compliers.

Results

Final participants (N = 3221) had a mean age of 21.7 (SD = 6.45) with 50.5% identifying as female. Pre-pandemic (2019), 63.4% met MVPA guidelines, compared to 50.3% (2020), 65.9% (2021) and 48.2% (2022) in subsequent years. Meeting STPA did not change from 2019 - 2021 (55% - 56%) but increased to 62% post-confinements (2022). Both happiness and mental health were statistically significantly higher pre-pandemic compared with during and post-pandemic (p-values < 0.05). Positive associations were found in all four years between meeting STPA guidelines and both mental health (p < 0.05) and happiness (p < 0.05). No associations were observed between meeting

MVPA guidelines and mental health any year. Nonetheless, in 2021, meeting MVPA guidelines was associated with higher happiness scores (p = .020, g = .230). Contrary in 2022, a negative association was observed (p = 0.04, g = .119).

Conclusion

STPA engagement prior to, during, and post pandemic restrictions was associated with better mental health outcomes, although associations with MVPA were inconclusive. While future research is needed, findings may be of interest to researchers and health professionals.

Her other presentations have included at the International Society for Physical Activity and Health Congress at the Palais de Congress, Paris and at the All-Ireland Postgraduate Conference at the Atlantic Technological University.

Healthy UL continues to provide data for student analysis as part of final year projects, Masters programmes and PhDs at the University of Limerick as part of our research and continuous improvement agenda. These include but are not limited to:

- 17 undergraduate and postgraduate projects analyzing healthy UL data.
- 3 PhD students.
- 1 Healthy UL PhD student scholarship
- Appointment of 1 research assistant
- 6 conference presentations.
- 1 international conference award.

The **Health Research Institute (HRI)** is a cross-faculty institute that brings together researchers from UL and partner institutions, focused on convergent and translational health research. The academic leaders of Healthy UL are strongly rooted within the HRI. The research agenda of Healthy UL aligns with the HRI's aim to conduct excellent research to enhance people's health and well-being and transform the health environment for the population.

Since 2015, the HRI has continued to drive interdisciplinary, translational health research with real-world impact. Healthy UL continues to support this research, via our annual surveys, which capture insight into health behaviours within the UL community, as well as identifying potential areas for impactful change. The Healthy UL survey also assesses the impact and effectiveness of Healthy UL initiatives, thus providing a useful monitoring and evaluation tool. See Appendix A for further information on Healthy UL research.

Collaboration is not limited to our colleagues in the HRI. External partnerships with other HEIs and agencies have resulted in meaningful outputs such as the Duhei Study with UCC, in 2021. In 2023, Dr. Catherine Norton with Dr. Cuisle Ford, Trinity College, Dublin were awarded funding to develop Ireland's first Open Course 'Supporting a Whole Campus Approach to a Healthy Campus'. The award recognises leadership in the Healthy Campus initiatives on the island of Ireland and the successful implementation of Healthy UL. Funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and the Higher Education Authority (€20,000), the Healthy Campus Open Course is at the forefront of educational innovation in Ireland and internationally.

In 2023, the Higher Education Authority & National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education tendered for the 'Development of an Evaluation (process and outcomes) Toolkit to support the Implementation of the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework '. Prof. Catherine Darker, Trinity College Dublin in collaboration with Professor Woods and the Healthy UL team, and with colleagues from Munster Technological University and University College Cork were successful and launched the toolkit in Trinity College Dublin with the HEA, on November 12th, 2024.

Healthy Partnerships & Collaborations

A whole campus approach is integral to the Healthy Campus Charter and Framework and a key focus for Healthy UL. Aligning our agenda and developing key internal and external partnerships has been achieved by:

- Engaging diverse stakeholders across different departments and units to coordinate efforts and leverage resources
- Addressing health and well-being from multiple angles - academic, administrative, social, environmental, etc.
- Creating a culture of health that is normalized and integrated into the everyday life of campus
- Providing comprehensive support and opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to prioritize their health
- Maximizing impact and sustainability of health promotion initiative

These partnerships include:

- BeWell
- Centre for Sustainable Futures and Innovation
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion
- Buildings and Estates
- Health and Safety
- Student Unions
- Associate Vice President of Student Engagement Office
- ISCycle
- Campus Life Services (PCC)
- First Seven Weeks
- ULGlobal
- Student Affairs
- Student Volunteering
- Library Information Services
- Envirocom

By bringing together different expertise, perspectives, and areas of influence, the university can take a holistic, coordinated, and impactful approach to improving overall campus health and well-being.

Some of the successes as a result of this approach include but are by no means limited to:

- Pooling of resources, expertise, and funding from different departments and units to scale up initiatives
- Aligned messaging and programming that reaches diverse campus populations
- Shared ownership and buy-in for health and well-being priorities
- Identification of synergies and opportunities to integrate health into existing processes/ structures
- Improved data collection, evaluation, and continuous improvement of efforts
- Enhanced visibility and support for health promotion work across the institution

External partnerships include the following.

