UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Human Rights Annual Report 2025

Jan 2025 – Dec 2025

#StudyAtUL



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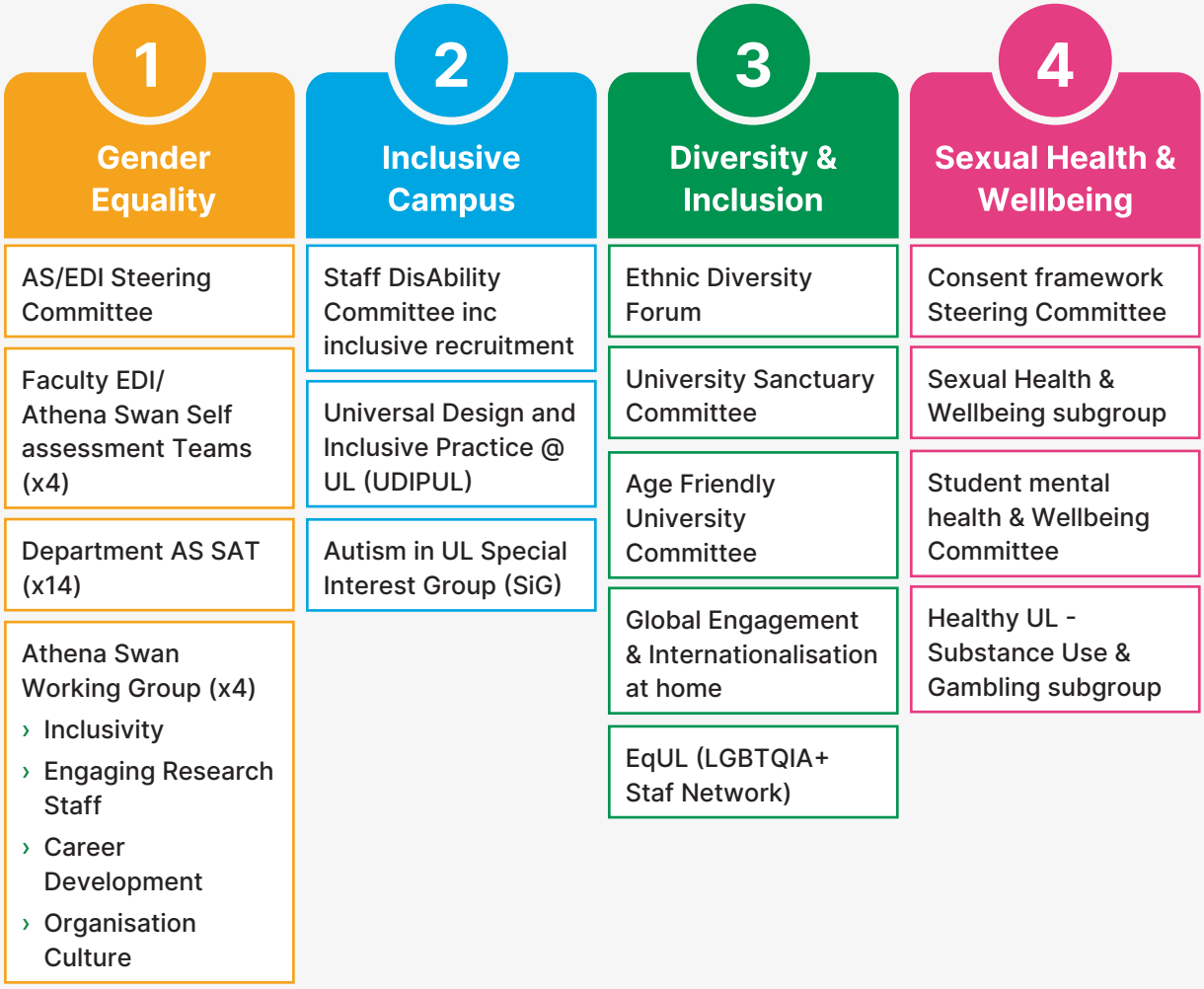
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Introduction

With the establishment of the office, we identified 4 key pillars for implementing HREDI within the institution; Pillar 1 Gender Equality; Pillar 2 Inclusive Campus; Pillar 3 Diversity & Inclusion; Pillar 4 Sexual Health and Wellbeing.



HREDI Working Groups

To support the embedding of the public sector duty (PSD) into UL functions a series of working groups were established to tackle 3 key areas. The working groups have been supported by the resources and webinars provided by the Irish Human Rights Equality Commission.

The HREDI Working Groups are:

› **HREDI Briefing and Training working group:** Has recorded introductory video with help from the staff and students of UL to introduce the duty and how staff & students can benefit from and contribute to its implementation across UL functions.

› **HREDI Indicators and Monitoring working group:** Have identified potential data sources and indicators that would support monitoring of the public sector duty across UL.

› **HREDI Integrating HREDI into Quality & Policy Processes working group:** Aims to update the current policy development framework to include guidance on how the Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) can support policy development & monitor implementation of our public sector duty.



Pillar 1

Gender Equality

UL has strived to progress gender equality across our University functions. Our academic departments continue to utilise the Athena Swan framework to assess, address and report our progress in advancing gender equality.

UL Athena Swan Committee Structure & Award Holders

- Athena Swan Steering Committee
- Faculty ASEDI Committees x 4
- Working Groups

UL Athena Swan Committee Structure



Figure 1 *Athena Swan Committees in UL Nov 2025*

Athena Swan meetings held in 2025

Committee	Dates
AS/EDI Steering Committee Meetings	Wednesday 26 March 2025
EHS EDI Committee Meetings	Wednesday 19 February 2025
	Wednesday 11 June 2025
	Thursday 17 September 2025
	Tuesday 9 December 2025
FAHSS ASEDI Committee Meetings	Monday 24 February 2025
	Thursday 25 September 2025
	Thursday 20 November 2025
KBS ASEDI Committee Meetings	Monday 10 March 2025
	Tuesday 16 September 2025
	Tuesday 25 November 2025
S&E ASEDI Committee Meetings	Tuesday 18 February 2025
	Thursday 8 May 2025
	Thursday 27 November 2025

Athena Swan Actions and Progress

Athena Swan is a key feature in progressing gender equality in Irish higher education institutions. UL continues to engage fully with the processes to deliver best practice, impactful gender equality improvements in our faculties and depts and for our staff & students.

UL's Current Athena Swan Awards

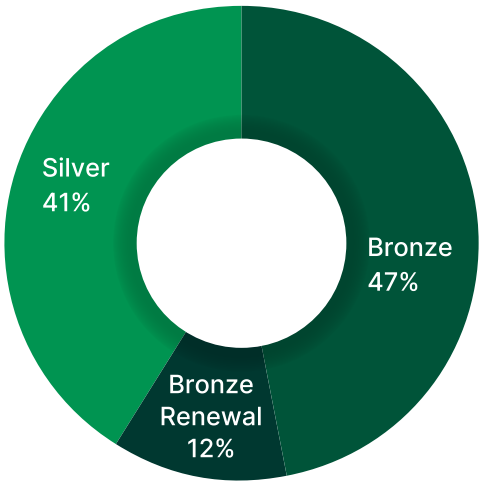


Figure 2 *All academic depts and faculties hold an Athena Swan award. This chart represents the different awards as of December 2025.*

Athena Swan Successes	Level	Awarded	Renewal
Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science	Silver	April 2025	April 2030
Department of Computer Science & Information Systems and Lero Research Ireland Centre for Software	Silver	April 2025	April 2030

Table 1 *Athena Swan Awards presented in Nov 2025.*

Department of Computer Science & Information Systems and LERO Research Ireland Centre for Software appointed a dedicated Equality officer to strengthen engagement with industry and embed equity across the department's work.



Figure 3 *L to R Dr Tabea DeWille, Dr Martina Prendergast, Dr Lillian Motti Alder, Professor Ita Richardson from the self-assessment team of the department of Computer Science & Information Systems and Lero Research Ireland Centre for Software at the award presentation ceremony.*



Figure 4 *L to R, Dr Chris McInerney, Oonagh Grace, Dr Maria Hickey Assistant Dean EDI, Rina Carr, Caroline Harrington from the self-assessment team of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science at the award presentation ceremony.*

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences committed to becoming a Faculty of Kindness through regular communication and embedding inclusive practices across their staff, students and outreach activities.

ID	Name	Priority Theme	Status	Update
A1.2.6	Work with HR to implement a self-declaration option in the Core Personnel System.	Data Gathering - Gender Equality & intersectionality	Red	Alignment to the CSO ethnicity classification will support benchmarking across the sector https://www.cso.ie/en/methods/classifications/csodatastandardsandclassifications/csodatastandards/csodatastandardforethnicity/
subtask	Roll out a self-declaration campaign and information sessions	Data Gathering - Gender Equality & intersectionality	Amber	Submitted for funding to the HEA for project to develop resources to promote self-declaration that builds trust on how data will be used and why data should be provided
A2.4.2	Improve engagement in and monitoring of Dignity & Respect training.	Safe & Respectful - Dignity and Respect (Bullying & Harassment)	Amber	Review our Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures for Students and Staff and raising awareness
A2.4.6	Roll out anti-bullying, harassment, racism, hate crime and active bystander awareness campaigns.	Safe & Respectful - Dignity and Respect (Bullying & Harassment)	Amber	Learn about our Race Equality training EMBRACED Project (HEA Enhancement Fund).
A2.1.5	Conduct an audit of leadership and committee membership across the additional equality grounds	Intersectionality, Inclusion/ Ethnicity and Belonging	Red	Will benefit from the resources developed from self-declaration campaign
A2.1.1	Conduct a disability awareness campaign and disability census.	Different Abilities	Green	Census completed and National Disability Authority / Part 5 Report
A2.3.4	Review where recruitment competitions are being advertised with a view to identifying additional portals and networks	Different Abilities	Amber	Recruitment data by competition available in pilot equality hub report to support analysis.

ID	Name	Priority Theme	Status	Update
A1.2.3	Establish an annual President's EDI award to staff.	Enhancing culture and life at work, Inclusion & Belonging	Red	Award to be established in 2026
A2.4.5	Roll out an awareness campaign on intersectionality.	Enhancing culture and life at work, Inclusion & Belonging	Amber	Intersectionality addressed in Microcredential in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education., EMBRACED Project (HEA Enhancement Fund) and during the Athena Swan 10th Anniversary Conference
A2.4.20	Seek additional lactation/ breastfeeding/ parent rooms on campus to support mothers.	Enhancing culture and life at work, Inclusion & Belonging	Red	Features of existing breastfeeding spaces identified to establish required features for new spaces. Breastfeeding entitlements promoted to staff
A2.4.21	Complete and implement the Support for Pregnant Students Policy.	Enhancing culture and life at work, Inclusion & Belonging	Amber	Support for Pregnant Students Policy is progressing
A2.4.1	Monitor how the staff communication strategies of UL leaders affect the Staff Survey 2024 responses relating to trust.	Inclusive Leadership	Amber	Survey will take place in 2026
A2.2.19	Aim to reduce the gender pay gap at senior levels by increasing representation of women in senior roles through actions on recruitment and promotion.	Gender Equality at Senior levels	Amber	Our Gender Pay Gap report for 2025 has been published
A2.2.9	Lobby the Promotions Review Committee to consider different academic career pathways to promotions.	Career Pathways	Red	Will be actioned in 2026

Figure 5 *Progress on Priority Actions from Athena Swan Institution action plan.*

Gender Pay Gap

The University's gender pay gap report for 2025 is available. This report concluded a notable concentration of women in administrative and support roles. While gender representation is balanced at academic entry levels, participation by women declines at senior academic grades, and a similar trend is evident across research roles. Over time, these patterns of gender concentration in specific roles become increasingly pronounced.

