



**UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK**
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH



YOUR GUIDE TO BEING A

BUDDY

THE UL GLOBAL BUDDY PROGRAMME

What is the Buddy Programme?

Every semester UL students are matched with 3 to 4 newly arrived international students from all over the world. As with anyone who moves to a new area or enrolls in college, our international students need a little help and guidance in their initial few weeks in the university. Your role, as a UL Buddy, is to help make their transition to life in Limerick go smoothly by being open, flexible and responsive to their needs.



*"He has given me so many recommendations and helpful tips about school and life in Ireland." -
Madison, USA*

Our International Students



"She encouraged me to join clubs and societies and is always available to chat if I need help." - Jessica, USA

Every year, over 2,000 new international students enrol in UL on a wide variety of programmes. We have students coming to UL from all around the globe. Students may be enrolling in a full time undergraduate or postgraduate programme, or partaking in Erasmus, Study Abroad or Exchange programmes for one to two semesters.

THE BUDDY PROGRAMME BASICS

Your Role as a Buddy is to:

- Be a friendly welcoming face to approximately three to four incoming international buddies.
- Commit 12 – 20 hours a semester to your Buddies and the programme.
- Have a genuine interest in getting to know and interacting with your Buddies.
- Offer support and insider tips about UL.
- Maintain contact, even if your Buddies are feeling 'at home'.
- Be a good representative of the University of Limerick and Ireland.
- Your role as a UL Buddy will not impede on your study time.

Your Responsibilities are to:

- Monitor your inbox in advance of the academic semester for updates from UL Global (i.e. during August/December)
- Make contact via email with your international buddies in advance of the new term.
- Answer queries; provide information on the University and the locality on an on-going basis.
- Initiate a meeting with your international buddies upon their arrival in Limerick.
- Take part in the Buddy Programme events organised by UL Global
- Encourage your buddies to get involved with the UL community.

You are an ambassador of UL and Ireland!

Remember when interacting with your Buddies you are representing the University of Limerick and Ireland. You play a role in giving new students a positive first impression of the country and to make them feel welcome in their new home for the next couple of months. Make an effort to connect with your buddy and support them. Be friendly, clear and open.

How does the Buddy Programme Work?

- The University of Limerick Buddy Programme runs in the Autumn and Spring semesters.
- UL Global receives applications from new international students and matches them with UL volunteers.
- We match buddies according to their area of study, hobbies and language capabilities. We endeavour to match specific requests where possible.
- We will email you with the details of your international buddies.
- You reach out to your international buddies and organise your first meeting. This will be before the term begins.

Perks of Being a Buddy

- A chance to practise your language skills
- Learn about new cultures
- Make international connections for the future
- Help students from your own academic background
- Make friends with people from a different background
- Develop your communication skills
- A great addition to your CV!
- Earn volunteer hours towards the President's Volunteer Award which is displayed on your transcript.

Buddy Programme Events

Each semester, UL Global organises a number of events for you and your buddies to attend. By signing up for the Buddy Programme, you have been added to our mailing list and will be notified of all events we have planned. You are not obliged to attend all of these events but you are required to notify your Buddy of them as the responsibility is on you to collect their tickets for such events, even if you do not plan to go. All events are held in accordance with public health and government COVID 19 guidelines.

Things to do with your Buddy

At the beginning of the semester, we encourage you to meet with your buddies over zoom/in-person when they first arrive and have a coffee together and get to know each other! We also encourage you to take the initiative to plan other activities for you and your buddies, particularly ones that give them a taste of Irish life. When planning such events, it's important to keep in mind that other cultures have different ideas about what is an enjoyable and appropriate way to spend one's leisure time. There are many events happening all over campus/ in Limerick city throughout the semester and it is a good idea to keep an eye out for these too!



"He made lists for me with shops I might find useful and sent me links to good food delivery services" - Daniela, Austria

Communicating with your Buddy

Maintain contact with your buddy and email them regularly. Periods such as the lead up to midterm breaks and the end of semester are when they may need some extra support and advice from you. Think carefully about how you communicate and how this may come across to someone from a different background. It can be easy to forget that we have quite a unique way of communicating in Ireland that might not always be easy for visitors to comprehend! You may use whatever platform you prefer to communicate, but initial contact will be made via email.



"She explained a lot to me about life in UL and helped me feel much more comfortable here." - Ngoc, Vietnam

Hear what some of our volunteers have to say!



Andrea, Bachelor of Arts:

I've 100% made new friends that I hope I'll have for life, as well as gaining a huge sense of fulfilment from being able to help new students

Alex, Bachelor of Arts:

There is little that I didn't gain from the Buddy Programme. Not only did I get the opportunity to meet an abundance of new people from all around the world, but I also got to reconnect with Limerick and learn more about it and enjoy its heritage. I would advise absolutely anyone who has the opportunity to, to join the Buddy Programme. It benefitted me so much in my final year of college.

Mardonio, BSc Nursing Intellectual Disability

The UL Buddy Programme has helped me connect to international students coming from India who are doing their PhD's. Helping them out to make their student studies transition easier was great, being of service to them helped me to be a better student!

Niamh, BSc Applied Physics:

The Buddy Programme was a great experience for me as I got to meet my buddies, learn about different cultures and make lifelong friends. It is a rewarding experience and I am glad to have done it!

Karin, Applied Languages:

I have met some great people throughout the buddy programme that I hope to keep in contact with. I really enjoyed getting the opportunity to meet international students. It's been really rewarding being able to help my buddies get to know Limerick and Ireland. I would 100% recommend joining the programme.

Michelle, PhD in Tesol:

Being a volunteer on the International Buddy Programme was one of the most rewarding opportunities at the University of Limerick. I experienced the excitement of moving to a new country/university through the lens of my buddies and made lifelong friends. I enjoyed being able to help my buddies to make the most of their university experience. I appreciated being able to offer guidance and support to ensure the international students settled into their new experience at the University of Limerick.



Contacting Us

If you have any questions you can contact us by emailing **buddyprogramme@ul.ie**.

More information is available on our website
www.ul.ie/international



Email: buddyprogramme@ul.ie **Website:** www.ul.ie/international



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