Learning Enhancement Projects SATLE 2024-2025

Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning

University College Cork

UCC's 2024 SATLE (Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement, HEA/National Forum) funding allocation has supported another highly successful open call for L&T Enhancement projects.

The SATLE allocation has supported 5 multiannual institutional initiatives and an open call (to all UCC staff who support student learning) for teaching and learning enhancement projects.

An open call for T&L Enhancement projects was launched in February 2024, open to all UCC staff who support student learning. The call invited proposals for small grants of up to €2,000 per proposal, and larger grants of up to €15,000 per proposal. 67 applications were received, and 26 proposals were offered funding. The total amount of funding dispersed via the open call was in excess of €170,000.

Projects are aligned with one or more of the following themes:

- Education for Sustainable Development

- Academic Integrity

- Digitally enabled Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- Inclusive Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- Delivering the Connected Curriculum – connecting students with research, SDGs, employers, entrepreneurship, and the world

A students-as-partners approach was a required aspect of all proposals.

SATLE funding in UCC is managed by CIRTL's Learning Enhancement Project Manager, Dr Laura Lee.

Large Grants

Combatting marginalisation: Engaging students in intercultural and community-based learning

Project Lead

Dr Céire Broderick, Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies, CACSSS

Project team members

- Noreen Kane (Phd researcher in Italian)
- Nadette Foley and Patty Abogazlo (Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation)

Project Overview

Partnering with Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, this project connected students of the MA in Migration, Mobility and Culture and PhD researchers in UCC with people in Cork seeking international protection. Glencree supported the recruitment of community-based participant and led the sessions on the trauma-informed Capacitar International Multicultural Wellness Programme. Through these sessions and collaging activities, this project fostered awareness of challenges for those participating and created inclusive, healing spaces. Capacitar and collaging were chosen to reduce potential linguistic/cultural barriers and facilitate collective spaces for community building.

The project connected students better to the world around them and strengthened their sense of civic duty. It facilitated their work directly with marginalised communities and ensured a tangible understanding of the more abstract concepts from their classroom learning/research projects. For participants seeking international protection, it increased their sense of wellbeing, belonging and community in Cork.

Objectives:
- Co-design meetings and activities with participants.
- Facilitate three workshops—two in Cork, one in Glencree.
- Support students in reflective practice that helped them align the theoretical learning with the practical elements of the community-based project.
- Invite active and ongoing participation in planning from all participants to enhance inclusion and belonging with each step.

The Approach

This project was initially envisaged for students of an undergraduate module, and was supposed to run in the first semester. Due to challenges faced by Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation beyond their control, we ran it in the second semester. Initial consultation with community-based partners also advised that workshops would not be possible during working hours on weekdays due to other commitments for the IPAs. As such, we had to change our workshops to weekends, further limiting the participation of certain student cohorts. Those completing the MA in Migration, Mobility and Culture and PhD researchers in our School,

working in areas connected to the project's focus, became the new UCC participants. PhD researcher, Noreen Kane, who specialises in intergenerational trauma in postcolonial Italian literature, joined the coordination team to support initial planning with Glencree, ensuring we prioritised ethical, intercultural and wellbeing considerations in our work.

Activities:

- 3 online planning meetings with Glencree and UCC participants
- 1 in-person welcome café in UCC to facilitate input from all participants
- 1 in-person workshop in Glencree
- 1 in-person workshop in UCC
- 1 online debrief session to seek final feedback
- 1 in-person teaching and learning seminar to share initial findings with UCC community

Results

The initial goals of the project—increasing students' sense of civic responsibility and promoting their understanding of theoretical discussions from their classroom learning, as well as fostering a sense of belonging and community for all participants—were achieved. Due to the adjustments implemented in response to external challenges, they manifested in a different manner, operating in a different semester, with a different cohort of students, at the weekends.

All participants appreciated the spaces created to build community during the workshops, but asked for this "brief sense of community" to continue. Everyone enjoyed the collaging and indicated surprise at the effectiveness of such a simple activity: "we came together, we didn't know each other, and we just did something". Feedback indicates that the choice of activities was secondary to the experiences of togetherness, solidarity and belonging that were fostered through them. Students asserted: "this project gave us the opportunity to go out [...] and share experiences with communities beyond UCC, an experience that enriched our learning". One highlighted how their comfort slowly grew through the workshops, creating "'Heimspiel'", in its figurative sense of comfort and familiarity, by the end, which was unexpected for them as an introvert.