Progress towards Gender Balance in Senior Academic Positions

Our strategic plan includes our commitment to progress gender balance in senior academic positions by encouraging and supporting career advancement.

Change in % Female at Associate Professor and Professor Headcount in UL 2021-2025

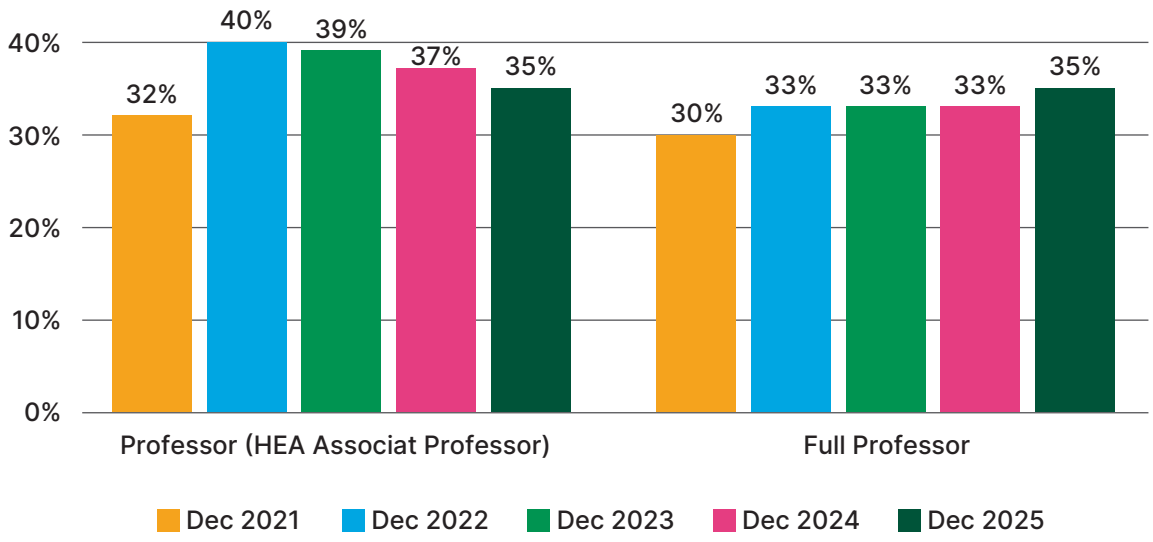


Figure 6 *Percentage of Females in senior academic positions.*

Snapshot	Professor (HEA Associate Professor)	Full Professor
Dec 2021	18n	22n
Dec 2022	35n	26n
Dec 2023	35n	26n
Dec 2024	34n	25n
Dec 2025	33n	25n

Table 2 *Headcount Full Professors & Professors 2021-2025.*

UL was successful in appointing its third Professor under the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative supported by the Higher Education Authority with the Chair in Digital Engineering.

Career Pipeline

The recruitment within career frameworks by gender for recruitment competitions that closed across UL in 2025. The trend over a number of years is analysed as part of the Athena Swan award renewal process at dept/faculty and institution level to ensure career pipelines enable a diverse talent pool at all levels of the institution.

Academic Recruitment by Category

Staff Category	G	Applied	Shortlisted	Job offers	Shortlisted: applied	Job offer: shortlisted	Job offer: applied
Assistant Professor (HEA LBB)	Female	327	66	35	20%	53%	11%
	Male	521	65	11	12%	17%	2%
	PNS*	31	3	1	10%	33%	3%
	% F	37%	49%	74%			
Associate Professor B (HEA Lecturer)	Female	88	20	8	23%	40%	9%
	Male	216	20	8	9%	40%	4%
	PNS*	8	3	0	38%	0%	0%
	% F	28%	47%	50%			
Associate Professor A (HEA SnrLecturer)	Female	60	18	8	30%	44%	13%
	Male	116	14	0	12%	0%	0%
	PNS*	4	0	0	0%	-	0%
	% F	33%	56%	100%			
Professor (HEA Associate Professor)	Female	39	16	6	41%	38%	15%
	Male	27	17	10	63%	59%	37%
	PNS*	2	0	0	0%	-	0%
	% F	57%	48%	38%			
Full Professor (HEA Professor)	Female	46	4	2	9%	50%	4%
	Male	110	13	6	12%	46%	5%
	PNS*	3	0	0	0%	-	0%
	% F	29%	24%	25%			

Table 4 *Application trend for Academic Recruitment by Year (LBB to Prof) for recruitments that closed in 2025 up to Dec 1st 2025.*

Teacher Recruitment by Category

Staff Category	G	Applied	Shortlisted	Job offers	Shortlisted: applied	Job offer: shortlisted	Job offer: applied
TAs	Female	193	48	19	25%	40%	10%
	Male	199	54	29	27%	54%	15%
	PNS*	7	1	1	14%	100%	14%
	% F	48%	47%	39%			
Assoc Teacher	Female	72	10	5	14%	50%	7%
	Male	87	9	3	10%	33%	3%
	PNS*	8	1	0	13%	0%	0%
	% F	43%	50%	63%			
Teacher / University Teacher	Female	26	7	2	27%	29%	8%
	Male	17	7	2	41%	29%	12%
	PNS*	-			-	-	-
	% F	60%	50%	50%			

Table 5 *Application trend for Teacher Recruitment by Year to 1st Dec 2025.*

Researcher Recruitment by Category

Staff Category	G	Applied	Shortlisted	Job offers	Shortlisted: applied	Job offer: shortlisted	Job offer: applied
Research Assistant	Female	282	73	28	26%	38%	10%
	Male	188	28	9	15%	32%	5%
	PNS*	5	2	1	40%	50%	20%
	% F	59%	71%	74%			
Post Doc Researcher	Female	330	74	22	22%	30%	7%
	Male	769	121	38	16%	31%	5%
	PNS*	8	1	0	13%	0%	0%
	% F	30%	38%	37%			
Research Fellow	Female	69	11	3	16%	27%	4%
	Male	142	20	7	14%	35%	5%
	PNS*	3	0	0	0%	-	0%
	% F	32%	35%	30%			
Senior Research Fellow	Female	4	0	0	0%	-	0%
	Male	33	5	4	15%	80%	12%
	PNS*	-			-	-	-
	% F	11%	0%	0%			

Administration Recruitment by Category

Staff Category	G	Applied	Shortlisted	Job offers	Shortlisted: applied	Job offer: shortlisted	Job offer: applied
Administrator	Female	53	32	17	60%	53%	32%
	Male	5	2	2	40%	100%	40%
	PNS*	4	3	1	75%	33%	25%
	% F	85%	86%	85%			
Senior Administrator	Female	298	132	48	44%	36%	16%
	Male	41	15	5	37%	33%	12%
	PNS*	6	2	0	33%	0%	0%
	% F	86%	89%	91%			
Executive Administrator	Female	844	136	43	16%	32%	5%
	Male	299	36	8	12%	22%	3%
	PNS*	13	1	0	8%	0%	0%
	% F	73%	79%	84%			
Senior Executive Administrator	Female	187	45	11	24%	24%	6%
	Male	248	48	12	19%	25%	5%
	PNS*	8	2	0	25%	0%	0%
	% F	42%	47%	48%			
SAO 1	Female	114	26	6	23%	23%	5%
	Male	78	14	5	18%	36%	6%
	PNS*	2	0	0	0%	-	0%
	% F	59%	65%	55%			
SAO 2	Female	24	7	2	29%	29%	8%
	Male	25	8	2	32%	25%	8%
	PNS*	-			-	-	-
	% F	49%	47%	50%			
SAO 3	Female	8	5	2	63%	40%	25%
	Male	9	2	0	22%	0%	0%
	PNS*	-			-	-	-
	% F	47%	71%	100%			

Assoc Professor A to Professor (SL to AP)

Within UL there is a formal promotion process for academic staff to be promoted from Associate Professor A to Professor level. By reviewing the number of successful candidates to the numbers applying from 2018 to 2025 it is clear there is an equal success rate for male and female candidates at institution level but with some variation across faculties.

Overall Success by gender Associate Professor A to Professor Promotion (SL to AP)

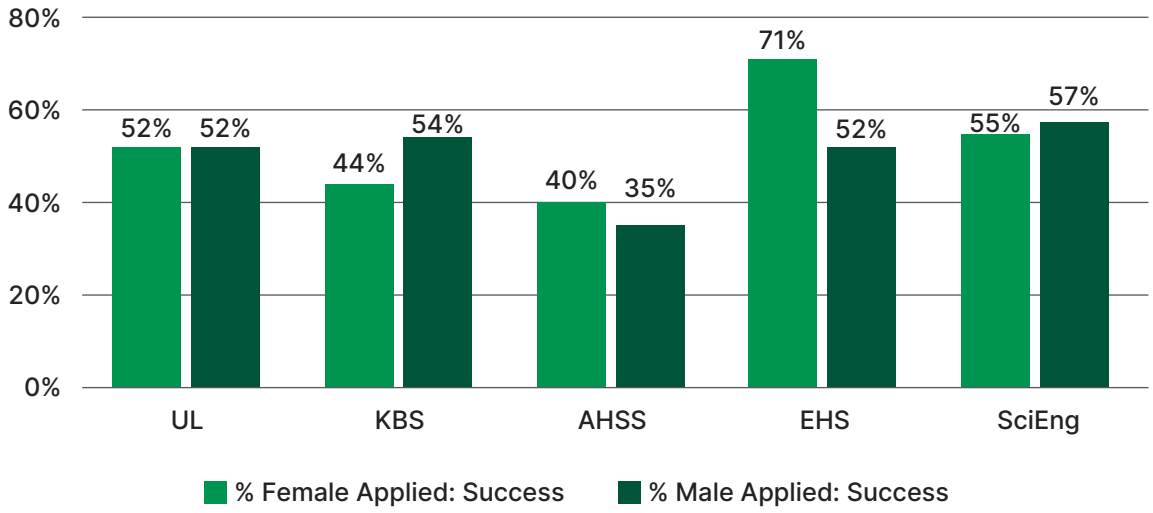


Table 6 *Overall success by Faculty in Associate Professor A to Professor from 2018 - 2025.*

Preparing for Academic Advancement (PAA)

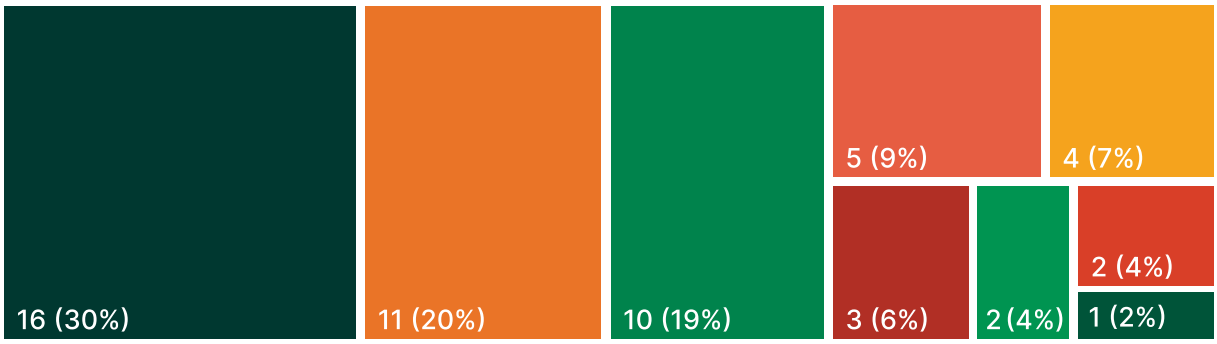
A key commitment of the Gender Equality Enhancement Funded Programme was to evaluate the effectiveness of providing a cross- sectoral programme, including one-to-one coaching and senior academic mentorship.