- Health Service Executive
- Roselawn House Health Centre
- Jigsaw
- Niteline
- Technological University of the Shannon
- Mary Immaculate College
- Trinty College Dublin
- Mid West Drug and Alcohol Task Force
- QUIT Mid West,
- Munster Technological University
- University College Cork
- Atlantic Technological University, St Angelas
- Healthy Limerick
- Limerick City and County Council
- Higher Education Authority
- International Health Promoting Campuses Network

Healthy UL continues to engage with our international colleagues in the International Health Promoting Campuses Network. The University of Limerick were successful in securing the bid to host the International Health Promoting Campuses Conference (2025 IHPC Conference — IHPCN (healthpromotingcampuses.org) in June 2025. This prestigious event occurs every decade, and in 2025 will see delegates from across the globe travel to UL to share ideas and experience on how best to promote health and wellbeing in third level campus communities.

Healthy UL would like to acknowledge all contributors and thank them for their tireless efforts and valued contribution to date. We look forward to continuing to work together. By bringing different stakeholders to the table, Healthy UL has likely been able to develop a more comprehensive understanding of campus health needs and implement multi-faceted solutions. The collaborative approach also helps ensure sustainability, as health becomes embedded into the university's core functions and culture.

Resource Requirements

Healthy UL developed key deliverables and as we continue to implement these, we have modified them to align with the evolving landscape of third level education. We continue to strive to embed the Healthy Campus Framework and National Charter, as well as the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework.

We will continue to do this by embedding health and wellbeing within the culture of UL and the curriculum available to our students. We work closely with our partners in the Centre for Future Foresights and Innovation, EDI, Student Affairs, Be Well, and Student Engagement (AVPSE/ Student Life/PSU). Aligning specifically with **SDGS 3,7** and **11** and continue to support the overall Strategic Plan of the University, by working towards the key objectives outlined on page 71.

Healthy UL Space Requirements

Lobby area	Open area for students/staff to avail of health promotion/educational information resources
Healthy UL Office Space	Office space x 2, with communal space for Subgroup/Steering Group meetings accommodating 15
Niteline Volunteer Space	Small room, locked cupboard, 2 desks
Student Lifeskills Workshop Space	Interactive Classroom space -accommodating 30 students accessing kitchen
Kitchen-Kitchen for students to use, and for demos	A professional-grade kitchen space with high-end appliances and cookware would be ideal. Adequate counter space for instructor demos and student participation. Audiovisual equipment for presentations and then storage for utensils, supplies etc. Pantry space
Peer Support Service (pending approval)	Office space x1, avail of workshop space
Bike Hub	PCC: Bike storage/lab and student facing space
Non market space for students if not already accounted for in New Student Building	Open space for students to congregate, eat homemade food and storage for students to store own food
SUGS Drop In Service Space	Confidential student facing space for SUGS Officer to utilise for one-to-one consultations

Key actions in Healthy UL 2.0 include aligning with our colleagues in wellbeing services and complement and augment existing supports for students and staff, as well as increasing visibility to students and staff, consolidating wellbeing supports available.

As the Healthy UL team grows, continued personnel, financial and space resources are required. A Healthy UL manager, administrative support, a Healthy UL PhD studentship and an annual coop placement is required to maintain the momentum and ensure delivery of the Healthy

UL objectives. In addition, a dedicated space will offer visibility to students, as well as centralising health and wellbeing as core university business, embedding it within the community of the HEI. Key to this integration, is aligning Healthy UL with similar services/colleagues, to facilitate alignment and augmentation of existing services, with the ultimate aim of delivering an all-encompassing health and well-being service and space to students and staff. Finally, a small budget to cover operational costs for promoting Healthy UL initiatives and encourage UL community engagement is necessary.

Healthy UL Community Members

Healthy UL Steering Group

NAME	TITLE	AREA REPRESENTED
Catherine Woods	**Chair**, Professor	Dept of Physical Education and Sports Science
Audrey Tierney	**Co-Deputy Chair**, Professor	School of Allied Health
Catherine Norton	**Co-Deputy Chair**, Associate Professor	Department of Physical Education & Sport Sciences
Sarah Kennedy	**Healthy UL Manager**	Faculty of Education and Healthy Sciences
Ann-Marie Creaven	Associate Professor	Psychology Dept
Ronan Cahill	Student President	Student Life
Marie Connolly	Director of Human Rights	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Eva Devaney	Substance Use and Gambling Support Officer	Faculty of Education and Sports Science
Siofra Foley	Student Welfare Officer	Student Life
Ronni Greenwood		AVPSE
Anne Griffin	Associate Professor	School of Allied Health
Lucy Edith Kiiza	Postgraduate President	Postgraduate Students Union
JJ Leahy	Professor	Dept of Chemical Sciences
Ian Sherwin	Director of BSc Sport and Exercise Sciences Programme	Dept of Physical Education and Sports Sciences
Aoife Noonan	Healthy UL PhD Student	Dept of Physical Education and Sports Sciences
Patricia Noonan	Business Partner	Human Resources