Capacitar was not a positive experience for some participants. Internally in UCC, we reflected on why, and how we could articulate that in a constructive manner. Through this, we identified the importance of ice breaker activities and clearly identifying alternative activities. The collective reflective process led to a consolidation of community among UCC participants that grew beyond the project.

From a teaching and learning perspective, impact for students was increased reflective practice to solve collective challenges constructively, recognition of real-life application of theoretical discussions from the classroom and enhancing their understanding for the need for flexibility and careful planning to facilitate intercultural, inclusive participation.

Next Steps

Feedback from this project demonstrated a keenness for this type of activity to continue, both from the students' perspective and the IPA participants. They would like to see more sessions, a wider range of activities and options available. Students appreciated being involved in the planning and would like to have had more input and to inform the modules connected to the

project based on their participation in it.

Bearing these lessons in mind, we have co-developed a submission with a colleague in French for more SATLE funding, which extends the scope of this project to a wider cohort of students. We will run more workshops, based in Cork to reduce costs, making it more sustainable and accessible for more people. Students will be guided in reflective practice from the moment they join the project to consider their participation in the activities and planning together with their more formal classroom learning.

Preparing and supporting students to become outward-looking, plurilingual global citizens through international mobility

Project Lead

Dr Anne Marie Devlin, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, CACSSS

Project team members

- Emma Riordan, Dept of German

Project Overview

Reflecting the fact that we live in a highly connected world where intercultural contact in multicultural and multilingual environments cannot be ignored, international learning and teaching has become an increasingly important aspect of higher education. It provides benefits to both the university and individuals. It can lead to greater co-operation in the exchange of knowledge, a sense of global justice, empathy towards other cultures, a sense of citizenship that goes beyond national borders, and the expression of plurilingual identities. This in turn can result in the development of an outward-looking, plurilingual global identity whereby students can critically engage in and across a diversity of languages and cultures. UCC actively supports the integration of international, intercultural and plurilingual dimensions into the delivery of the educational experience. This is seen in many ways, for example in the Praxis Project (SDG4 Quality Education); and in the promotion of international mobility through the Erasmus+ programme and the UNIC Alliance. However, research has consistently shown that simply participating in international mobility is not always enough to guarantee that such developments will occur. Students require pre-departure preparation, support during their stay, and post-mobility opportunities to continue to engage in intercultural, multilingual and globalised learning

The Approach

The study focuses primarily on facilitators and barriers to the emergence of plurilingual/pluricultural global identities. We understand a plurilingual global identity as having the ability to adapt to and communicate across a range of social, cultural and linguistic borders in a just and equitable manner (SDG4). The project has two main aims:

- To understand the students' perspectives on how their plurilingual global identities develop and what we can do to support this process pre, during and post their stay
- To develop guidelines for training and support which could be expanded university wide

We took two separate but complementary data collection approaches. Firstly, used quantitative data collection instruments to track the development of the students' plurilingual and global identities - the Plurilingual Identity Questionnaire. Although we intended to administer the questionnaire in September, November and January, delays in getting ethical approval meant that we could not start in September. We extended the data collection until the end of the stay

in May/June 2025 and also collected data from pre-departure students in May/June. We received 103 responses from students at different stages of their mobility experience. After consultation, a number of students agreed to be interviewed to shed more light on the challenges encountered by our students during their stay abroad.

The questionnaire data and the interview data were analysed with the help of a research assistant who was employed on a 0.8 basis for 3 months.

Preliminary results were presented at the ENIS (European Network of International Student Mobility) conference in Iasi, Romania in May and more complete results will be presented at the Association of German Teachers conference in Oxford in September.

Results

In terms of results, the project has given insight into the challenges that students face when developing plurilingual and pluricultural perspectives during a study abroad programme. In general, students rate higher in terms of pluricultural perspectives. In terms of plurilingual, their development is hampered primarily in 2 ways.

1. Their lack of awareness of what plurilingualism is. Plurilingualism in short refers to interconnectedness, rather than differences, between languages/cultures and focuses on the learner's linguistic repertoire holistically. In contrast, the majority of students viewed plurilingualism as a form of 'complete' bilingualism. Instead of focusing on what they can do in a range of languages, many students persisted throughout their Study Abroad period in having a deficit view of their linguistic abilities - i.e. they often rejected the idea that they were plurilingual - despite evidence of it - due to focusing on what they couldn't do in other languages.
2. Lack of pre-study abroad plurilingual experiences. Results from the questionnaire and the interviews revealed that their language experiences were primarily monolingual in nature. This is different from other studies into learners in different European contexts and may be attributed to coming from a primarily monolingual English environment.