As part of the formal conclusion of the Preparing for Academic Advancement (PAA) Programme we assessed its impact and fulfilled this commitment by sending out a short survey to the final cohort of participants.

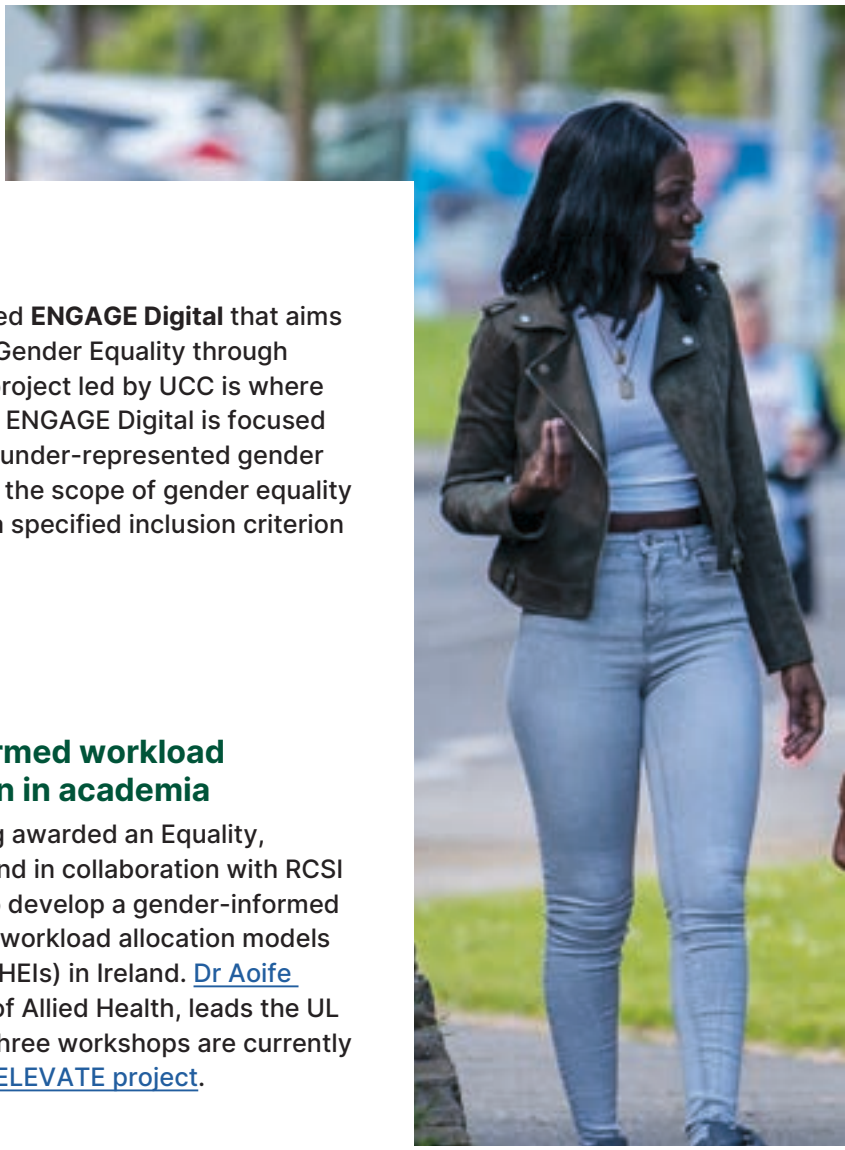
Of those that responded 61% reported a positive experience by being either promoted (30%), positive career progression (19%), were better prepared (4%), applying for promotion (7%) or found the experience positive (2%). 39% of respondents saw no change (20%), no opportunity to progress (9%), did not apply (4%) or were unsuccessful at promotion (6%).



Describe your career progression since the PAA programme?



Sectoral Engagement Projects



Engage Digital

Work has begun on a HEA funded project called **ENGAGE Digital** that aims at Empowering New Generations, Advancing Gender Equality through Reverse Mentoring in Higher Education. The project led by UCC is where early career mentors support senior mentees. ENGAGE Digital is focused on advancing gender equality for women and under-represented gender identities (non-binary or other), expanding on the scope of gender equality from the initial ENGAGE pilot (2024-25) with a specified inclusion criterion for women in early career roles in HEIs.

Elevate: Implementing gender-informed workload allocation models to support women in academia

In November 2024 UL was successful is being awarded an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Enhancement Fund in collaboration with RCSI & UCC. The aim of the project (ELEVATE) is to develop a gender-informed national framework for the implementation of workload allocation models (WAMs) within Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Ireland. Dr Aoife Gallagher, Associate Professor in the School of Allied Health, leads the UL strand of the project. Data collected from all three workshops are currently being analysed. You can find out more about ELEVATE project.

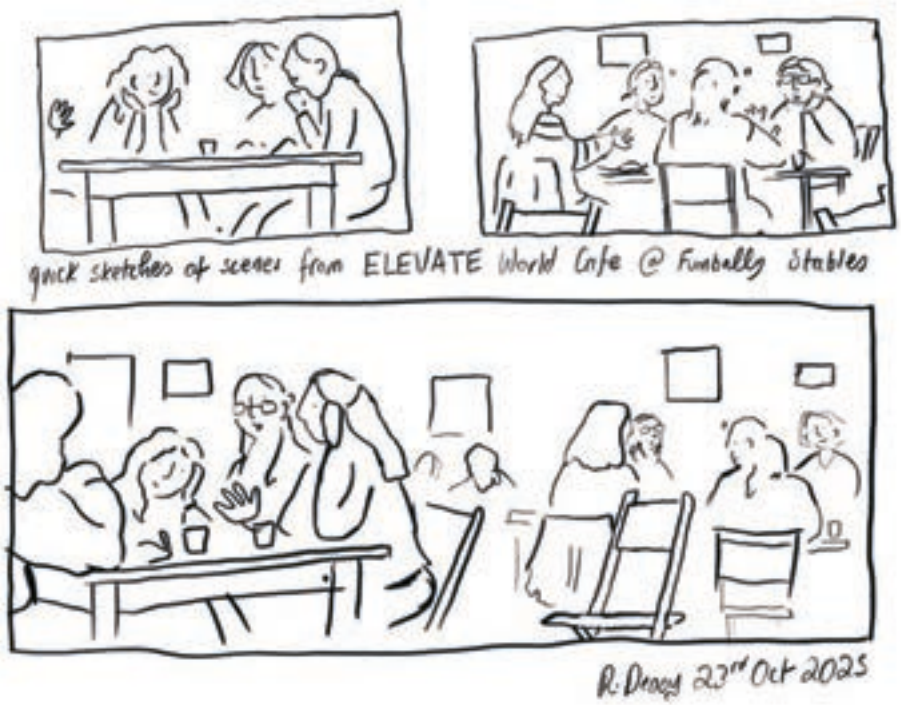
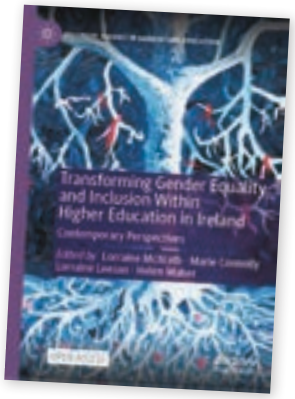


Figure 7 *Sketch from Elevate workshop.*



Data was gathered from UL academics at a World Café event on Friday 10 October 2025 and subsequent workshops were facilitated at UCC & RCSI. World Café is a qualitative methodology which draws on participatory and conversational methods to facilitate group dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaborative idea generation.

Transforming Gender Equality and Inclusion within Higher Education in Ireland – Contemporary Perspectives



The official book launch of Transforming Gender Equality and Inclusion within Higher Education in Ireland – Contemporary Perspectives, took place on Wednesday 29 October at Mary Immaculate College.

Mary Mitchell O' Connor, former Minister of State at the Department of Education with special responsibility for Higher Education launched the book. The launch was followed by a panel conversation with national experts exploring gender equality, inclusion and institutional change in higher education. The book is available as an open access resource.

Athena Swan 10th Anniversary Conference

The University of Limerick hosted the 10th Anniversary Athena Swan Conference in January 2025. This milestone event celebrated the transformation brought about by the Athena Swan framework while paying tribute to trailblazing women who have shaped the path towards greater gender equity. Among them was Mary Mitchell O'Connor, former Minister of State for Higher Education, whose leadership of the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI) paved the way for four key academic positions at UL with three positions filled to date.

We were equally privileged to hear from Professor Eileen Drew, Professor Jane Gibson, Professor Yvonne Galligan, and our own Professor Pat O'Connor, whose reflections on her memoir were nothing short of inspiring.

Another highlight was the opportunity to engage in dialogue about the forthcoming publication, *Transforming Gender Equality and Inclusion within Higher Education in Ireland – Contemporary Perspectives* The editors of this book were Dr. Marie Connolly (University of Limerick), Dr. Helen Maher (University of Galway), Professor Lorraine McIlrath (Mary Immaculate College), and Professor Lorraine Leeson (Trinity College).

The conference included an engaging panel on intersectionality, featuring Tara Leach in discussion with Ebere Edeh, Professor Anna Hickey-Moody, Siobhan Kangataran, Patrick Nevin, and Oluchi Porter.

As part of the Athena Swan 10th year celebrations in Ireland, a series of Case Studies were produced showcasing good practice in gender equality initiatives across higher education institutions in Ireland, including the University of Limerick.



L-R: *Irene Byrne, Advance HE, Professor Jane Grimson, Fellow Emeritus and Pro-Chancellor, Trinity College Dublin, Sarah Fink, Head of Athena Swan Ireland, Advance HE, Professor Pat O'Connor, Professor Emeritus, UL, Professor Yvonne Galligan, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Professor of Comparative Politics, Technological University Dublin, Professor Eileen Drew, Fellow Emeritus, School of Computer Science and Statistics and Centre for Gender and Women's Studies Trinity College Dublin, Professor Ann Ledwith, interim Provost and Deputy President, UL, Tara Leach, Senior Adviser, Advance HE, Professor Lorraine McIlrath, Director of Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Interculturalism, Mary Immaculate College, Dr Marie Connolly, Director for Human Rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, UL, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, former TD and Cabinet Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation as well as Minister of State for Higher Education and Dr Ruth Gilligan, Assistant Director – Inclusive Institutions, Advance HE.*



L-R: *Siobhan Kangataran, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Manager, Munster Technological University, Ebere Edeh, final year law student and social justice activist advocating for equity and intersectionality, Maynooth University, Prof Anna Hickey-Moody, Professor of Intersectional Humanities in the Arts and Humanities Research Institute, Maynooth University, Oluchi Porter, Equality Project Officer, Maynooth University, Tara Leach, Senior Adviser, Advance HE and Patrick Nevin, Manager Tallaght Travellers Community Development.*



L-R: *A 'proper' woman? One woman's story of success and failure in academia, Dr Gemma Irvine, Vice-President of Equality & Diversity, Maynooth University in conversation with Professor Pat O'Connor, Professor Emeritus, University of Limerick and Visiting Professor, Geary Institute, University College Dublin.*



L-R: *Dr Ruth Gilligan, Assistant Director – Inclusive Institutions, Advance HE and Sarah Fink, Head of Athena Swan Ireland, Advance HE.*



Pillar 2
Inclusive Campus

Pillar 2 of the UL Strategy Plan focuses on fostering an inclusive campus that supports equity, respect, and belonging for all. This commitment reflects our dedication to creating a welcoming environment where diversity is celebrated, barriers to participation are addressed, and every individual feels empowered to succeed.