Sexual Health and Wellbeing

NAME	TITLE
Marie Connolly (Chair)	Director Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Sarah Kennedy	Healthy UL Manager , Faculty of Education and Health Sciences
Maria Healy	SVH Prevention & Response Manager, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Claire Kearns	Nurse Practice Manager (SHC), Student Health Centre
Karen Fanneran	Employee Relations Manager, Human Resources
Ellen Fitzmaurice	Student Support & Development Manager, Student Affairs
Shane Laffan	Student Life Advice & Advocacy, Student Life
Síofra Foley	Student Welfare Officer, Student Life
Lucy Edith Kiiza	Postgraduate President, Post Graduate, Students Union
Cynthia Abudango	Student Engagement & Support Officer, Student Affairs
Andrea Crockett	Student Engagement & Support Officer, Student Affairs

Substance Use and Gambling

NAME	TITLE	AREA REPRESENTED
Eva Devaney	Co-Chair, Substance Use and Gambling Support Officer	Faculty of Education and Health Sciences
Andrea La Touche	Co-Chair, Student Community Engagement Liaison Officer	Global & Community Engagement
Shane Laffan	Deputy Chair, Advice and Advocacy Team	Student Life
Therese Hennessy	Associate Professor School of Nursing AND Midwifery	School of Nursing and Midwifery
Evie Kearney	Residence Life and Operations Manager	Campus Life Services
Lucy Edith Kiiza	Postgraduate President	Postgraduate Students Union
Sarah Kennedy	Healthy UL Manager	Faculty of Education and Health Sciences
Siofra Foley	Student Welfare Officer	Student Life
Roisin Doogue	Associate Professor in General Practice	Graduate Entry Medical School
Ronan Keane	Student Engagement Support Officer	Student Affairs
Rachel Lenihan	Lecturer	School of Education
Christina O'Connor	Associate Professor	Kemmy Business School

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NAME	TITLE	AREA REPRESENTED
Muireann McMahon	Chair, Associate Professor	School of Architecture & Product Design
Gabriela.Avram	Emeritus Professor	
Ronan Cahill	Student President	Student Life
Patricia Conlon	Emeritus Associate Professor	
Roisin Conway	Executive Administrator	School of Nursing and Midwifery
Bernadette Connaughton	Associate Professor	Dept. of Politics & Public Administration
Bernadette Connaughton	Associate Professor	Dept. of Politics & Public Administration
Ronan Courtney	Professor	Department of Biological Sciences
Ellen Fitzmaurice	Student Support and Development Manager	Student Affairs
Colin Fitzpatrick	Professor	Department of Electronics & Computer Engineering
Elizabeth Gabbett	Teaching Assistant	School of History and Geography
James Green	Professor	School of Allied Health
Adrienne Horan	Educational Technologist	Faculty of Education and Health Sciences
Vicky Kelly	Sustainability Engagement & Operations Manager	Sustainable Futures and Innovation

Envirocom

NAME	TITLE	AREA REPRESENTED
Sarah.Kennedy	Healthy UL Manager	Faculty of Education and Health Sciences
Sheila Killian	Emeritus Professor	
Elisa Minoue	Student Sustainability Coordinator	Sustainable Futures and Innovation
Caoilfhionn Ni Bheachain	Associate Professor	Department of Management & Marketing
Thomas O'Shaughnessy	Educational Assistive Technology Centre Manager	ITD
John O'Sullivan		Buildings and Estates
Margaret Phelan	Digital Learning Specialist	Glucksman Library
Derval Ryan	Student Communities Officer	Student Life
Yvonne Ryan	Associate Professor	Department of Chemical Sciences
Marlene Schwingeler	UL Student	
Chidi Usanga	PhD Student	Computer Science and Information Systems
JJ Leahy	Professor	Department of Chemical Science

Mental Health and Wellbeing

NAME	TITLE	AREA REPRESENTED
Ann-Marie Creaven	Chair, Associate Professor,	Dept of Psychology
Ronan Cahill	Student President	Student Life
Philip Desmond	Student Engagement and Support Officer	Student Affairs
Linda.Fitzgerald	Student Volunteering and PVA Manager	
Siofra Foley	Student Welfare Officer	Student Life
Annmarie Grealish	Associate Professor	School of Nursing and Midwifery
Ronni Greenwood		AVPSE
Abbie Jones	Healthy UL Coop Student	Faculty of Education and Health Sciences
Ailish Larkin	Librarian	Student Engagement and Success
Hayley O'Gorman	Senior Counsellor	Eist Counselling Service
Caroline Rafter	Erasmus Mundus Global MINDS European Coordinator	Dept of Psychology
Mary Ellen NiCheidigh	Senior Counsellor	Eist Counselling Service