These findings will be incorporated into a number of teaching modules in the school of languages in terms of teaching practices and assessment practices which would be in line with Council of Europe recommendations which emphasis promoting and celebrating linguistic diversity at an individual level. In particular, guidelines will be produced for promoting an awareness of, and providing opportunities for plurilingual practices for interdepartmental modules WL1103, WL2101 and LL2108.

Next Steps

Next steps are already underway. We have entered into a collaboration with colleagues from the University of Basel to produce a plurilingual competence assessment tool. We are planning to publish this soon. This will be made available under creative commons licence. We have used our experience with this to successfully apply for PATH 4, Phase 1 funding for the project 'MOVE: "Mobilising Vectors for Engagement": Supporting Our Students' Access to International Mobility'.

Treading the tightrope: Developing inquiring professionals

Project Lead

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Project team members

- Brian Murphy, School of Education
- Niamh Dennehy, School of Education

Project Overview

This project aimed to enhance the design and delivery of the Professional Research Paper (PRP) module within the Professional Master of Education (PME) programme at University College Cork. The PRP module introduces student teachers to practitioner research and culminates in a research paper based on their classroom practice during school placement. While the module supports the integration of theory and practice, sustaining an inquiry stance among student teachers remains a challenge, particularly given the pressures of school placement and classroom management.

Initiated in response to local and national priorities for research-informed teacher education, as outlined in Teaching Council accreditation standards, this project addressed the gap between academic research expectations and the realities of school-based practice. It focused on fostering meaningful engagement with practitioner inquiry through collaborative feedback from PME students, research supervisors, and partner schools. By exploring experiences of those directly involved in delivering and enacting the PRP module, the project sought to identify barriers and enablers to developing an inquiry stance. It holds relevance for teacher educators, placement schools, professional development providers, and policymakers seeking to promote reflective, research-informed teaching. The project contributes to national efforts to strengthen the research-practice nexus in initial teacher education and developing sustained practices.

The Approach

To achieve the project's objective of enhancing the PRP module and fostering an inquiry stance among PME students, a multi-phase, collaborative approach was adopted. Following ethical approval, data were gathered from key stakeholders - student teachers, supervisors, and a partner school - through surveys, interviews, and case studies. PME Year 2 students completed feedback questionnaires at three points during the academic year. Four student case studies and one partner school were selected for in-depth engagement involving observations and interviews. Four PRP supervisors also participated in semi-structured interviews. To further support research engagement, the Deputy Principal from the partner school delivered a guest lecture to PME Year 1 students, offering practitioner insights as they began planning their own research projects. Additionally, a research symposium was hosted at the end of the academic year where student teachers presented their projects. The event was attended by partner schools and the Director of the Teaching Council, promoting dialogue between stakeholders and showcasing the impact of practitioner research. A key challenge was managing participant availability during placement. This was addressed through flexible scheduling and ongoing

communication. The inclusive, practice-informed approach provided valuable insights for future module refinement and research-led teacher education.

Results

The project successfully achieved its goal of enhancing the PRP module by deepening understanding of how an inquiry stance is developed and supported among PME student teachers. Drawing on data from student surveys, interviews with supervisors and a partner school, and four detailed case studies, the project provided actionable insights into module strengths and areas for development. Student feedback highlighted appreciation for the opportunity to engage in practitioner research, while also identifying the need for clearer scaffolding and earlier support in the research process. Case study findings underscored the importance of school context and supervisory relationships in enabling sustained inquiry. Supervisors emphasised the challenge of balancing academic rigour with the practical demands of school placement, signalling a need for enhanced guidance and shared exemplars. Key initiatives arising from the project included a guest lecture by the Deputy Principal of the partner school to PME Year 1 students, supporting early engagement with research, and a well-attended research symposium at UCC where PME Year 2 students presented their research projects. This event brought together partner schools, PME staff, and the Director of the Teaching Council, strengthening professional dialogue around practitioner research. The project has had a tangible impact on teaching and learning at UCC, informing the redesign of PME Year 1 research preparation workshops, the development of case-based teaching materials, and stronger integration between school-based and university-based supports. Beyond UCC, findings have been disseminated at a national (Educational Studies Association of Ireland) and European (Association of Teacher Education of Europe) teacher education conferences, contributing to broader conversations on research-informed practice. Two journal publications are currently in preparation to share the project outcomes and methodological innovations with wider academic and practitioner audiences.