To uphold this commitment, the following actions have been adopted under this pillar:

Access and Participation

University of Limerick (UL) publicly committed to the HEA anti-racism principles for Irish Higher Education Principles in 2023, which acknowledged that racism is a problem that is detrimental to the performance of the institution & is counter to our values. It also commits us to advancing race equality with an intersectional and intercultural lens.

At University of Limerick, we have agreed enrolment targets for Traveller and Roma student participation. Achieving these targets has been supported by the appointment of a dedicated Mincéir/Traveller Programme Coordinator under PATH 3 funding.

This role has provided a focal point for outreach, advocacy, and targeted student support, contributing to stronger connections with Traveller and Roma communities.

The university offers several access pathways, including the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR), the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE), the Mature Student route, and the QQI/FET route. The number of students entering through these pathways in 2024/25 reflects national trends, with an increase in students with disabilities and a slight decline in HEAR entrants.

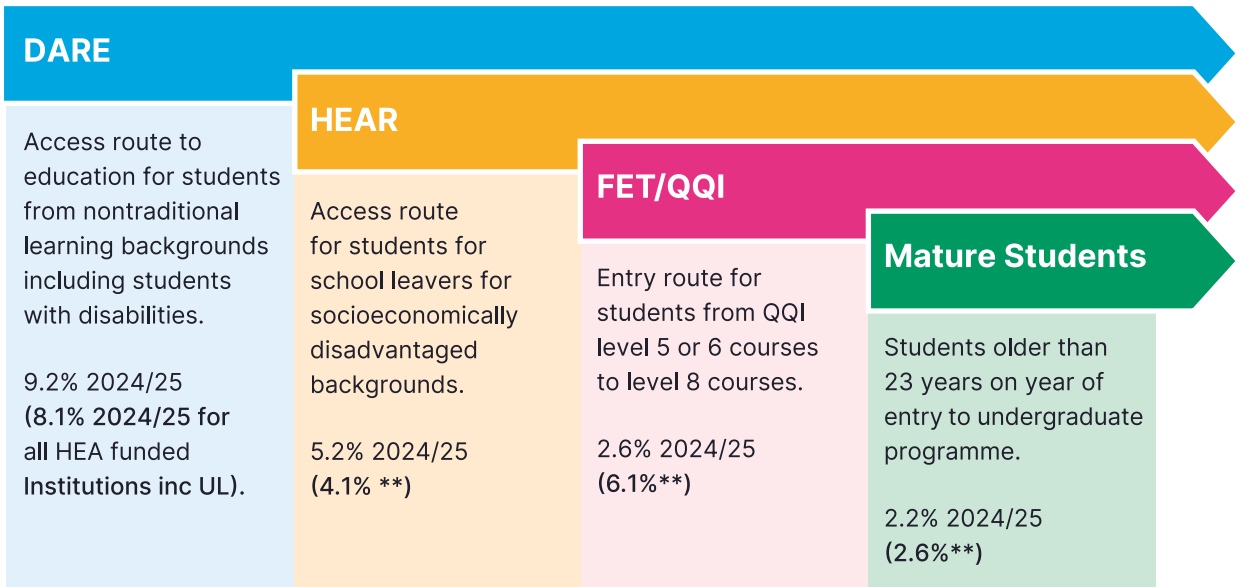


Figure 8 ** *2024/25 for all HEA funded Institutions including UL Source HEAR, DARE, MS, QQI HEA Entry* https://hea.ie/statistics/data-for-download-and-visualisations/key-facts-figures/.

Age Friendly University Teaching Programme

The University of Limerick welcomed 32 enthusiastic older learners to campus on Friday, 5 September, for the launch of its first-ever Age Friendly University (AFU) Teaching Programme — a landmark initiative in inclusive, lifelong learning.

This pilot programme is the result of a collaborative effort led by UL's Age Friendly University Committee, with generous support from Course Directors across faculties who opened their lecture halls to older learners. With coordination from Graduate and Professional Studies (GPS), Academic Registry, and IT Services, the pilot programme is now underway.



Age Friendly University Learning Programme Participants with course organisers Joachim Fischer, Maria Hickey and Michaela Schrage-Früh.



Dr Michaela Schrage-Früh, AHSS, fields questions from the AFU Learning Programme participants.

Designed for adults in the 'third age'—those who are retired or seeking personal enrichment—the programme offers a unique opportunity to engage in university-level study in a flexible and supportive environment.

Orientation Day Highlights:

- Participants were welcomed by Prof. em. Joachim Fischer, Co-Chair of the AFU Committee, alongside Dr Michaela Schrage-Früh and Dr Maria Hickey (AHSS), who shared insights into the semester ahead.
- A guided visit to the UL Library gave learners hands-on support from IT Services to help them navigate the digital tools needed for their studies.
- The atmosphere was one of excitement, curiosity, and community—setting the tone for a transformative learning experience.



Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures for Students and Staff

The new Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures for students and staff was launched in March 2025. While the overarching policy applies to both groups, the procedures remain distinct for students and staff. This is the first policy at UL to incorporate key concepts such as institutional discrimination and harassment, vicarious liability, and intersectionality.

The policy also introduces user-friendly flowcharts to guide individuals through the complaint process, designed to be accessible for people with visual impairments and neurodivergent users. In addition, it provides clear, easy-to-use online links for submitting complaints and appeals.

This policy also formed the foundation for the new e-learning materials for the Staff Dignity & Respect Training developed by HR. Dr Niloufar Omidi from Human Rights-EDI Office collaborated with HR in designing and developing these training materials.

Training for Support Service Providers and Students on the Students Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedures:

In response to requests from colleagues and students and to enhance transparency of our policies within the UL community, a workshop on **Student Dignity and Respect for students** was delivered by Dr Niloufar Omidi on Monday 17 February. 45 members from various departments, sectors and students from University of Limerick attended the training which was jointly hosted by HR-EDI Office and UL Global. The workshop covered the following key components:

- What is meant by respect, dignity, discrimination, harassment, bullying, and victimisation on campus
- Vicarious liability
- Institutional discrimination and harassment
- Analysis of three prominent Higher Education Institutions Discrimination cases before the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC)
- Group Activity – How to recognise and report these issues [Real-life Case Studies]
- How to support victims and become an active bystander.
- The support services available to students
- Establishing a *prima facie* case
- Understanding the *shared burden of proof*
- Complaint and appeal processes





UL staff from diverse roles across the university and students engaging in group discussions and activities, analysing cases of discrimination, harassment and bullying.



Raising Awareness on Bullying and Harassment

In collaboration with the Student Engagement and Support Officer, Philip Desmond, and as part of the Be Mindful Programme, in-person training on Dignity and Respect policy and procedures was designed and delivered to 50 students by Dr Niloufar Omidi on 11 March 2025.

RespectfUL Campus 2025

The Human Rights-EDI Office and HR were proud to launch a RespectfUL Campus Campaign on Wednesday, 5 March 2025. Professor Shane Kilcommins, Acting President launched the RespectfUL Campus Campaign in Lecture Theatre AD2-010, Analog Devices Building.

The Conference which was chaired by Dr. Marie Connolly featured panel discussions and talks on Ending Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment in our institutions, Identifying and Tackling Bullying & Harassment in the Workplace and during study, and Eliminating Gender-Based Violence.

The keynote speaker was Fiona Drouet whose powerful advocacy stemmed from her personal journey following the tragic loss of her daughter, Emily, after a campaign of gender-based violence by a fellow student. Fiona has become a leading advocate for student safety, gender-based violence prevention and mental health support in Higher Education. Through EmilyTest she has spearheaded transformative initiatives that continue to make a profound impact.

It was an inspiring day, and presentations from Caroline Reidy and Professor Patricia Mannix McNamara on bullying and harassment in the workplace were powerful. They drove home the importance of addressing these issues in the workplace at the earliest possible opportunity.

The RespectfUL Campus Campaign was created as an overarching messaging to aid the launch of several policies as set out below:

- Sexual Violence & Harassment (SVH) Policy and Procedure
- Dignity & Respect Policy and Procedure
- Sexual Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Domestic Violence Policy

The RespectfUL Campus Campaign promotes inclusivity, and strives to prevent discrimination, bullying, and sexual violence and harassment, and ensures access to essential support services. This landmark event represented a crucial step in cultivating a culture of dignity, respect, inclusion, and safety at UL. Further details on this launch can be found on the RespectfUL webpages.

All staff and students can view the policies that govern UL's RespectfUL Campus and the supports available to staff and students should they experience any form of bullying, harassment or sexual violence.

View the RespectfUL Video here: https://vimeo.com/1064285588/86f2c65645

We had an excellent turnout on the day with over 150 attendees attending this event on campus. We received excellent feedback and those in attendance found the conference very inspirational.









L-R: *Bobby O'Connor, Director Human Resources, UL, Mary Hayes, Too Into You Coordinator Women's Aid, Kara Stewart, Training & Project Development Manager, Emily Test, Dr. Marie Connolly, Director for Human rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, UL, Professor Shane Kilcommins, Acting President, UL, Fiona Drouet, Executive Director, Emily Test and Clarissa DiSantis, Education Training Co-Lead Active*Consent, University of Galway.*



L-R: *Professor Patricia Mannix McNamara, Professor of Education, UL, Fiona Drouet, Executive Director, Emily Test, Dr. Marie Connolly, Director for Human rights, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, UL, Professor Shane Kilcommins, Acting President, UL, Mary Hayes, Too Into You Coordinator Women's Aid and Bobby O'Connor, Director of Human Resources.*



*Clarissa DiSantis, Education and Training Co-Lead Active*Consent, University of Galway at the RespectfUL Campus Campaign, University of Limerick.*



Fiona Drouet, Executive Director, Emily Test, keynote speaker at the RespectfUL Campus Campaign, University of Limerick.



Professor Shane *Kilcommins, Acting President, UL at the RespectfUL Campus Campaign, University of Limerick.*

Staff DisAbility Committee

The Staff DisAbility Committee is a subcommittee of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) - Human Rights - Steering Committee (SC).

The Staff Disability Committee has 14 members. The chair of this Network is Rob Hickey, and the co-chair is Caoilinn Kennedy.

Some of the key updates over the past 12 months are as follows:

Staff Disability Updates	
In Progress	Formation of a committee. Change from a Network to a committee.
In Progress	The committee review of the Terms of Reference for 2025 is in progress.
In Progress	A review of the Staff disability policy, reasonable accommodation and evidence of disability forms is in progress.
June 2025	An application was submitted by chair of the committee under EC member Bobby O' Connor for the Annual Devolved Capital Grant (DCG) - 'Addressing of accessibility issues across campus'. This was a campus community initiative, led by the Staff DisAbility Network, Student Disability Services, Buildings & Estates and HR. In June 2025 UL received confirmation that this application was successful for funding for 2025/2026. B&E provided a progress report in June's meeting on the 2024/2025 DCG funding.
In Progress	Training and Information sessions planned for 2025 include Disability Awareness Training, Emergency Evacuation / Evacuation Chair and HoD/ Manager Responsibilities.

National Disability Authority / Part 5 Report

5% of staff in 2024 reported a disability using the definition of disability as defined in the Disability Act 2005.

