

Dear all,

Along with the usual pressures on students and staff around exam time, there is a degree of additional apprehension about the current COVID-19 transmission levels in Ireland. A significant proportion of exams have been moved online. The Provost, Nigel Healey will be writing to all students on Monday to outline the preventative measures and supports being put in place for on-campus exams and in summary these are:

- Students will be advised not to attend on-campus exams if they are unwell or displaying symptoms of COVID-19.
- Exam spaces will be well ventilated.
- Hand sanitiser will be available at exam centre entrances
- Students will be required to wear face coverings.
- If a student feels more comfortable with a medical grade face covering (FFP2), they will be made available in advance of entering exam centres. These face coverings are also still available for staff to order using the PPE request form in the [PPE Folder](#) on the COVID-19 SharePoint site.
- Exam desks will be set up at approx. 1m spacing.
- Ecostatic cleaning will take place weekly (in excess of the manufacturer recommended 1-month interval) in exam centres.
- Sanitising wipes will be available in all exam centres to facilitate self-cleaning.

Spaces continue to be available for students to study on campus and quiet rooms have been identified to facilitate those who need to take online exams on campus.

### **HR Learning & Development**

Earlier this year, Learning and Development invited all University staff to participate in a training needs survey. Thanks to everyone who responded. From the survey, the key training needs identified were Leadership, Project Management Skills, Communication Skills and Career Development Support.

In response to these needs, here are just some of the courses which have run over the past few months: *The Management Essentials Programme, Head of Department Training, Communicating your Research with Impact, Influencing Skills, Facilitating meetings, Difficult Conversations, the Principles of Project Management* and *Supporting Women in Academia*.

We have also developed a new programme *Career Development for Support Staff* which has been very well received; 100% of respondents would recommend the programme to a colleague

“I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to participate and the 1:1 coaching session is the ideal way to finish this programme.”

“Thank you, HR for providing this programme. It was invigorating and positive...”

Further options for leadership development are being explored.

If you've missed out previously, [Introduction to Project Management for Professional Services Staff](#) is running again on 6 and 7 December and [Career Development for Researchers](#) is also coming up in December. Don't miss out on these very popular courses. [Book here](#)

### **UL Global Accommodation Request**

As you will have noted UL is experiencing accommodation challenges. UL Global is working consistently to try and locate more rooms for our incoming Spring Semester students who unfortunately did not receive an on-campus room. If you know are interested in becoming a host /

host family, please contact [studentmobility@ul.ie](mailto:studentmobility@ul.ie). It could be worth approximately €2,000 for the stay and falls under the Rent-a-Room tax incentive. It is also a fantastic way to learn another set of cultures, customs, and language, as well as sharing your own.

If you know anyone with a spare room who might be interested, please ask them to complete this quick online [survey](#). Rooms located via this mechanism will only be advertised, internally via ULG, to incoming international students and there is a referral **prize** up for grabs of a dinner for two in the East Room at Plassey House.

We received some great ideas from you, our colleagues, in September when we were working to accommodate students. We would again be very appreciative of you taking two minutes to complete this [form](#) with any ideas about accommodation for January in nearby Clare/Tipperary/Limerick.

### **Healthy UL Survey**

You will have received an email from the Healthy UL team earlier this week inviting you to participate in their ongoing research. Here is the link to their survey: [Healthy UL Staff Survey](#). Please take some time out to complete the survey, which explores the health-related behaviours of staff and students. This is a valuable piece of work, which will inform the ongoing Healthy UL Action Plan.

### **EVOLVE**

EVOLVE / UL Support Staff Community was launched recently, which provides a community of practice for UL Support Staff. EVOLVE is peer-to-peer, voluntary, and an informal space for UL Support Staff to share knowledge.

For further information please view the introductory video [here](#) and follow this [link to join](#) the EVOLVE Community of Practice.

### **UL in the Media**

Professor Mike Zaworotko and Dr David Styles were featured on RTÉ's *Science to the Rescue* TV show which was broadcast on Wednesday 10 November. They were talking about the C-Minus project, and you can watch it [here](#) (about 37 minutes into the programme). The show was funded by SFI to showcase the €4m Future Innovator Competition across two challenges - AI for Societal Good and Zero Emissions.

UL graduate and Carrick-on-Suir native Aisling Hahessy has been awarded the prestigious title of Engineer of the Year by Engineers Ireland. [Watch](#) Aisling talk about the role of engineering in society and some of the projects she has worked on in Ireland, Mexico, Peru and Saudi Arabia.

Professor of Creative Writing, Donal Ryan offers [advice](#) for aspiring writers in *The Irish Times* this week: "Look after your sentences and everything else in your writing life will look after itself."

Earlier this week, Professor Amanda Haynes and Dr Jennifer Schweppe accepted the prestigious Take Action Against Hate award on behalf the European Centre for the Study of Hate at UL, of which they are co-directors. [Read](#) more here.

The UL supported Irish Chamber Orchestra's Sing Out with Strings has been shortlisted for an Innovation for Change award in the Irish Red Cross Humanitarian Awards 2021. [Read](#) more about this ground-breaking initiative in *The Limerick Post*.

Have a good weekend,

Eoin