Next Steps

Building on the insights gained, the next phase will focus on embedding the project's findings into sustained improvements to the PME programme. This includes revising Year 1 lectures to provide earlier and more explicit support for developing an inquiry stance and integrating the case study exemplars into supervisor training and student guidance materials. A key recommendation is to continue fostering stronger school-university collaboration, including inviting school leaders to contribute to research preparation and dissemination events. Two journal publications are currently in progress, and further dissemination is planned through professional networks and conferences. A central lesson learned is the value of structured, practice-informed supports and stakeholder dialogue in enabling meaningful engagement with research. These principles will guide the ongoing development of research-rich teacher education at UCC.

Exploring neurodivergence in higher education: an experiential workshop for staff

Project Lead

Professor Deirdre Horgan, School of Education, CACSSS

Project team members

- Katie Marah (School of Applied Social Studies)
- Marcin Szczerbinski (School of Applied Psychology)
- Kirsten Hurley (Formerly Access)

Project Overview

This project involved the collaboration of neurodivergent staff members (Katie, Kirsten and Marcin) with neurodivergent undergraduate students to co-develop/co-deliver an experiential workshop on neurodivergence. This workshop was conceptualised in May 2023 by Katie, Kirsten and Marcin, emerging out of our own experiences of being neurodivergent and working with neurodivergent students and was inspired by a workshop Katie attended in March 2023 (at the ITAKOM conference). It is foregrounded in the concepts of 'neurodivergent intersubjectivity', seeking to capitulate on shared understanding which emerges between neurodivergent people, and 'compassionate pedagogy' (Hamilton and Petty, 2023), wishing to foster compassion and empathy amongst presumed neurotypical UCC staff. The pilot phase was gratefully funded by SATLE (small grant) and involved collaboration with a pilot cohort of students to co-produce said workshop. Our aim for this project (2024/25) was to build upon the initial design of the workshop and to involve a wider cohort of neurodivergent students alongside a neurotypical ally/staff member (Deirdre) to redesign and co-deliver the workshop for UCC staff members through co-production. This project began in May 2024 and was concluded in June 2025; involving a four-stage process (unFocus groups; a follow-up survey, content creation sessions; and the delivery of the workshop).

The Approach

This project involved four concrete stages: unFocus groups (a spin on focus groups); qualitative surveys; content creation sessions; and the delivery of the workshop. Work on this project began in June 2025, with an overview of the previous project iteration and brainstorming between Katie, Kirsten, Marcin and Deirdre of an overall proposed outline of the project. An SREC application was submitted in September 2024 and SREC approval was granted in January 2025. Contact was established with students through engagement with the Disability Support Service and Neurodiversity Society through initial invitation emails and posters; and students were invited to participate in an unFocus group. Approximately 20 students indicated interest in participating and 6 students attended an unFocus group. 4 students completed an anonymous follow-up form; and 4 students continued as student partners for the remainder of the project, attending content creation sessions and delivering workshops. Obstacles were encountered throughout the project including the unexpected conclusion of a staff member's contract, large waiting times with SREC; and needing to postpone holding workshops until completion of examination periods.

Results

There were multiple outcomes of this project. Firstly, this project resulted in the involvement in neurodivergent students and staff members in elucidating and capturing the experiences of neurodivergent people across the UCC campus. Points raised included: the impacts of executive dysfunction on planning and organising assignments (and subsequent fears of being judged/misperceived as 'lazy'); challenges of meeting neurotypical social expectations (worrying about being perceived as 'weird', 'odd', 'rude'; navigating new environments ('I nearly dropped out in the first week'); sensory processing difficulties (processing loud noises/needing quiet spaces; needing to eat separately; visual processing issues; sensory overwhelm); and difficulties with navigating the complex systems within UCC and seeking support, especially when undiagnosed. Experiences shared by students were documented by staff members during the unFocus groups and used by students and staff members to collectively create the resultant workshop through the content creation sessions. This project aligns with teaching and learning experiences within UCC, by both amplifying student voices and influence within the campus and enabling more compassionate and empathic pedagogy across classrooms. Secondly, this project resulted in the redevelopment/delivery of the experiential of up to 4 workshops to approx. 60 staff members. Overall, very positive feedback was received with multiple staff members commenting that they would like this training to be rolled out to other departments. We have since received contact from said staff, alongside other colleagues, asking to run the training next semester for their colleagues. Finally, we hope to further influence teaching and learning development by continuing to contribute to ongoing discussions, as outlined in our initial application. We will present our workshop at the Autism Europe Congress in September 2025 in Dublin, and will also prepare an open access toolkit which will be shared on the T&L website.