Healthy Eating

NAME	TITLE	AREA REPRESENTED
Anne Griffin	Chair, Associate Professor	School of Allied Health
Rob Hickey	Health and Safety Officer	Human Resources
Sarah Kennedy	Healthy UL Manager	Faculty of Education and Health Science
Sylvia Murphy Tighe	Associate Professor	School of Nursing and Midwifery
Catherine Norton	Associate Professor	School of Allied Health
Audrey Tierney	Professor	School of Allied Health
Annmarie Ryan	Associate Professor	Dept of Marketing and Management
Stephen Taylor	Manager	UL Visitor Centre

Physical Activity

NAME	TITLE	AREA REPRESENTED
Ian Sherwin	Chair, Associate Professor	Dept of Physical Education and Sports Science
Ronan Cahill	Student President	Student Life
Matt Herring	Professor	Dept of Physical Education and Sports Science
Ross Higgins	Lecturer in Civil Engineering	Science and Engineering
Sinead Kelly	Gym Manager	UL Sport
Sarah Kennedy	Healthy UL Manager	Faculty of Education and Health Sciences
Lucy Kiiza		Postgraduate Students Union
Aoife Noonan	Healthy UL PhD Student	
Neasa O'Donnell	Senior Executive Sports Manager	UL Sport
Catherine Woods	Professor	Dept of Physical Education and Sports Science

Conclusion

Reflective of The Healthy Campus Process which outlines an inclusive, coordinated approach to improving health and wellbeing through 5 stages (Commit, Co-ordinate, Consult, Create and Celebrate and Continue), the Healthy UL 2.0 framework has engaged with the continuation, consultation and creation phases in the preparation of Healthy UL 2.0. We have celebrated the various milestones and successes to date and are invigorated and optimistic for the next phase of Healthy UL. A vibrant research programme is in place to evaluate the development, impact and outcomes of health promotion activities across the university community. In the next five years, we will continue the international dissemination of our experience in order to consolidate UL as a global health promotion exemplar.

In this framework, we have documented the actions and deliverables of both the original and revised Healthy UL strategies. We thank the institution for the support of these vital initiatives and are confident of the ongoing commitment to health promotion activities at the University of Limerick.

The implementation of the action items set out in this Framework will lead to the realization of the 'Healthy UL' objectives, the ultimate deliverables of which are:

1. **Objective 1:** To improve human and environmental health and wellbeing, which are determinants of learning, productivity, and engagement.

2. **Objective 2:** To build on UL's strengths, identifying and supporting existing actions to improve health and wellbeing across the University.

3. **Objective 3:** To consolidate and collectively enhance these actions, while simultaneously ensuring that UL has a comprehensive response to the Government's Healthy Ireland framework., aligning our actions with national and university strategy

4. **Objective 4:** To promote research, innovation, and evidence-informed action.

5. **Objective 5:** To strengthen relationships, partnerships and collaborations with local authorities, communities, health authorities and other partners.

6 **Objective 6:** To ensure students are equipped for the challenges of transitioning to third-level education,and optimise their success using a whole systems approach.

These objectives, when achieved through the implementation of the action items outlined in this Framework 2.0, will contribute to creating a healthy and thriving University of Limerick community, benefiting students, staff, and the wider society.

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- World Health Organisation's *World Mental Health International College Student Initiative* (2018)

Links to Relevant Policies

Environment and Health

- Department of Health (2015) Tobacco Free Ireland Action Plan, 2015: Dublin.
- Climate Action Plan 2024
- Smarter Travel: A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020
- A Resource Opportunity: Waste Policy for Ireland
- Irelands Energy Efficiency Action Plan
- Public Sector Energy Efficiency Strategy
- A National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017:2021
- SmarterTravel
- National Cycle Network
- Project Ireland 2040

Substance Use & Gambling Support

- Department of Health (2017) Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery: A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025
- Department of Education and Skills (2020) Framework for Response to the Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education Based on the Report of the Rapid Response Group (RRG) on Use of Illicit Substances within Higher Education

Sexual Health and Wellbeing

- Active Consent NUIG
- Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions: Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Department of Health (2013) Healthy Ireland - a framework for improved health and wellbeing 2013 - 2025
- Department of Health's 'Connecting for Life – Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide, 2016-2024:
- Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023:
- Sharing the Vision 2020-2030, Sharing the Vision - HSE.ie
- The National Mental Health Framework and Suicide Prevention Plan

Healthy Eating

- https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/
- https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/healthy-eating-guidelines/
- https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/healthwellbeing/our-priority-programmes/heal/calorie-posting/
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- Healthy Weight in Ireland: Obesity Policy and Action Plan 2016-2025

Physical Activity

- WHO Global Action Plan on Physical Activity (GAPPA)
- Get Ireland Active, Ireland's first National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP), was published in 2016
- Every move counts: National Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Ireland (2024)
- Get Ireland Active! The National Physical Activity Plan for Ireland (2016)
- Working for Third Level Sport and Physical Activity- Student Sport Ireland Strategic Plan 2017-2020 (2017)
- National Outdoor Recreation Strategy 2023-2027
- National Sports Policy 2018-2027

Appendix A: Healthy UL Research Outputs to Date

Data from the Healthy UL surveys is a valuable resource for undergraduate and postgraduate student research projects from a variety of programs across faculties. Through the Healthy UL Steering Committee, and with appropriate Ethical approval, access is given to anonymised data sets to allow students to investigate research questions of interest. Many students have carried out projects and completed reports following analysis of these datasets. Project reports and other outcomes are submitted to Healthy UL to inform them of its work. A summary of research output from 2021 to 2024 are provided in the tables below.

