

Dear all,

First years started at UL on Monday and despite the sudden slide into Autumn weather, there is a lovely hum of activity on campus. Whether the new normal or a return to normal, it is reassuring to see.

### **Return to Campus Updates**

The [New Academic Year Guide for Staff](#) on the COVID-19 SharePoint site has been updated once more. Specifically:

- Two additional Q&As have been added (**5.8 & 5.9**) to cover close contacts and managing a suspected case of COVID-19 on campus.
- **6.12** has been amended to detail what to do if a student refuses to wear a face covering in a teaching space.
- **Section 7:** Remote / Blended Working Equipment has been expanded to include how to order an office chair.

### **COVID-19 Management of Visitors, Guest Lecturers**

In accordance with the national Work Safely Protocol, the [COVID-19 Visitor Management Process](#) remains in operation. Departments/Units are advised that visitors should be limited to those who are business critical for University operations. Visitors in this instance are defined as non-UL staff members who are coming on campus for a short, once-off visit and who are accompanied by a UL staff member at all times.

A separate process is in place for guest lecturers or examiners who may be in charge of a teaching space while visiting UL and who may not be accompanied by a UL staff member during their time on campus or while teaching. Departments are required to contact [hnsbookings@ul.ie](mailto:hnsbookings@ul.ie) to advise of the guest lecturer/examiner's upcoming visit. The latest revision of the *COVID-19 Pre-Return to Work* form will be issued to the department to be forwarded for completion by the guest lecturer/examiner. The guest lecturer/examiner will then be enrolled to complete the *COVID-19 Staff Awareness* training programme as appropriate. Departments are advised to forward a copy of the most recent version of the *New Academic Year Guide for Staff* to guest lecturers/examiners in advance of their arrival.

### **Travel**

The [COVID-19 International Travel Request](#) form has been updated slightly to take into account the change in the Department of Foreign Affairs travel advice. As always, this is a dynamic situation so the best approach with using forms and information sheets on the [COVID-19 SharePoint site](#) is to download as you need them to allow for updates.

### **Interviewer Skills Training – Now Online**

Interviewer Skills training is mandatory for anyone who participates in Interview Selection boards. We urge you to complete this online course if you are a manager and have not attended Interviewer Skills training since 1 January 2020 or if you are likely to sit on an interview board in the near future and have not attended Interviewer Skills training since that date. For details on how to access this course please [click here](#).

For more information about the courses available in the Learning and Development schedule, please go to: [Training Programmes and Schedule](#)

### **Creating Our Future**

A Science Foundation Ireland initiative, this roadshow is an opportunity for everyone in Ireland to share their ideas on how to make our country better for all and it is visiting Limerick (2-4pm) and Ennis (5-7:30pm) on this Friday 1 October.

If you know of some Ennis or Limerick-based academics/researchers from UL who might be interested in popping along to it or taking part, could you please spread the word. Email [events@SFI.ie](mailto:events@SFI.ie) if you are interested in taking part and go to [Creating Our Future](#) for more information.

### **A note from the Director of HR**

On Friday, Philip Thornton retires after thirty-six years of dedicated service to UL. He joined HR in the new Safety Officer role in 1997. As the only person to hold this position since then, he is known throughout the University for his pragmatic approach and advice about the application of health and safety legislation and guidelines on campus. At no time has this been more evident than during the past eighteen months of the COVID-19 pandemic when despite an increased workload, his guidance and practical support has no doubt helped to reduce the risk and incidence of the virus in our community. On a personal level, I will miss my ready access to Philip's customary good humour and sage advice but look forward to taking advantage of it when I encounter him on campus, walking his dog Joey and still, I'm sure, keeping an eye on things. *Bobby O'Connor*

Finally, the walk-up vaccination clinic in EG 010 in the Main Building ends this evening at 7pm. It is open to staff and students, and you can find more information [here](#).

Best wishes,

Eoin