Next Steps

We have several future actions and recommendations based on our project outcomes. This workshop will be presented at the Autism Europe Congress in September 2025, to a mostly neurodivergent audience. We will be using this opportunity to receive feedback from our audience on how to present this workshop to audiences outside of the higher education sphere. Otherwise, this workshop will be turned into a toolkit, and will be made openly accessible on the T&L website for higher education staff members to use. At a broader scale, we also wish to further explore (through written papers) our emerging research methods and how they can contribute to innovative research with neurodivergent people; alongside the natural camaraderie which arose amongst us as neurodivergent people (neurodivergent intersubjectivity).

AI-Learning Insight and Engagement Navigator (AI-LIEN)

Project Lead

Dr Selja Seppala, Business Information Systems, CoBL

Project team members

- Prof. David Sammon, CUBS/Business Information Systems, College of Business and Law, University College Cork (Ireland)
- Dr. Tadhg Nagle, CUBS/Business Information Systems, College of Business and Law, University College Cork (Ireland)
- Dr. Patrick O'Sullivan, CUBS/Business Information Systems, College of Business and Law, University College Cork (Ireland)

Project Overview

The AI-Learning Insight and Engagement Navigator (AI-LIEN) project follows up on the 2023 SATLE funded SHLAMM project (Simple Hermeneutics-inspired Learning Analytics Model for Modules). Led by Dr. Tadhg Nagle and Prof. David Sammon, the capability- building project delivered a simple learning analytics model to see and celebrate the efforts (interim struggles) of learners as they learn. This Learning Analytics tool enables 'evidence-based nudges' and 'week-on-week comparative analysis' which improves our module level, learner-centric, storytelling. However, a limitation of the SHLAMM LA tool is that it requires a significant amount of human intervention to (i) curate the weekly student responses and (ii) create a module level dataset (integrated weekly responses) for more longitudinal analysis. These current manual practices are not sustainable and limit the 'close to real-time' value proposition of the LA tool as it is currently instantiated. Therefore, the SATLE grant funding for the AI-LIEN project will enable the development of the AI-LIEN system – an AI-powered tool to ingest, integrate, and analyse weekly SHLAMM student responses (Canvas Quiz data). Therefore, AI-LIEN is needed to automate and streamline the feedback process based on SHLAMM data.

The Approach

- Set up shared directories on UCC's MS OneDrive for project documents and data.
- Redefined the SHLAMM survey to simplify data collection and processing, making it also simpler to adapt to various teaching environments.
- Created a Python programme to anonymise the survey data downloaded from Canvas for further processing.
- Created a first 6-week work programme prioritising a 2x2 matrix representing effort vs. impact of various learning activities to provide the most impactful insights on student learning first. The second 4-week work programme focused on other graphs and the implementation of AI techniques for sentiment analysis and insight generation.

- Several versions of the AI-LIEN dashboard are required for students and teachers: single reflections (e.g., weekly) and reflection-by-reflection comparison (over time), both at class and individual levels.
- Hired six students to work over a 4 to 10-week period to develop aspects of the AI-LIEN system (effort v impact matrix, sentiment analysis, etc.). Ongoing work is on schedule to complete the learning analytics prototype with more advanced data processing, further visualisations and AI-assisted insights creation.
- Aspects of the learning analytics prototype will be evaluated by students (throughout S1 and S2), and surveys circulated to assess the tool, provide feedback and suggest improvements.

Results

The AI-LIEN project, focusing on AI-enhanced insights and engagement in learning, will significantly impact teaching practices and student learning by increasing student engagement, providing students with personalised learning paths and helping them develop their learning skills. The project will also impact lecturer and institutional teaching practices by providing real-time data on student engagement and learning processes to allow them to create evidence-based teaching methods in an agile manner. By providing a more nuanced understanding of student performance, beyond traditional assessments, AI-LIEN will lead to more constructive feedback, helping students to improve their learning strategies and outcomes. Ultimately, the insights gained from the AI-LIEN system could inform institutional strategies and policies, aiming for more effective and engaging learning environments. In summary, the AI-LIEN project will revolutionise educational experiences by making them more responsive, personalised, and effective, bridging the gap between teaching strategies and student needs.