Yearly Trend Percentage of UL employees with a disability

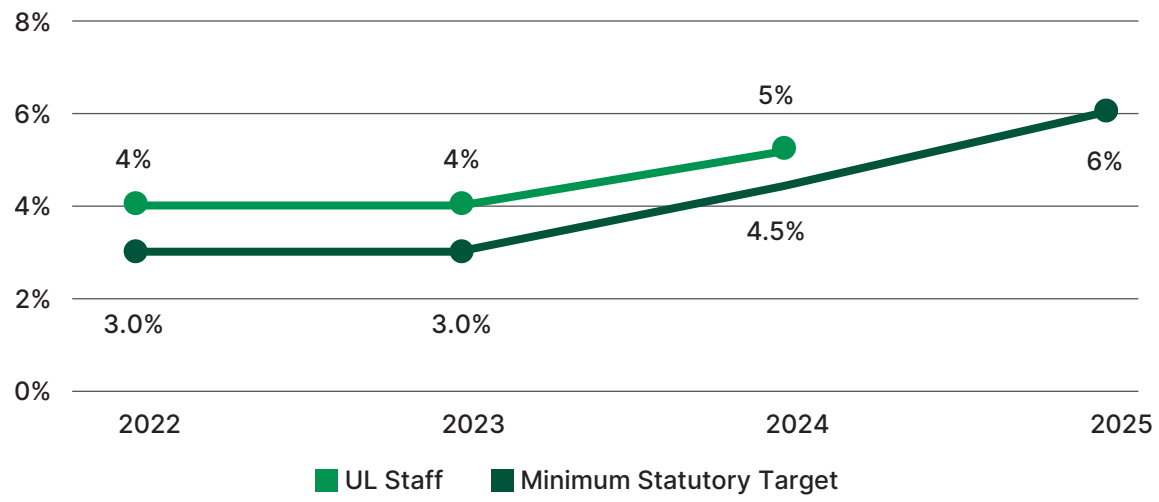


Figure 9 *Trend in Part 5 reporting based on the definition in the Disability Act 2005.*

The increase in 2024 has benefited from increased awareness of the supports available to disabled employees and from the anonymous disability census conducted in October 2024. The census was completed by 20% of staff.



L-R: *Pictured at the launch of the Elephant in the Room initiative are Clodagh Ruddy, Director of Partnerships at Cornmarket; Professor Shane Kilcommins, Acting President of UL; Brent Pope, Founder of Elephant in the Room; and Luan Lyons, who designed the UL elephant.*

‘Elephant in the room’ Initiative

On Wednesday, 20 August 2025 the University of Limerick unveiled a sculpture on campus that aims to break down stigma, encourage openness, and promote mental wellbeing.

The ‘Elephant in the room’, a nationwide initiative led by broadcaster, former rugby player and mental health advocate Brent Pope, and supported by Cornmarket.

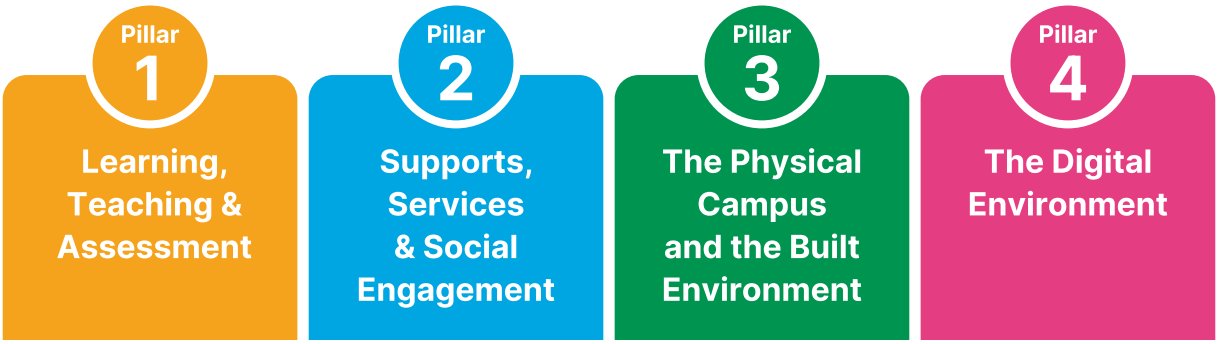
Each elephant sculpture is intended to serve as a reminder that mental health is something we all carry, and that speaking up can make a difference. The idea is that the elephant, as a strong yet gentle creature, represents the silent presence of mental health struggles, often invisible, but sometimes too big to ignore. The UL elephant will move to different locations across campus, ensuring it is seen by as many people as possible. Each move will serve as a reminder that the UL community, students, staff and visitors alike, are encouraged to talk, to listen, and to support one another.

At the launch in the Glucksman Library, Acting UL President Professor Shane Kilcommins said the initiative was aligned with the institution’s commitment to the wellbeing of its community.

Committee for Universal Design and Inclusive Practice @ UL (UDIPUL)

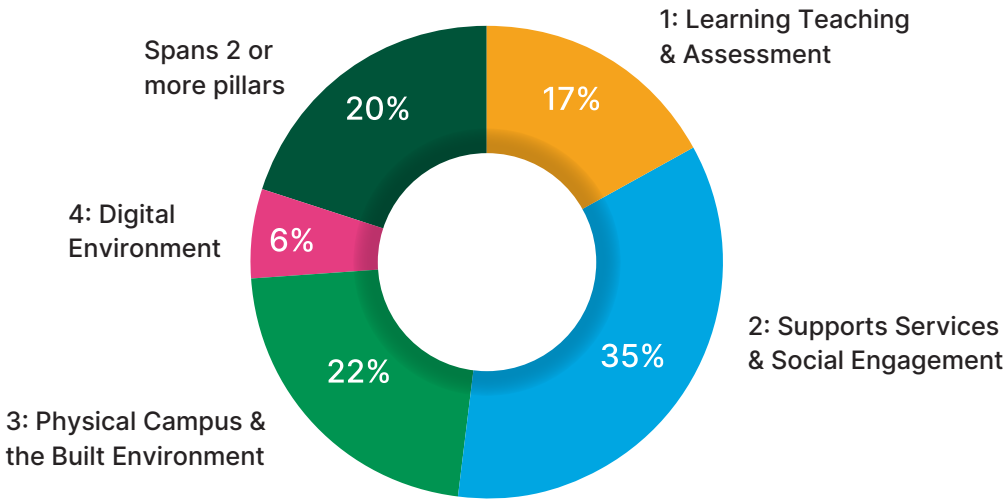
UDIPUL takes a university-wide approach to promoting inclusion, supporting UL's goals and embedding these principles in structures, policies and practices.

The Universal Design and Inclusive Practice (UDIPUL) committee were complimented by the recruitment of Dr Tracy McAvinue UDIP Project Officer to support the delivery of the roadmap for UL. This required mapping examples of inclusive practice across UL to document and build a shared repository of current initiatives. Staff from all areas were invited to contribute examples of Universal Design, Universal Design for Learning, and inclusive practice they have implemented. The aim is to build a repository of current practice and showcase activities across:



To date 158 examples have been submitted by staff from across the University. Staff can continue to contribute by completing the Inclusive Initiatives, Exemplar Mapping Form.

Inclusive Practice Exemplars by Pillar



Autism in UL Special Interest Group (SIG)

Some of the updates from this group over the past 12 months are as follows:

Autism in UL Special Interest Group (SIG) Updates	
In Progress	The SiG continued to meet in 2025. Topics discussed included accessibility, universal design for learning, barriers to inclusion, appropriateness of terminology, workplace challenges and inclusive research with nonspeaking people.
March 2025	March webinar with Professor Deirdre O'Loughlin titled: It Never Ends: Experiences of Persistent Liminality and Service Resourcing Challenges among Families of Autistic Children.
April 2025	April webinar with Dr Sean Healy: Movement Matters: The Power [and Pitfalls] of Exercise for Autistic People.
May 2025	Awarded €10,000 for the Activity and Recreation in an Inclusive Sensory Environment (ARISE) project at UL's Citizens Assembly event in Limerick.
In Progress	The Reworlding Marie Curie funded project is ongoing under the supervision of Dr Cristiano Storni. Our scholar Carolina Carvalho Goncalvesde was seconded to AsIAm and to ASD Ireland from January to July to collaborate and collect data. Data gathering among group members took place last semester.

Sectoral Engagement Projects

Micro-credential in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education.

UL has contributed to the UCC led project to develop a 5 ECTS module which aims to develop awareness and understanding of approaches to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in higher education in Ireland. Based on an intersectional and critical perspective, it draws on evidence-based research to illustrate how inequalities are experienced in university and social life. It equips participants with the knowledge and skills to advance an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice, thereby positioning them to contribute to a supportive, enabling higher education environment for all students and staff.

Professor Lucy Ann Buckly & Professor Mannix McNamara shared their expertise on Equality legislation within Higher Education and how educational reform contributes to social justice and positive social change.



Figure 10 *Introduction Slide to Micro credentials course Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education produced by UCC, UL and UofG.*

Buildings Accessibility Campus Project Update

The Buildings and Estates Department (B&E) plays a central role in ensuring the physical infrastructure of the campus is accessible and continues year on year to provide staff, students and visitors with a more inclusive campus.

B&E continue to embed more inclusive practices in plans and future developments. They work closely with staff and students from across the campus to identify needs in this space. The team also works in partnership with staff on funding applications to promote more cohesive approaches to their work. Examples of this include the accessibility audits which took place with support from a third-party vendor on the following buildings:

Individual Buildings Accessibility Audits:

- Glucksman Library: February 2025.
- Foundation Building & Concert Hall: 14 March 2025.
- KBS/Schuman: 11 April 2025.
- Main Building: Block C, D & E: 2 May 2025.
- Irish World Academy of Music and Dance: 23 May 2025.
- Main Building: Block A: 20 June 2025.
- Main Building Block B: 27 June 2025





Pillar 3

Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity & Inclusion underscores our commitment to creating an equitable, inclusive, and respectful environment for all. This pillar focuses on celebrating diversity, removing barriers to participation, and ensuring that every member of our community feels valued and empowered. By integrating these principles into all areas of university life, we aim to foster a culture where individuals can thrive, contribute meaningfully, and reach their full potential. To achieve the aspirations outlined in this pillar, the following foundations were established and subsequent actions were taken under these foundations.

EDI Training Course enrolments per year

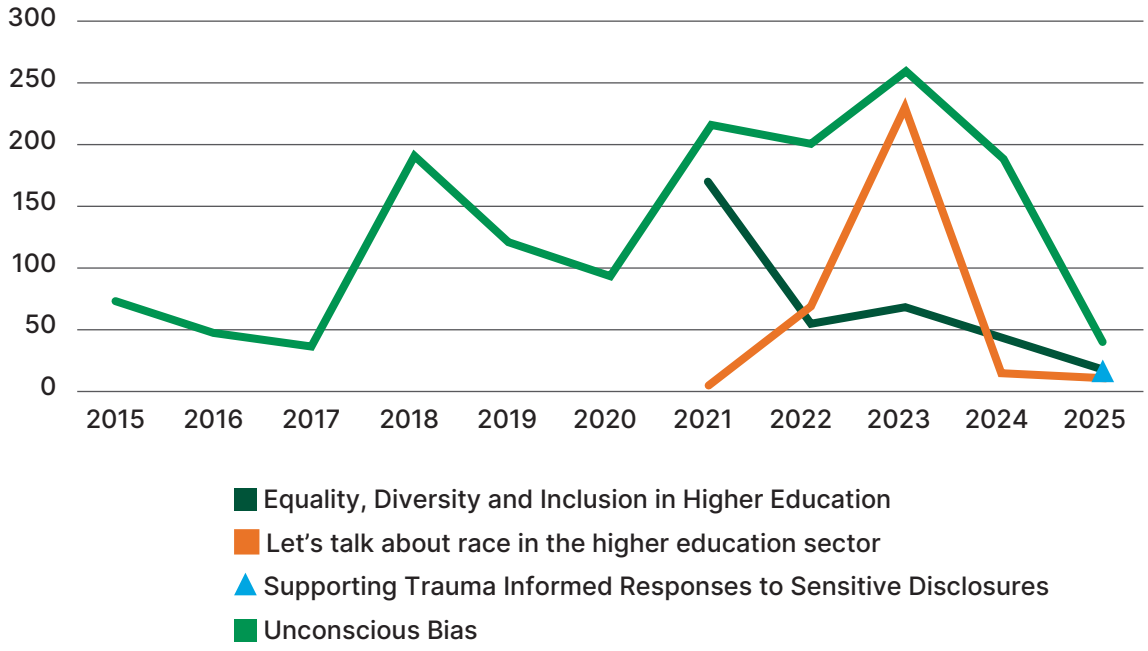


Figure 11 *EDI training enrolment over time*

Diversity Calendar

The 2026 Diversity Calendar was created in collaboration with the Marcomms team, considering the best practices and accessibility requirements.

