**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY STATS 2015:**

* 392 Responses which is 28.8% response rate
* 27% respondents were Study Abroad
* 32% respondents were Erasmus
* 18% taught Masters
* 81% of respondents indicated that UL was their first choice

**SOURCE OF INFORMATION**: Respondents were asked to indicate how they initially heard about UL

* 30% from UL website, 33% faculty recommendations, 19% friend/relative, 17% education agent and 10% education fair

**INFORMATION PRIOR TO ARRIVAL:** The majority of students felt they received sufficient information prior to arrival with the exception of living expenses and working in Ireland.



**ORIENTATION PROGRAMME**

In general, orientation was well received by respondents. Suggestions/comments for improvement included

1. More breaks during Orientation, give us a chance to get up and move around, not so many talks back to back.
2. Split us into smaller groups with student bonding activities
3. Too much repetition in workshops and presenters
4. Improve the campus tour process and the guides
5. Interactive feature on website to facilitate a live Q& A
6. More information on Irish culture, and life outside of college

**Respondents were then asked to comment on what they felt was the biggest obstacle to overcome in the first 3 months of the semester. The obstacles most frequently cited included:**

1. Finding accommodation off campus
2. Homesickness and loneliness
3. Budgeting Money
4. Meeting Irish students
5. Language barrier and cultural differences

**Respondents were asked to indicate whether they were a) aware and b) had used a number of services available at UL.**

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| **Table 4: Awareness and usage of services** | **Aware of Service** | **Used Service** |
| The Mathematics Learning Centre | 98.7% | 3.3% |
| Student Counselling Service | 94.7% | 16.3% |
| Study Skills programme | 96.1% | 9.0% |
| Medical Centre | 91.6% | 16.8% |
| Writing Centre | 97.6% | 5.9% |
| Chaplaincy Centre | 95.3% | 15.7% |
| Free English Language Courses | 91.4% | 23.6% |
| Language Centre | 92.6% | 18.0% |
| Students Union | 81.9% | 59.6% |

**INTEGRATION WITH IRISH STUDENTS**

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The majority of respondents (37,7%) indicated that they had between 1-3 friends, 20.8% stated that they had between 4-6 friends, 18.5% stated that they had 10 or more friends as a result of having studied at UL. Conversely, 16.9% of respondents stated that they did not feel that they made Irish friends as a result of their time in UL.

**Satisfaction with overall experience at UL**



**Recommend UL to friends and family**

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**Students were asked to indicate what other services they would you like to see made available to international students to improve the non-academic aspects of studying in Ireland:**

1. Regular communication and ‘check-ins’ with students to see that all is going ok; assist with accommodation reservations. The housing in UL is a mess, fix it.

2. Better explanation of the systems and structure of Irish university and how things differ in UL to home university.

3. Clear information on job options pre-arrival, along with a greater level of detail relating to assessments, assignments, cost of living and transportation.

4. Create more chances for international students to meet Irish students, including sharing accommodation with Irish students. Arrange “get to know” sessions.

5. Organise more weekend events as everything on campus shuts down at weekend, as well as village-wide events to help integration, and smaller tour groups.

6. Improve the buddy programme, dedicated volunteers required

7 More detailed map for the buses. For example maybe where the stops are exactly in the city and a landmark to orient ourselves

8 Host Irish culture nights: film screenings, cooking classes, music/dance workshops, Irish language classes and a workshop about Irish culture and history

9 Inform students about events taking place in the city each week

10. Give students the option to sign up for trips and events online

11. More information about module selection prior to arrival and more assistance with timetable on arrival.

12. Mix International students and Irish students living on campus, it’s the only way we can meet Irish students.

**Benchmark results from 2011, 2013, 2015**

**Areas of significant Improvement:**

1. Orientation satisfaction increased by 20% since 2011
2. Support from lecturers in the classroom has risen by 11% since 2011
3. Membership of UL club or society has risen from 80% to 91%
4. Consider further study at UL has risen from 54% to 74%
5. Recommend UL to friends and family has risen from 93% to 98%

**Areas of dis-improvement**

1. Respondents use of Study Skills programme has dropped from 19% in 2011 to 9% in 2015
2. Respondents use of Medical centre dropped from 33% in 2011 to 15% in 2015

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| **IED Services Mean Scores**  **2011 2013 2015 Change** | | | | |
| Application Process | 3.91 | 3.96 | 4.13 | +0.17 |
| Pre-arrival Information | 3.84 | 3.8 | 4.19 | +0.39 |
| Orientation Service | 3.91 | 3.82 | 4.14 | +0.32 |
| Off Campus Trips | 3.13 | 3.69 | 3.89 | +0.2 |
| Day to day assistance | 3.65 | 3.67 | 3.91 | +0.24 |

**All services directly provided by IED received positive ratings (mean scores of 3.0 or over) with the highest rated elements being the pre-arrival information (4.19), the orientation service (4.14), followed by the application process rated 4.13. Although off campus trips received the lowest satisfaction rating, it showed some improvement (+0.2%) to 3.89. This demonstrates a universal improvement in satisfaction with the work done by the International Education office.**

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