The project is ongoing and its impact on student learning and lecturer/institutional practices will be assessed over the coming semesters (S1 and S2), when the leaning analytics tool is tested in class and through student /lecturer surveys. However, anecdotal evidence based on existing SHLAMM survey data and student feedback suggests that using this pedagogical tool raises students' awareness of the importance of engaging with the learning activities surveyed in the SHLAMM form (e.g., reading, re-reading, discussing, artefact sharing) to develop their skills. From a teacher's perspective, manual analysis of the data has already proved insightful as it allows lecturers to get a sense of student engagement outside of the classroom and qualitative feedback from their reflective textual answers.

Next Steps

To guarantee the scalability and transferability of the AI-LIEN system, we plan on engaging students and lecturers in post 'go-live' activities, by establishing a student ambassadors programme to assist in the roll-out of AI-LIEN; helping their peers to navigate and use the AI-LIEN system and collect feedback for its continuous improvement. We will also organise quarterly joint training workshops where both students and lecturers will learn to use the AI-LIEN system together, facilitating a shared understanding and collaborative discussion on its use in learning and teaching processes. To guarantee the scalability and transferability of the AI-LIEN system, we will introduce an AI-LIEN project advisory panel comprising students, lecturers, and 'technical' staff (e.g. IT Services, Centre for Digital Education, CIRTL) to oversee

the project's direction. This AI-LIEN advisory panel can help the team make decisions on feature updates, address technical concerns, and ensure the project remains aligned with educational goals.

"Train-the-Trainer" approach for sustainable national implementation

Project Lead

Dr Michelle O' Driscoll, National Suicide Research Foundation/School of Pharmacy, CoMH.

Project team members

- Dr Eve Griffin, National Suicide Research Foundation
- Kerrie Gallagher, National Suicide Research Foundation
- Ailish O'Neil, HSE National Office for Suicide Prevention
- Dr James O'Mahony, School of Nursing and Midwifery, UCC
- Prof. Laura Sahm. School of Pharmacy, UCC
- Dr Aoife Fleming, School of Pharmacy, UCC
- Dr Aoife O'Sullivan, UCC Wellbeing and ICGP
- Dr Samantha Dockray, School of Applied Psychology, UCC
- Ciara Wray, HSE/Athlone Technological University
- Dr Dorcas Oyewande, Cork University Hospital
- Ms Jane McDonald, NSRF

Project Overview

Suicide is a significant public health concern. The majority of individuals who die by suicide have had contact with a healthcare professional in the year preceding their death. There is a need for health and social care students, regardless of their discipline, to receive formal suicide prevention training. Such training, however, is currently lacking nationally.

A suicide prevention module for health and social care students was created by researchers in the NSRF and School of Public Health at UCC, funded by the National Office for Suicide Prevention HSE in response to Action 5.4.4 of Connecting for Life, Ireland's national strategy to reduce suicide. Informed by a scoping review, survey of academic staff, student focus groups and World Café of stakeholders, module piloting took place in Semester 1 2024/2025 with positive impact on student perceived suicide prevention importance, behaviours and competence, as well as their personal wellbeing levels and interprofessional collaboration.

A theme that emerged from a SATLE-funded World Café (January 2024) which sought to identify potential barriers and facilitators to module implementation was "sustainable delivery." A Train-the-Trainer approach was specifically identified as a suitable way to grow the module's reach, making it accessible to all HEIs national by upskilling facilitators locally.

The Approach

Actions and activities:

- Establishment of a Train the Trainer steering group to guide the project trajectory
- Hiring of a research assistant to progress the module content development and assist with administrative aspects

- Completion of a QQI Training qualification to ensure best practice in TTT course design
- Content development via:
  o Online platform;
  o 100+ page Tain the trainer manual;
  o Slide decks for in-person two-day training;
  o Additional resource documents for logistical considerations, safety protocols, recruitment video, etc.
- Online webinar to launch pilot module findings and open TTT registration
- Screening of expressions of interest via online interviews
- Delivery of two-day in-person training, held at UCD
- Evaluation of the TTT programme via pre and post module surveys, with a third timepoint to be administered in November 2025.
- Dissemination related to the project and promoting the train the trainer opportunity at one national and one international conference.
- International pilot sites identified in Malaysia, South Africa and Scotland, which will benefit from the TTT programme.