This calendar highlights key social and cultural dates observed by different communities throughout the year.

Many of these occasions may be marked by activities both on campus and beyond the university.

Being aware of these important dates can help us better understand the diverse UL community and recognise how they may influence the daily experiences and learning of staff and students.

Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF)

The Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF), established in 2021 as a sub-committee of the UL Human Rights-EDI Steering Committee plays a key advisory role in shaping policies and action plans that promote equity and inclusion across the university. Guided by its core objectives to raise awareness of ethnic diversity, prevent racial discrimination, and develop anti-racism strategies, the Forum has grown substantially. By May 2025, it comprised more than 100 students and staff from across the campus, united by a shared commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable UL community.

Members engage in policy development, event organisation, and action-plan implementation, while also benefiting from the support and connections offered through the Forum's broad network.

Inclusive Environment Fund:

Supported under PATH 4 Phase 1 - Universal Design. Designing quantitative and qualitative research to inform the Race Equality Action Plan.

A campus-wide survey on discrimination, hate, and victimisation, followed by focus groups, has been developed in line with the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)4 on combating hate crime (adopted 7 May 2024). The Recommendation emphasises prevention, inclusion, and effective institutional responses within educational settings.

This initiative positions the University of Limerick as the first higher education institution in Europe to align a victimisation survey with this framework. The research aims to inform the development of appropriate reporting mechanisms and victim supports in third-level education and is being conducted in collaboration with the European Centre for the Study of Hate at UL.





Events and Festivals

World Cafe- Am I Racist?

In March 2025, as part of our RespectfUL Campaign and in recognition of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the EDF organised a World Café to encourage open and meaningful discussions on race equality across campus. The Anti-Racism Campaign 2025, held on 20 March in collaboration with the Postgraduate Students' Union, UL Global, and supported by An Garda Síochána, took the form of this interactive World Café titled: "Am I Racist? Reflection, Accountability, Change", and was held in conjunction with Wear Red Day to show Racism the Red card. In this event, Dr Mudassar Aziz delivered a thought-provoking session on Racism: A Critical Psychological Perspective, and Dr Gulnaz Anjum facilitated an insightful World Café discussion that fostered meaningful reflection and dialogue. The event was successfully moderated by Lucy Edith Kiiza, who was the Postgraduate Students' Union President at UL at the time.







Jewish Festival

The 2025 Jewish festival was organised in collaboration with the Jewish Community at UL to combat antisemitism.

This festival, which included services for both Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashannah, was successfully held on campus in October 2025. Students and staff from the Jewish community and other backgrounds came together to observe and celebrate this important festival on the UL campus. This event was supported by the Human Rights-EDI Office, the Ethnic Diversity Forum (EDF), and coordinated by Dr Yonit Kosovske, a member of the EDF Steering Committee.

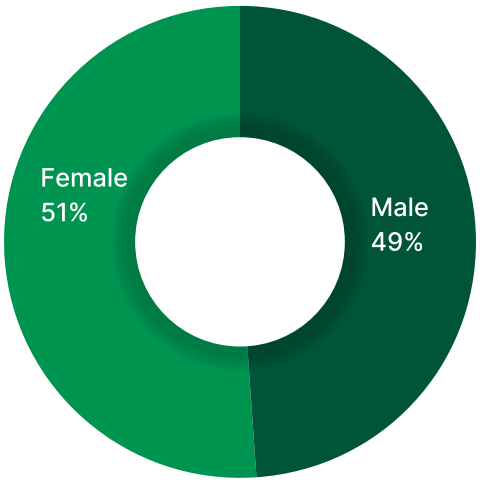




University of Sanctuary

UL is proud to hold the University of Sanctuary award and in academic year 2025/2026 is supporting 35 students through the programme.

University of Sanctuary Students 2025/26 Gender Breakdown



Age Friendly University Committee

Some of the updates from this committee over the past 12 months are as follows:

Age Friendly University Committee Updates	
Ongoing	Regular communication channels with local organisations dealing with older citizens have been established; esp. Age Friendly Ireland.
Ongoing	Regular contact with RESTART (UL Retirees forum) has been established. RESTART is formally represented on the Committee.
February 2025	Face-to-face meeting with the full steering committee of Limerick chapter of University of Third Age and exploration of possibilities for future cooperation.
In Progress	PhD project by Madge O'Callaghan on Age Friendly Universities started and supervised by Rose Galvin (SAH) and Rachel Lenihan (SoE).
Autumn Semester 2025/26	Start of pilot phase of UL Age Friendly University Teaching Programme Autumn Semester 2025/26. Formally advertised in July 2025 with a list of 11 undergraduate modules. The programme is administered by UL's Graduate and Professional Services section. Very positive response by the public with a strong take-up of various options offered.

More information on the UL-Age Friendly University Committee available here

UL Age Friendly Visit – Friday 4 April 2025

Members of the UL Age Friendly University Committee were delighted to welcome a diverse group of Ukrainian older adults from across the Clare region to UL on Friday 4 April. The group received a tour of the beautiful campus, followed by an interactive talk on healthy and positive ageing in the School of Medicine. Throughout the day, members of the group shared their stories and experiences of ageing across the two different cultures. A sincere thanks to Alina and Svitlana for acting as interpreters.

Age-Inclusive Symposium



L-R Professor *Margaret O'Connor Consultant Geriatrician, UL Hospitals Group, Dr Dympna Tuohy Associate Professor, School of Nursing and Midwifery, UL, Professor Rose Galvin Co-Director Ageing Research Centre, Co-Chair of the Age-Friendly University Committee, UL, Minister Kieran O'Donnell, Minister of State for Older People and Housing, Madge O'Callaghan PhD Student, University of Limerick, Professor Ann Ledwith Interim Provost and Deputy President, UL, Professor Margaret O'Connor Consultant Geriatrician, UL Hospitals Group and Senator Maria Byrnes.*

An Age Inclusive Symposium took place on Friday, 30th May 2025 at the School of Medicine. This symposium highlights our commitment to advancing age-friendly initiatives and fostering an inclusive environment for our ageing population.

The event was officially launched by Minister Kieran O'Donnell, Minister of State for Older People and Housing.



The symposium featured esteemed speakers, including Professor Emer Ahern, President of the Irish Gerontological Society, and Professor Margaret O'Connor, Consultant Geriatrician at UL Hospitals Group, who shared their insights on age-friendly health systems and age-attuned healthcare practices. Additionally, we had contributions from Dr. Dympna Tuohy and PhD candidate Madge O'Callaghan, who discussed intergenerational learning and research opportunities for ageing demographics.

Global Engagement & Internationalisation at Home

The Internationalisation at Home Committee, a subcommittee of the Global Engagement Strategy Committee, drives UL's strategic priorities for internationalisation within the university community. Chaired by the UL Global Director, the committee brings together representatives from all faculties and professional services.

Recent initiatives include:

- Hosting international visiting scholars at UL.
- Developing and embedding CPD modules on training on Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC), intercultural competence, and understanding internationalisation at home.

These CPD modules, as well as a Framework for Inclusive Internationalisation at Home are the output of an Erasmus+ Project led by UL and Dr. Angela Farrell, Assistant Dean International, AHSS.

The committee is collaborating with Human Resources to embed this training across the institution, integrating internationalisation into UL's professional development and culture.

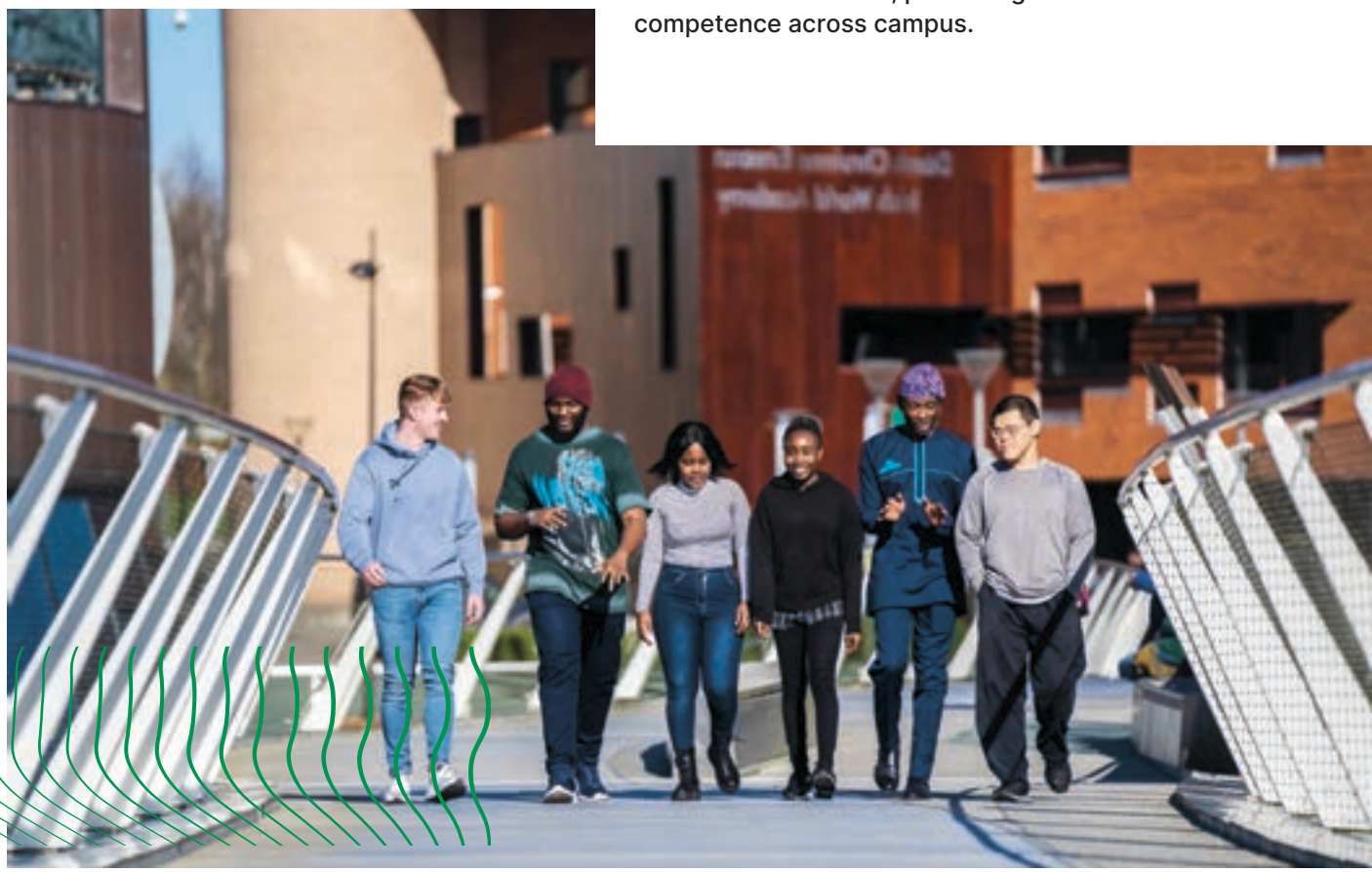
Student and Staff Mobility

Erasmus+ mobility remains a cornerstone of UL's international engagement. Each year, over 600 students complete a semester at a partner university abroad. In the past year, 86 UL staff participated in international mobility – an increase of 19% from the previous year.