Alongside this, several students, subgroup chairs, and Healthy UL members successfully published in peer reviewed journals/conference proceedings in relation to Health and Wellbeing in Healthy UL. In addition, several students, subgroup leads and subgroup members presented at various seminars and conferences using the Healthy UL data.

Table 1. Staff and student presentations and reports in conjunction with Healthy UL (2021/22)

AUTHORS	TYPE	TITLE	WHERE PRESENTED
Norton	Presentation	Sustainable Eating Seminar	Erasmus Module, BeWell@UL, SDG
Tierney	Presentation	Mediterranean Diet Seminar	Erasmus Module, SDG
Norton, Murphy Yaiza	Poster presentation	Healthy Campus Environment Points Audit Survey	INDI Research Symposium 2021
Tierney, Norton, Ahmed	Oral presentation	Dietary Trends Among Students in Higher Education and the Influences of Covid-19 Confinement	TUFH 2021 The Network Toward Unity for Health
Donnelly	Oral presentation	Sedentary Behaviour	BeWell@UL
Herring	Oral presentation	Mental Health and Physical Activity	BeWell@UL
Ryan, Norton, Griffin and O'Beirne	Oral presentation	When the Zoom Call Ends, the Student Lived Experience	International Conference HEA'd

Table 2: Projects and Reports Healthy UL by Staff & Students in Conjunction with Healthy UL (2022/23)

AUTHORS	PROJECT TITLE	PROGRAMME & STUDENT(S)
Ryan, Griffin, Norton, O'Beirne	When the zoom call ends: Exploring university student resilience in response to COVID-19 induced online learning, a lived experience approach Note: Paper presented @ ICHEA	Kemmy Business School
Murphy, Yannez, Norton	Healthy Campus Environment Audit CEP Survey	MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics
Norton & Tierney	Dietary Restrictions at UL - prevalence, motivations, and availability of food to meet needs: A systematic review	MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics

Table 2: Projects and Reports Healthy UL by Staff & Students in Conjunction with Healthy UL (2022/23)

AUTHORS	PROJECT TITLE	PROGRAMME & STUDENT(S)
Norton & Tierney	Barriers and facilitators to continuing breastfeeding on return to work or study in higher education: A systematic review	MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics
Norton & Tierney	Healthy Campus Environment Audit POINTS and CEPS (Policies, Opportunities, Initiatives and Notable Topics and Campus Environment Perceptions Survey) from the HCEA toolkit	MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics
Woods	Interventions to increase physical activity among university staff	MPH Public Health Ms. Louise Donovan
Woods	A comparison of the prevalence of Risky health related and demographics in students in a large Irish University who are members of clubs and societies and those who are not	BSc Sports and Exercise Science Thomas Kennedy
Woods, Murphy	Predictors of potentially addictive substance use among first year undergraduate students	BSc Sports and Exercise Science Mr. Morgan Lewis
Woods	Is there a correlation between physical activity participation and positive mental health of 3rd level students in University of Limerick?	BSc in Physical Education Ms Kate Kennedy
Woods	An examination of the correlates of physical activity in undergraduate students in UL.	BSc in Physical Education
Woods	Barriers and facilitators to changes in adolescent physical activity during covid-19	BSc in Physical Education
Coughlan	Exploring mental health status, willingness to avail of supports, and retention rates by Faculty	Masters Psychological Science Ms Brooke McMullan
Houghton	Exploring the relationship between sleep quality, lifestyle choices and mental health of Irish students from before and during the Covid-19 pandemic is?	Masters Psychological Science Ms Racheal Crean
Griffin	A Secondary Analysis of the Healthy Eating Behaviour Data from the 2022 Healthy UL Survey using the NOURISHING Framework.	MSc Human Nutrition and Dietetics Ms Mairead McCabe Ms Rebecca Foster

Note. ICHEA = International conference

Table 3. Staff and Student Academic Conference Presentations and reports in Conjunction with Healthy UL (2023/24).