Obstacles or challenges:

- Suitability of the applicants for the Train the trainer programme – this was ensured by introducing an online interview process to screen the 100 expression of interest, which was very helpful to confirm appropriate allocation of places.
- Volume of associated admin – addressed this by hiring a research assistant who was familiar with the project previously, and was able to provide some additional support during the duration of their contract.

Results

- Online webinar to launch pilot module findings and open TTT registration received significant interest from key stakeholder, with ~200 registrants, and 120 live attendees (with the recording circulated) representing:
  o 8 countries (Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales, Spain, Australia, Iran)
  o 16 Irish Higher Education Institutions, 5 international universities, and the Union of Students in Ireland
  o 6 governmental organisations
  o 16 non-governmental organisations

- Successful screening of 100 expressions of interest - 28 online interviews conducted, with 16 final places offered. A very useful contact list for future delivery of the module can now be drawn upon.
- Delivery of two-day in-person training, held at UCD - 16 attendees, representing 11 HEIs and a range of healthcare courses.
- Dissemination related to the project and including promotion of the train the trainer opportunity at one national conference (Irish Network of Healthcare Educators 2025, UCC) and one international conference (International Association of Suicide Prevention (IASP) Conference, Vienna, 2025).

- International pilot sites identified in Malaysia, South Africa and Scotland, which will benefit from the TTT programme and can progress future comparator studies.

Data from the pilot are to be formally analysed, pending Timepoint 3 collection in November 2025. Initial indications are of positive acceptability, feasibility and appropriateness of the course.

This project and the traction it has gained nationally and internationally has placed UCC as pioneers in the delivery of suicide prevention training to undergraduate health and social care students. The outputs from this work are already helping to inform and shape the suicide prevention training landscape for undergraduate healthcare students, to ensure the best support is offered to those at risk.

Next Steps

Next steps will build on the momentum of this pilot through the following avenues:

- Follow-up with previous participants to support their delivery of the programme at their respective sites to their undergraduate healthcare students.
- Future adaptation of the module for healthcare professionals, and/or university students more widely. The materials and procedures that have been created for this Train the Trainer programme will serve as a strong foundation for this further development, and will ensure fidelity to the course delivery.
- Publication of findings in an international peer-reviewed academic journal.
  Seek future funding for a wider intervention – the findings from this pilot creates a strong case for wider implementation and evaluation, to include interprofessional offerings, international comparator studies and control groups. Any future rollout will be based on a robust pilot and an evidence-based resources that can be utilised.

For More Information

https://www.nsrf.ie/prepare-support-prevent/
https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/2025/03/24/a-suicide-prevention-module-for-undergraduate-health-and-social-care-students-a-train-the-trainer-approach-for-sustainable-national-implementation/

Building a dataset of typical and disordered speech for teaching and assessing phonetic transcription in Speech and Language Therapy students in Ireland

Project Lead

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Project team members

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- Ms. Maeve Sharkey, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, School of Clinical Therapies, College of Medicine and Health
- Ms. Claire Mansfield, Speech and Language Therapy Department, Cork University Hospital
- Ms. Emma Screene, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, School of Clinical Therapies, College of Medicine and Health
- Dr. Jill Titterington, The Speech Doctor, UK

Project Overview

Phonetic transcription is the use of phonetic symbols to document in written form the speech sounds produced by speakers. Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) are expected to apply this tool to assess speech disorders, select intervention approaches and targets, and evaluate treatment outcomes. However, the materials for teaching and assessing transcription skills vary between SLT academic programmes and are often subject to instructors' own expertise. It is also challenging to include sufficient in-class practice time to build effective transcription skills in students. To address these issues in Ireland, a large-scale shared online resource for direct teaching, self-learning, and assessment is needed but such facility is not available.

This project made a start by co-producing with SLT Students and Practice Educators (PEs) a phonetic transcription learning resource. We surveyed the students and PEs for suggestions on the learning tool. We also asked the students their phonetic transcription usage in clinical placement and perceived difficulties, and the PEs their views on expected phonetic transcription skills level in just-graduated SLTs. A dataset that contains audio recordings of words/utterances produced by Irish English-speaking children with speech disorders, typical children and adults was created, and the face validity was assessed by the students and PEs.