Intercultural engagement is a central focus of the UL Global Engagement Team. In the past year, 269 engagement events were delivered, including cultural celebrations, wellbeing initiatives, internationalisation seminars, and Buddy Programme events.

Through the Buddy Programme, 335 volunteers supported 948 international students, creating opportunities for cross-cultural exchange and community building.

Cross-cultural awareness is embedded in international student orientation, and UL Global recommends extending this to domestic student orientation to further enhance inclusivity. In addition, intercultural workshops are offered year-round to students and staff at the Globe, promoting intercultural competence across campus.



Emerge Alliance Inclusive Campus

In January 2025 the Emerge alliance was launched with UL as the coordinating partner. EMERGE (Empowering the Margins of Europe through Regional and Global Engagement) brings together nine universities, united by the conviction that by working together we can better serve our students, territories and communities. A set of uniting values & principles underpins the alliance with inclusion and equality chief among them to guide partners towards becoming more socially and environmentally conscious in their teaching and research.

INCLUSION
EMERGE is dedicated to providing equal access to opportunities.

SOLIDARITY
Solidarity fosters an environment where diverse voices are not only welcomed but celebrated.

RESILIENCE
Resilience is not only about withstanding adversity but also about thriving in the face of it.

SUSTAINABILITY
Embracing sustainability is our declaration of commitment to future generations, demonstrating that the pursuit of knowledge and progress must be in harmony with the well-being of our planet and all its inhabitants.

MULTILINGUALISM AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY
Multilingualism and Cultural diversity is about making sure that people can participate, be treated equally and embrace democratic principles and European values.

Figure 12 *Emerge Alliance Values and Principles.*

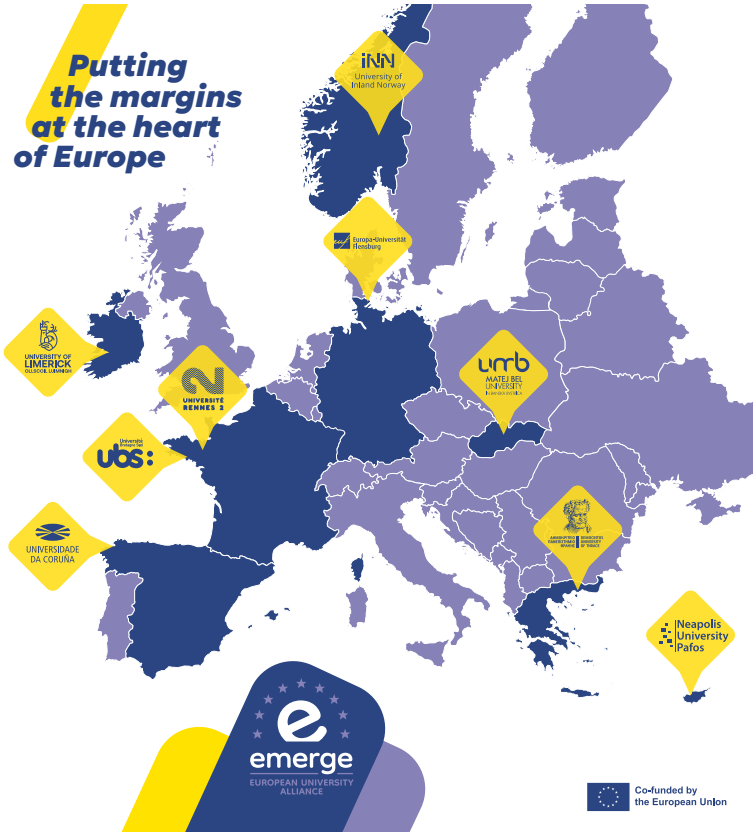


Figure 13 *Map of Emerge Alliance Partners 2025.*

Student Ambassador Force

To progress these values, students have been recruited to join the student ambassador force to highlight the opportunities and benefits of the alliance. The students attended an induction week with students from each of the partners in attendance. The blended intensive programme (BIP) at Matej Bel University in Slovakia sessions on

- Emerge and its partners
- Intercultural session
- How to support an international student
- How to organise an Emerge event on campus
- Communications workshop including digital communications

The sessions were supported by staff from across the alliance with colleagues from UL Global sharing their social media expertise to provide students with the skills necessary to promote Emerge within and across their institutions.



Figure 14 *Students and Staff from Emerge European Alliance Institutions attending the Student Ambassador Force workshop Mateja Bela University in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia.*

EqUL Staff LGBTQIA Network

Some of the updates from this network over the past 12 months are as follows:

EqUL Staff LGBTQIA+ Network Updates	
In Progress	The network recruited for new committee members for 2025.
In Progress	The network drafted Terms of reference and Code of Conduct.
In Progress	Partnered with GOSHH (Gender Orientation Sexual Health and HIV) to run a Limerick based dinner event to celebrate pride in the Mid-West.
May 2025	The 2nd Annual on campus pride parade took place in May 2025 (EqUL, UL Student Life + PSU).
In Progress	Expression of interest for new Co-chair.
May 2025	2nd Annual meeting for all Ireland HEA pride network May 2025 (Trinity College Dublin).
In Progress	Sourcing for new pronoun badges/lanyards to distribute to staff.





May 2025 – *UL Campus Pride Parade.*

PSU and Student life organised UL's 2nd on campus pride march on Monday 12 May. EqUL is our LGBTQIA+ staff network open to all staff interested in supporting and connecting with LGBTQIA+ staff and allies across the University. Colleagues interested in being part of UL Staff LGBTQIA+ Network please email EqUL@ul.ie

Diversity & Inclusion Events

International Men's Day 2025

The International Men's Day event took place on Wednesday 19 November in the Appellate Court, Glucksman Library. The theme this year was "**Supporting Men and Boys**".

This event was hosted by the Human Rights, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Department and our keynote speaker was David Crosby. David is a double transplant recipient, marathon runner, and extraordinary survivor who has faced down Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis, COVID, and kidney failure, all while training for his next marathon.

David's story was a powerful message of resilience, purpose, and the unbreakable will to overcome life's greatest challenges. David Crosby reminds us that strength is about what you can endure, overcome, and still carry forward.





Sectoral Engagement

EMBRACED Project (HEA Enhancement Fund)

EMBRACED project (Embedding Race Equality Training in Higher Education) involves the co-development of the 'train the trainer' module to ensure the sustainability and long-term effectiveness of staff race equality training. Individuals from participating HEIs will receive additional training as trainers and positioned to deliver training within their own institution.

This programme is a Train-the-Trainer programme where participants from four HEIs (UL, University of Galway, Trinity College Dublin, and Mary Immaculate College) will be equipped to deliver evidence-based race equality training. The training covered:

- Understanding racism at institutional, structural, and individual levels
- Irish legal/policy frameworks (Equal Status Acts, Employment Equality Acts, IHREC Act 2014)
- Practical guidance on reporting mechanisms and supporting affected colleagues and students
- Intersectionality and how racism connects with other identity factors
- Two sessions of this training series were delivered at UL, hosted on 28 April 2025 and 13–14 November 2025.



UL Staff from the different sectors actively attended EMBRACED Training.





Pillar 4

Sexual Health & Wellbeing

Sexual Health & Wellbeing remains a central component of the Human Rights-EDI Strategy, and this year we continued to strengthen our commitment by advancing a whole-campus approach to these priorities.

Building on the foundations laid in last year's report, we have expanded our efforts to ensure that students and staff are supported through informed, inclusive, and equitable practices. This pillar continues to prioritise comprehensive education, increased awareness and improved access to resources related to sexual health, consent and healthy relationships, while sustaining our focus on preventing and addressing sexual violence and harassment.

Our work has been further reinforced through the RespectfUL Campus Campaign, which emphasises the creation of safe spaces and the amplification of strong voices across the university community – this approach further highlights our commitment to a campus culture grounded in respect and accountability.

By embedding these values into our institutional practices, we aim to empower our community, strengthen a culture of respect and consent, and advance the holistic wellbeing of the entire campus.

Some of the updates over the past 12 months are as follows:

Sexual Health & Wellbeing Updates	
In Progress	Revise committee membership and Terms of Reference.
In Progress	Develop Support for Pregnant Students Policy.
January 2025	Establish and launch SATU Follow up Outpatients Clinic.
March 2025	Launch of Sexual Violence & Harassment Policy and Procedure, and Sexual Health & Wellbeing Policy and overarching RespectfUL Campus Campaign.
September 2025	Consent training rolled out for all incoming 1st year undergrads.
October 2025	Refresher disclosure training for member of the Designated Contact Persons Panel.
October 2025	Bystander Intervention training rolled out for students.
November 2025	16 Days of Action Against GBV awareness campaign and event.

Support for Pregnant Students Policy

Over the past year, significant progress has been made in the development of our Support for Pregnant Students Policy. An extensive consultation process was undertaken, engaging staff, students and specialist services internally. The feedback gathered has been comprehensive, and constructive, and all insights are currently being integrated into the final draft of the policy.

This collaborative approach aims to ensure the policy is robust, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of our community.

Key next steps include:

1. Finalise the policy draft incorporating all feedback.
2. Final review to ensure compliance and best-practise review.
3. Present the policy through the necessary approval channels.
4. Develop an implementation plan, including a communications plan.
5. Launch the policy.
6. Monitor and evaluate, using feedback to refine support mechanisms as needed.

Consent

Participation Metrics and Growth

Participation in consent training has remained strong throughout 2025 with 2142 students participating to date. While overall attendance is lower on last year, engagement among new cohorts has increased, indication growing interest and improved reach.

The reduced attendance reflects lower numbers at 1st year undergrad orientation and follow up sessions scheduled for later in the year have not yet been delivered. As these additional sessions roll out, participation is expected to rise, providing a complete picture of annual engagement.

Embedding Consent Workshops in Orientation

Embedding consent training with Orientation continues to be a core strategy, ensuring we reach our target audience early and equip all students with foundational knowledge of what constitutes consent.

This year engagement expanded beyond Orientation Programmes with Student Life Clubs & Societies inviting us to facilitate tailored workshops for their student groups.

This proactive interest from student led communities reflects a positive cultural shift and demonstrates strong engagement from new cohorts who are eager to deepen their understanding and contribute to a safer, more respectful campus environment.



Consent training delivered by SVH Manager Maria Healy and Co-op Placement Student Conor Davidson, during Orientation Week.



*New cohort of student ambassadors with Active*Consent team members and Sexual Violence & Harassment Prevention and Response Manager Maria Healy.*

Peer Education through Consent Student Ambassadors

Our student ambassadors continue to play a vital role in promoting a strong consent culture across campus. Each year, new ambassadors are recruited at the start of the academic year and receive specialised training through Active*Consent equipping them with skills and confidence to lead conversations among their peers. These peer led initiatives are essential, as students are often most receptive to messages delivered by fellow students who can relate to their experiences.