AUTHORS	TYPE	TITLE	PROGRAMME
McAuliffe, Ahern, Houghton, Fortune	PhD Submission	"Higher Education Student Mental Health: Insights from the COVID-19 Pandemic".	Doctorate in Clinical Psychology
Iballa Martinez Yanes [1,3], Clodagh Murphy [1,3] and Catherine Norton [2,3,4,5]	INDI research symposium and NutSoc preceedings	Determining the healthfulness of an Irish higher education institute's campus environment	[1] School of Allied Health (SAH), [2] Health Research Institute (HRI), [3] Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI), [4] Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences (PESS)[5] Healthy UL
R Greaney [1]; R Murray [1]; E Harnett [1]; E Liu [1]; S Twohig [1]; K St Leger [1] and C Norton [1,2,3,4]	INDI research symposium and NutSoc preceedings	An investigation of healthfulness of the food environment in an Irish higher education setting	[1] Department of Physical Education and Sport Sciences (PESS), University of Limerick, V94T9PX, Ireland [2] Health Research Institute (HRI), University of Limerick, V94T9PX Ireland [3] Healthy UL, University of Limerick, V94T9PX Ireland [4] Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute
Ahmed, Tierney, Norton	TUFH 2021 The Network Toward Unity for Health: Oral Presentation	Dietary trends among students in higher education and the influences of COVID-19 confinement 2019-2020	
R Landers, Y Ryan	Final Year Project	The Gender Gap in Cycling in the University Environment	Dept of Geography, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Studies

Table 4. Healthy UL PhD Research Outputs (Aoife Noonan, PhD student), 2022 to date.

EVENT	DATE	OUTPUT	PRESENTATION TITLE	LOCATION	DOI
European Public Health Conference	November 2023	Poster Presentation	Prevalence of Risky Health-Related Behaviors and Associated Factors in University Students: A Repeated Cross-Sectional Study.	Convention Center, Dublin.	https://doi.org/10.1093%2Feurpub%2Fckad160.1431
All Ireland Postgraduate Conference	May 2024	Oral Presentation	Sedentary behavior and anxiety risk in higher education students	Atlantic Technological University	
HEA Wellbeing conference	June 2024	Case Study Presentation	An exploration into the health-related behaviours of UL students and staff: A healthy campus case study.	Clayton Hotel, Dublin.	Final-UL-6-An-exploration-into-the-health-related-behaviours-of-UL-students-and-staff.docx (live.com)
Health Enhancing Physical Activity Conference.	August 2024	Oral Presentation	Sedentary behavior and anxiety risk in higher education students	Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland.	
European Journal of Public Health	September 2024	Journal publication	The Role of Physical Activity and Strength Training on the Mental Health Outcomes of University Students Across the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Repeated Cross-Sectional Study	Volume 34, Issue Supplement_2, September 2024, ckae114.191	https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckae114.191

- **Prevalence, risk, and protective factors of health among Irish university students: a repeated cross-sectional study** (paper presented by Healthy UL PhD Candidate, Aoife Noonan, at the European Public Health Conference, Dublin, October 2023).

Background: Young adulthood (18-25 y) is associated with increased engagement with risky health behaviours, with those in transitionary phases most vulnerable. The transition to higher education (HE) make such settings important in health promotion. However, global evidence suggests that the health-related behaviours of HE students are both sub-optimal, and worsening. Our objectives, therefore, are to determine prevalence and risk of various health behaviours, and to identify protective factors in Irish HE students.

Methods: Using an anonymous, repeated measures (annually 2019-2022) cross-sectional student survey of health behaviours (physical activity, mental health and wellbeing, healthy eating, healthy environment, addictive behaviours, and sexual health), data on 4924 participants (2019:N=1302, 2020:N=1128, 2021:N=967, 2022:N=1527), 58.5% identifying as female (2877), aged [mean(SD)] 21.8 (6.3) years are eligible. Most respondents (60.4%, N=2539) are undergraduates in first year.

Results: Preliminary prevalence data show vaping has risen from 10.8% in 2019 to 17.9% in 2022. Those reporting poor mental health (MHI-5) has also increased from 17.4% in 2019 to 21.5% in 2022. Similarly, happiness declined from 2019 to 2022 (2019, 6.5, (1.92) | 2022, 6.09 (2.00). Further work will aim to calculate prevalence of health indicators (weighted means and 95% CIs) each year; dichotomise variables where necessary and perform logistic regression to determine if health behaviours (i.e., substance use, physical activity etc.) are associated with illness indicators (i.e., GAD, general mental health, BMI, happiness etc.), controlling for gender, economic status, course of study, marital status, sexual orientation, age and underlying health conditions. Conclusions: While the results so far are concerning, they align with existent literature. Outcomes may be of interest to HE health services and policy makers in determining how to optimise the student health

Aoife Noonan, Sarah Kennedy, Catherine Norton, Audrey Tierney, Kwok Ng, Catherine Woods,

1,100
followers on Instagram, 410 on X (Twitter)

10,000
Students reached in active consent workshops

1 new communication campaign in situ, with website and social media channels

COMMUNICATION HIGHLIGHTS 2019-2024

Over **6,000** respondents to Healthy UL Staff and Student Surveys 2019 - 2022

1
International Conference awarded

3 NEW MENTAL HEALTH PLATFORMS
2 new online mental health platforms, silvercloud & Togetherforall, for student & staff, and peer support service Niteline

