

Dear all,

For those of you who were unable to make the live Town Hall meeting with President Kerstin Mey and Dr Marie Connolly last week, a recording is now available to [watch here](#).

In addition to the questions answered on the day, a number of queries came in wondering about UL's remote working procedure. A cross-campus group is developing the Remote Working Procedure for the University but this is a work in progress. The aim of this procedure will be to provide guidance for all staff on how to balance the business needs of the University that thrives on face-to-face learning and on-site research, and the opportunities enabled by online technologies and remote-working. As they consider these guidelines, the working group must also bear in mind that a national approach to remote working is being developed and that whatever we do must align with it. This national approach is not due to be published until possibly the last quarter of 2021.

There were also some questions about planning for the next academic year. The University is awaiting sectoral guidance from Minister Harris before firming up on the precise detail of how teaching, learning and general campus business will operate in September. Professor Nigel Healey emailed all staff on Friday to announce that first years will start on 27 September due to the later than usual issuing of the Leaving Cert results, while all other years will start on 6 September.

Regarding the queries about recent recommendations on ventilation in the workplace, these are covered below.

### **COVID-19 Updates**

The [Return to Work Safely Protocol has been updated](#), specifically in relation to ventilation. If you are travelling in a work vehicle, you should open windows on opposite sides of the vehicle. Do not use recirculated air, i.e. air-conditioning. This applies whether travelling on your own in a work vehicle or as part of a pod.

The importance of maximising natural ventilation by opening windows in your workspace is stressed as an essential part of the general [Public Health Advice](#) for minimising the transmission of COVID-19, in addition to hand washing, physical distancing, respiratory etiquette etc. For more information, please see this [note on natural ventilation](#) on our COVID-19 Sharepoint site.

You are reminded also that you do not need an appointment or a referral to get a COVID-19 (coronavirus) test at a walk-in centre. You can just show up or you can book online for walk-in centres. Follow this [link](#) for locations and more details.

Tests are limited to 1 per person. If you think you need a repeat test or you are worried about any [symptoms of COVID-19](#), talk to your GP.

I would like to remind you that the [UL COVID-19 website](#) and [COVID-19 SharePoint](#) site are regularly updated to reflect changing national public health and sectoral guidelines.

### **Historic Annual Leave**

A reminder that the recently agreed *Procedure for Managing Historic Annual Leave Balances* is now available [here](#). In addition, Executive Committee has approved a carry-over of up to 10 days from your 2021 annual leave allocation. This 2021 carry-over must be used by the end of June 2022 and you are reminded that you should use any 2020 leave carry-over by the end of this month.

### **UL First Online Graduations**

Congratulations to Aelish Nagle and her colleague Cáit Hammersley from the UL Ceremonies Office, Andrew Carey, Corporate Communications Officer, Dr Patrick Ryan, Associate Vice-President Student Engagement, and faculty representatives Caroline Harrington, AnnMarie Hickey, Lisa Kennedy and Anne Moloney for making last week's online graduations so memorable for almost 700 students, including 145 new medical doctors.

Despite the virtual nature of the event, there was a real sense of celebration and occasion. It is an inspiring [watch](#) and keep an ear out for the rhyme of *laughin' with gastrografin* as junior doctor Sinéad Loughran spoke in rhyming couplets to her peers, the School of Medicine graduating class of 2021.

### **UL@50 Consultations**

Thanks to everyone who has signed up to attend one of the Phase 2 Consultations over the next two weeks. There is still time to get involved and you can see all of the dates and how to let your voice be heard on the [UL@50 Sharepoint](#) site.

The Consultation Review Group (CRG) had only one open consultation date identified for the Operating Model topic and there has been feedback that this does not suit everyone interested in this, so a second date is now available: **1130-1300 on 15 June**. Please email [consultation@ul.ie](mailto:consultation@ul.ie) if you are interested in attending.

### **UL in the Media**

UL Student and founder of Moyo Nua, Jack O'Connor was named Limerick Person of the Month by [The Limerick Leader](#) on Saturday. [Moyo Nua](#) has developed agricultural seeding planters for smallholder farmers in Africa and was part of the UL winning entry to the [Enactus](#) Ireland National Competition for social enterprise projects by third level students.

Algerian students Wafa Rougab and Islam Ben Adel arrived in Limerick in January 2021 to spend the next few years working on their PhDs in UL. The lockdown, quarantine and lack of opportunities to meet others meant that the first few months were challenging. But now, they are looking forward to travelling and getting to know Ireland over the summer. You can read more about their story in [The Irish Times](#).

My podcast recommendation this week is the in-depth discussion between Dr Kieran O'Sullivan, winner of the President's Research Excellence and Impact Award for Early Career Researcher and Professor Helena Lenihan about his ground-breaking research into low back pain. You can listen to it [here](#) and read his RTÉ Brainstorm article 'Back pain: are you saying it's all in my head?' [here](#).

All previous HR Notices are available on the HR website [here](#) and if you have any comments or suggestions, please email [hrnotice@ul.ie](mailto:hrnotice@ul.ie).

Have a good week,

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