Through their visibility, advocacy, and ongoing engagement, the ambassadors help normalise discussions about consent and healthy relationships.

Innovative Engagement

Student Consent Ambassadors collaborated with UL Global and their student ambassadors to produce a series of short videos highlighting what consent is, and what it is not. This cross-cultural collaboration generated impressive engagement on social media and broadened the reach of our messaging to international and domestic students alike.



Sing for Consent

In addition, our student ambassadors, hosted a "Sing for Consent" karaoke night in Scholars Bar to creatively promote consent culture. The event featured a themed song suggestion list designed to spark discussion and encourage reflection in a fun, low pressure environment.

Attendance was strong and the relaxed peer led format helped students connect with consent messaging in an accessible and memorable way.

Overall, the event demonstrated the value to student driven approaches in fostering a positive and engaging consent culture on campus.

Handling Disclosures Training

A new e-learning resource "Supporting Trauma Informed Responses to Sensitive Disclosures" was launched at the RespectfUL Campus Conference. This resource empowers staff to provide trauma-informed, sensitive responses to disclosures of harm. Developed as a collaborative, cross-institutional project between University of Limerick, University College Dublin, University of Galway, Trinity College Dublin and the Irish Universities Association, the module offers practical guidance, grounded in best practice to create more supportive campus communities. This resource is available to all staff and can be found on the Learn Upon platform.

On Thursday 6 March following the launch of the RespectfUL Campus Campaign, Kara Stewart from EmilyTest facilitated GBV LISTEN Risk Assessment training to over 40 staff members. This included staff members from our Designated Contact Persons Panel, Accommodation, Student Engagement teams, Student Life and PSU Officers.

In this training staff members learned how to support students with safety and care, how to confidently respond to a GBV (Gender Based Violence) disclosure, how to identify and apply the steps of L.I.S.T.E.N, how to assess the risk and take action appropriately and identify escalation contact, and signpost to the relevant resources.

On the 14th of August EmilyTest GBV LISTEN Risk Assessment training was also delivered to the new student officers, and staff members, of both Student Life and the Postgraduate Student Union. There were 16 attendees in total at this training.

Refresher training was delivered to key stakeholders on effectively and sensitively handling disclosures. Thes session, delivered by Gemma McNally, Clinic & Therapeutic Lead for Active*Consent, focused on strengthening core skills needed to respond with confidence, clarity and care. Participants engaged in confidential role-play exercises designed to support practical skill development and reinforce best-practice approaches. This ongoing training ensures that staff remain well-prepared to provide appropriate support to those who choose to disclose.





Bystander Intervention Training delivered by SVH Manager, Maria Healy to students of the Be Mindful Programme.

Bystander Intervention Training



Bystander Intervention training was delivered this year as part of both the BA Arts Programme "Preparing for Academic Success" and the Be Mindful initiative, with a total of 421 students participating. The training equips students with practical skills to recognise harmful behaviours, intervene safely, and support a culture of respect and accountability. As a skill set with wide applicability across academic, social, and community contexts, bystander intervention empowers students to play an active role in fostering a safer, more supportive campus environment.

Students' Guide to Wellbeing



The Students' Guide to Wellbeing project was created as an information sharing session for Healthy UL by three students on Co-operative Education placement within the University; Nathan Carson (Healthy UL) Marija Simic (Office of the AVPSE), and Conor Davidson (Office of the Director of Human Rights – EDI), with the goal of creating a guide for those coming into first year. The information session was facilitated by the students on the 23rd of September and took a more nuanced approach, focusing on self-care, mental health, and what to expect as an incoming student.

It encompassed a lot of areas, including but not limited to; cooking for yourself, encountering drugs and alcohol, stress management, sexual health and wellbeing, and social isolation.

This project sought to guide students through the learned experiences of the students who had been first years before them, with a focus on staying safe and making their initial experience of UL as beneficial as possible. The Students' Guide to Wellbeing stands alone as a student-led directive to openly discuss how to stay safe and make the most of your time when arriving at University.

16 Days of Action Against Gender-Based Violence campaign – November

As part of our commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful university community, we actively participated in the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence campaign.

We once again joined forces with 16 other HEI's in a collaborative social media initiative aimed at raising awareness, amplifying



Various information stands at the local support services fair for 16 Days of Action Against Gender Based Violence.

prevention messaging, and taking a united stance against gender-based violence across the sector.

On campus, we partnered with Student Life and the Postgraduate Student Union to deliver a dedicated day of events designed to educate, engage and support our community.

Activities included information stands from key support services, such as Doras and GOSHH, a MOVE Ireland workshop, which looked at Perpetrator Programmes and Coercive Control, and a "What Were You Wearing?" exhibition that challenged rape myths and victim blaming narratives, with an impassioned talk by Siobhán O'Leary, Executive Director, Rape Crisis Midwest.

We concluded with a candlelight vigil in remembrance of those who have lost their lives to gender-based violence, reinforcing our continued commitment to advocacy, support, and meaningful change.



Orlaith Morrissey and Michaela Usher from Move Ireland.



Representatives from Student Life and Postgraduate Student Union at the candlelight vigil in memory who those who have been lost to gender-based violence.



SATU Follow Up Outpatients Clinic on Campus

A Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) Follow-Up Outpatients Clinic was established in UL's Health Centre to improve access to care for patients from the Midwest who faced barriers – particularly travel- in attending appointments in SATU Cork and SATU Galway.

Following an approach from SATU Cork, UL became the designated site for this outreach service, which commenced on 28 of January and operates monthly.

Led by Sinéad Maher, CNS Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner, the clinic delivered 12 sessions in 2025 with 26 patients availing of the service. Reflecting on its impact, Sinéad noted "Without the vision and support offered to SATU Cork by HR-EDI and UL, these individuals would not have access to this type of care. The numbers do not measure the value to those who need it".

The clinic will continue to operate regularly in 2026.

Healthy UL Mental Health Committee

The healthy UL framework was updated to version 2.0 in 2025 and aims to embed health promotion and wellbeing across UL using the three pillars of healthy systems, healthy engagement & healthy people & environments.

This included establishing the UL Mental Health committee to develop a student mental health and wellbeing policy.

The International Health Promoting Campus Conference was held in UL in June 2025 and marked the production of the Limerick Framework for Action: Advancing the Global Health Promoting Campuses Agenda as an international guide to advance student and staff health and wellbeing on campus.

Healthy UL – Substance use & Gambling subgroup

Is a pillar of the healthy UL framework to support students & staff who are experiencing difficulties through their use of tobacco, vaping, alcohol, drugs or gambling.

Training & Engagement
Drug awareness workshops led on campus
Drop-in and on-demand service substance use & gambling support for UL students and staff.
19 Student volunteers recruited to support SUG activities

Collaborations
UL coordinated a knowledge exchange webinar on substance use in higher ed.
Midwest regional Partnership forum with TUS, MIC, Gardai, Student Unions, HSE.

Sectoral Engagement

The University of Limerick is leading a collaboration with University of Galway and University College Dublin, to lead a national study on Sexual Harassment and Violence (SVH) in the tertiary sector. The study commissioned by the Higher Education Authority is designed to give voice to those who have experienced SVH and the study outcomes will include the design of promotional materials that will raise awareness of the issue in the sector and provide knowledge as to how to seek effective redress and support.





Appendices

Committee Memberships

Sexual Health & Wellbeing Subgroup

Name	Role
Dr Marie Connolly	Director of HR-EDI (Sub-Group Lead)
Dr Sarah Kennedy	Healthy UL Manager
Maria Healy	Sexual Violence & Harassment Prevention and Response Manager
Claire Kearns	Practice Nurse Manager
Ellen Fitzmaurice	Student Support & Development Manager
Karen Fanneran	Employee relations Manager
Shane Laffan	Advice & Advocacy (Student Life)
Síofra Foley	Student Welfare Officer (Student Life)
Lucy Edith Kiiza	Postgrad President (PSU)
Cynthia Adubango	Student Engagement & Support Officer (AHSS)
Andrea Crockett	Student Engagement & Support Officer (EHS)

Staff Disability Committee Membership

Staff Disability Members	Role
Andrew Rock	Senior Employee Relations Specialist
Mary B O'Connell	Employability Officer
Caitlin Neachtain	University Teacher in Technical Communication and Instructional Design
Caleb Derven	Head, Digital Scholarship & Systems
Caoilinn Kennedy	Disability Support Officer
Caroline Lane	Disability Support Services Manager
Cliona Donnellan	Administration and Insurance Manager
Lucy Ann Buckley	Professor School of Law
Maria Hickey	Assistant Dean, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (AHSS)
Michael O' Brien	EDI Athena SWAN Data Analyst / Projects Officer
Rob Hickey	Safety Officer
Rosie Gowran	Associated Professor Occupational Therapy
Thomas O'Shaughnessy	Assistive Technology Officer
Sadhbh O Dwyer	Researcher
Maureen Keogh	Senior Human Right EDI Administrator

Ethnic Diversity Forum Committee Membership

Members	Role
Dr Niloufar Omidi	Chairperson Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Policy and Project Development Officer
Professor George Barreto	Deputy Chair Chair of the Action Plan Implementation Working Group EDI Assistant Dean, School of Science and Engineering
Dr Gulnaz Anjum	Chair of the Research Design Working Group Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology
Dr Andrew Shorten	Chair of Policy Development Working Group
Aysha Liyana KC	Chair of Communication and Social Media Working Group
Dr Yoga Nathan	Associate Professor, School of Medicine
Dr James Carr	Associate Professor, Dept. of Sociology
Dr Mariano Paz	Associate Professor, School of Modern Languages & Applied Linguistics
Professor Helen Phelan	Director, Irish World Academy of Music and Dance Member, Health Research Institute
Professor Hussain Mahdi	Professor, Centre for Research Training in Foundations of Data Science Professor, Department of Electronics & Computer Engineering
Dr Maria Hickey	Associate Professor, School of Modern Languages & Applied Linguistics Assistant Dean for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, he Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Limerick
Dr Yonit Kosovske	Associate Professor in Music, Irish World Academy of Music and Dance
Dr Anca Minescu	Associate Professor, Department of Psychology
Mahdi Nohtani (Postgraduate Student Union President)	Postgraduate Student Union President
Síofra Foley (Student Life President)	Student Life President

Age Friendly Committee Membership

The Age Friendly University Committee was formed in 2022 and is co-chaired by Professor Rose Galvin and Professor Emeritus Joachim Fischer.

The committee members are as follows:

Name	Role
Andrea La Touche	Student Community Engagement Liaison Officer
Ann Marie Kennedy	Accreditation, Quality and Compliance Officer
Bernadette Walsh	Chair of RESTART
Donal O' Leary	Access Campus Manager
Hilary Curley	Research Assistant in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Joachim Fischer	Prof. em. of European Cultural Studies Co-Chair, Age Friendly University Committee, UL
Maria Hickey	Assistant Dean, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (AHSS)
Michaela Schrage-Frueh	Associate Professor in German Studies; Director of the Centre for European Studies
Pattie Punch	AHSS Research Librarian
Rose Galvin	Professor in Physiotherapy
Sorcha Prendergast	Widening Participation Manager
Maureen Keogh	Human Rights EDI Senior Administrator
Patricia Anne Moore	Former UL Lifelong Learning Manager
Madge O' Callaghan	PHD Student
Marie Connolly	Former Director Human Rights, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Tracey Gleeson	Community Engagement Facilitator





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