One Nominated as 'exemplar' to present at HEA's national heathy campus network launch

16
Steering Group members including 12 females amd 5 males, staff and students

Food Philosophy in situ and policy being drafted

17
UG and PG student projects using Healthy UL data

POLICIES & GOVERNANCE HIGHLIGHTS 2019-2024

Six conference presentations

Substance use and gambling support officer

30
PVA students enrolled

Four health promoting policies adopted
1. Student Subsance Use and Misuse Policy.
2. Smoke and Vape Free Policy
3. Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy
4. Sexual Health and Wellbeing Policy

One PhD studentship awarded on behalf of Healthy UL

INITIATIVES HIGHLIGHTS 2019-2024

Winter Wellbeing Advert

80 Student bikes & 60 staff e-bikes on the road

Marie Keating visit

24,000 Students engaged in Dirty Dozen Campaign, promoting wellbeing at exam time.

Niteline Launch

12 Wellbeing seminars delievered to undergraduate programs

60+ health promotion initiatives, in-person and online with engagment over 30,000

Quit Campaign

Library collaboration, promoting wellbeing supports

Menopause Webinar

328 HPV Vaccine Clinics

ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS 2019-2024

42,000+ Engaged online with collaborative Drug Driving Awareness Campaign

74 Clubs and Societies on Campus

6 Secure bike bunkers

7,000+ Engaged with Healthy UL online in AY 23/24

43 Water refill stations installed

700+ Engaged with inperson Healthy UL initiatives

National Bike Week

Highlights

HEALTHTY UL ACTIONS
2019-2024

20% in progress

80% Implemented

Sexual Health and Wellbeing Highlights:

- 10,000 students have participated in Active Consent workshops since 2020

- 43 students attended the Active Consent Play in 2023 "How I Learned About Consent".

- Speak out Tool launched Oct 2021, annual data collated.

- Designated Contact Persons Panel launched 2023

- Active Bystander Training and Handling Disclosures Training completed by panel 2023

- Other awareness raising initiatives such as social media campaigns and information stands at UL Student Life Well-Fair Wednesdays on ongoing basis in collaboration with UL Student Life.

- Appointment of Sexual Violence and Harassment (SVH) Prevention and Response Managers in HEIs.

- Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy and the Sexual Health and Wellbeing Policy have been approved by EC, and GA, will be launched on March 5th 2024 in conjunction with RespectfUL Campus Campaign.

- Sexual Health and Wellbeing subgroup liaised with the SATU in Cork, with the aim to roll out an outpatient service in UL, which opened on campus 28th January, 2025, to avail of follow up care in the Midwest in AY 24/25

Substance Use and Gambling Highlights:

- The Student Substance Use and Misuse Policy was developed by the subgroup and was approved in 2020, recently reviewed and updated in 2024

- The Smoke and Vape Free Policy was developed approved in 2018 and reviewed and updated in 2024.

- An educational campaign has been rolled out both online and in person for harm reduction and supports are in place to support those affected by substance use in a hybrid approach providing non-judgemental support.

- A Substance Use and Gambling Support Officer was appointed in 2023, A drop in service has been launched in September 2024, with a hybrid approach.

- Partnerships with healthcare providers have been developed to develop services to support staff and students who are experiencing difficulties regarding their use of tobacco/vaping, alcohol, drugs and/or gambling behaviours.

- Stakeholders were identified and signposted via the Healthy UL website. Screening tools are available to the wider UL Community.

- Healthy UL has active external partnerships with the Midwest Regional Drug and Alcohol Forum, Quit Mid-West, the Third-level Regional Drug and Alcohol Network, the HSE drug and alcohol service and voluntary services.

- Data on health behaviours regarding the UL community continues to be collected, and this informs annual initiatives.

- Initiatives aimed to educate UL staff and students on healthy lifestyle choices in relation to tobacco/vaping, alcohol, drugs and gambling are promoted, taking a sustainable approach to health promotion in this field.

- Healthy UL supported the administration of the Drug Use in Higher Education Institutions (DUHEI) study in early 2021.

Environment Subgroup Highlights:

- Since first achieving Green Campus accreditation for Energy, Biodiversity and Travel and Transport in 2015, the Buildings and Estates department together with its many supporters amongst the campus community are working resolutely to retain it.

- Every three years Green Campus accredited institutions are required to undergo a full reaccreditation assessment in order to maintain their Green Campus accreditation. In 2018 UL successfully underwent a full reaccreditation assessment as well as adding Waste and Green ICT to their list of accredited themes.

- Achieving the Green ICT accreditation saw Buildings and Estates partnering primarily with academia and ITD to refine the processes and procedures to safely dispose of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) in addition to making energy savings in server rooms.

- Achieving Green Campus accreditation for Waste saw amongst other things the establishment of a Waste Management group within Buildings and Estates, the roll-out of initiatives aimed at preventing waste (e.g. installation of fit-for-purpose water bottle refill stations), improvements to waste collection and segregation processes, and improved data collection on waste.

- Envirocom continue to work tirelessly to improve Smarter Travel on campus. Initiatives to date include the installation of e charging points, increased bike parking, and lobbying for increased bus routes.

- Healthy UL rolled out CycUL, the affordable bike rental scheme in Autumn 2023, with a fleet of 78 bikes. This scheme is oversubscribed.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Highlights:

- The mental health and wellbeing subgroup have worked tirelessly to develop, introduce and support primary interventions such as Silvercloud, Togetherall, Niteline and text 50808, in collaboration with Student Affairs, Student Life and the Counselling Dept, as well as mental health initiatives to promote positive mental health for our students and staff. This stepped care approach has been imperative in providing opportunity for students to avail of hybrid resources, as well as in person Counselling, 24/7.

- A campus wide approach had been applied to rolling out initiatives, workshops and activities that promote positive mental health and development of skills that promote resilience and wellbeing. Examples of these activities include, but not limited to Lifeskills workshop in person and online, Mindfulness workshops, Mindful Music and, Welfair Wednesdays.

- Healthy UL and Eist have collaborated to work with Faculty to ensure that mental health is part of their teaching and that all student facing staff are aware of, and promoting the resources available to students regarding positive mental health. This includes specific promotion of individual Silvercloud programmes as well as supports at key times such as exams, and training from Eist for academic staff, 'Supporting a Student in Distress'.

- We continue to advocate for mental health spaces/green spaces in physical development, and this should materialise in the form of the new Student Life Building, launching Autumn 2024.

Healthy Eating Highlights:

- Healthy UL successfully initiated several programs and activities aimed at promoting healthy eating on campus. Key highlights include:

- Healthy Eating Workshops and Seminars: Regular workshops and seminars were conducted to educate students and staff about the benefits of a balanced diet and how to make healthier food choices. These were collaboratively with other stakeholders on campus (BeWell, PCC, First7 Weeks among others).

- Healthy Dining Options: Campus food services were audited to inform advocacy for healthier options cross all food outlets (cafeterias, restaurants, convenience stores, vending service etc). introduced a range of healthy meal options, focusing on fresh, locally sourced ingredients, and offering alternatives for various dietary needs.

- Development of the first higher education-based Food Philosophy, in collaboration with the Centre for Sustainable Futures and Innovation, and Campus Life.

- Collaborative development of an institutional Nutrition Policy which ambitiously aims to influence practice among all stakeholders in the food lifecycle, from farm to fork, on campus.

- Review usage of the Breastfeeding facility on campus, identify barriers and enablers for maintaining breastfeeding on return to work or study

- Awareness Campaigns: Targeted campaigns raised awareness about the importance of nutrition, including initiatives during National Nutrition Week and similar events.

- Partnerships with Local Food Producers: Collaborations with local farmers and food producers ensured a supply of fresh, high-quality produce for campus dining services, and in particular student led events.

- These initiatives laid a solid foundation for promoting healthy eating habits within the campus community, demonstrating a commitment to student and staff well-being.

- Audits of 1) UL policies and initiatives relating to health and nutrition, as well as 2) the healthfulness of our vending machine offerings and 3) supermarket were completed (Jan 2021). The results of these audits (published and under review), completed using validated, reliable tools, will inform advocacy for change at UL.

- 2.Publication of the Food Philosophy, in collaboration with the Centre of Futures and Foresights innovation, and PCC, with the development of an institutional Nutrition Policy underway

- 3.Review usage of the Breastfeeding facility on campus, identify barriers and enablers for maintaining breastfeeding on return to work or study

- 4.Ongoing initiatives and education campaigns annually regarding healthy eating, including and not limited to: mini series, Cookalongs, online workshops, etc.

Physical Activity Highlights:

- The Physical Activity subgroup has incorporated a social, environmental as well as a diversive lens, to ensure that all members of the UL community are given every opportunity to engage, meeting sociable needs as well as Physical Activity requirements through clubs and societies such as MOVEmber, Dirty Dozen Campaign, National Workplace Wellbeing Day, as well as expanding clubs and societies to 75.

- MOVEmber was launched by the Physical Activity group, in conjunction with BSc Sport & Exercise Sciences students. This consisted of a 4-week training programme for staff who were currently inactive. There were 42 applicants and the first 20 were accepted. The student implementation and reflection on this initiative contributed to assessment in their BSc Sport & Exercise Sciences programme.

- Annual Dirty Dozen Campaign to promote physical activity as a mechanism for dealing with stress associate with exam time, with engagement of over 24000 students online to date

- Marchathon, a fun team step challenge that takes place in March each year and is promoted by the National Transport Authority. Its aim is to encourage workplaces and third level campuses to engage in sustainable forms of travel to and from work, as well as building more physical activity into your day via increasing step count.