The Approach

Input from Year 2-4 SLT students and PEs were gathered through two online surveys. All students had completed their module on phonetics and transcription in Year 1. In the initial survey, they were asked their opinions regarding barriers and facilitators to phonetic transcription learning, usage of transcription in clinical placement, and suggestions for the learning tool. The PEs were asked their views on expected transcription skills level in just-graduated SLTs and learning tool suggestions. For the speech dataset, 5 children with speech disorders were recruited through the SLT Department, Cork South HSE, and 5 children with

typical speech development and 5 typical adults were recruited through convenience sampling. Their speech (single words, sentences, and spontaneous speech) were audio-recorded in a soundproof booth. Three team members phonetically transcribed the words to produce answer keys. A demo page was created on Canvas to show the students and PEs the learning tool. They were asked to trial the transcription tasks and evaluated the face validity in the final survey. It was challenging to access children with speech disorders despite the support of the HSE. Additional time was required and we were fortunate to reach our goal of 5 children. Student survey responses were low initially, we resolved this by tapping into class gatherings where possible.

Results

The outcomes include (1) a speech data collection protocol for children relevant to clinical speech assessment in Ireland, (2) a speech dataset of 15 speakers of Irish English with or without speech disorder which can be used in the following academic year, and (3) pre-post SLT students and PEs survey data on their perspectives in relation to teaching / learning and assessment of phonetic transcription skills. Students' suggestion on including audio recordings of speech samples from Irish English-speaking children with speech disorders and those with typical speech development, as well as phonetic transcription practice with model answers were taken into account in the development of the present teaching and assessment resource. After trialling the demo, both students and PEs agreed that the tool will help students' learning. They felt that the product created met their expectations. Further suggestions were made including the inclusion of video recordings of speakers, individuals of other clinical groups, and multilingual speakers.

The preliminary results were presented in an oral presentation at the 20th biennial conference of the International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association, June 24-27, 2025. We received positive feedback and made links with colleagues who are pursuing similar initiative for their languages. We are writing up a manuscript for submission to a special issue (for this conference) in the journal, Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics.

Next Steps

The students' and PEs' input in the production of the phonetic transcription teaching materials have been very helpful and we plan to use a similar approach to create a speech dataset for Irish English-speaking adults with communication disorders associated of different causes (e.g., neurological impairment such as stroke, and Parkinson's Disease; voice disorders; stuttering) in the near future. When this is achieved, the initiative of a clinical speech corpus of children and adults will be scaled up by including speech data of speakers from different parts of the country (i.e., speakers of different regional accents of Irish English), through collaborating with the other SLT programmes on the island of Ireland. There is also a plan to collaborate with colleagues in the discipline of Computer Science to develop an online platform for presenting phonetic transcription and ear training tasks and keeping track on the learners' progress.

Leveraging digital tools for creating and grading assignments and laboratory experiment reports

Project Lead

Dr Stig Hellebust, School of Chemistry, SEFS

Project team members

- David Otway, School of Chemistry
- Simon Lawrence, School of Chemistry
- Mark Kennedy, School of Physics

Project Overview

The purpose of the project was primarily to explore alternative assessment of student performance in practical laboratory sessions. Traditionally practical sessions in Chemistry are assessed by marking of written reports, where the marking is carried out by laboratory demonstrators. This remains the preferred method, but the University no longer finds that the cost of paying demonstrators to correct reports is sustainable. The project explored digital tools for automatic assessment of student performance in practical sessions through online submission and marking of "reports".

The Approach

The initial approach relied on open-source software solutions designed for the purpose. Specifically, a virtual machine was set up on Microsoft Azure to run jupyterhub with the package nbgrader. This allowed for a workflow whereby the instructor writes a reporting template that is distributed to students so they can complete with their individual results, that are subsequently processed and assessed by a series of tests and algorithms written by the instructor. The assessment is therefore based on each individual student's input and does not rely on prescribed answers. The system generates a score and automatic feedback reports that are returned to the students. The feedback report also enables quality control of the marks by the instructor. The advantages of this system over the traditional method are i) no demonstrators have to be paid and ii) the results and feedback can be returned to the students without further delay because it is not affected by instructors and demonstrators' workload to the same extent as the traditional assessment method.

Results

The project demonstrated that automatic assessment and feedback of practical sessions is feasible, which was the main goal. However, it also demonstrated that the students respond very differently to the alternative submission procedures. Whereas all students are comfortable with the concept of writing and submitting a report, interacting with an unfamiliar protocol was a challenge to some. As two objectives of the alternative assessment method were to reduce the workload for demonstrators and instructors and improve the timeliness of feedback to students, the project demonstrated that the success of this entirely depends on the willingness of the students to engage with digital tools. The pilot project worked with three chemistry

modules attended by students from a range of programmes and it is clear that the currently available off-the-shelf tools are best suited to students familiar with IT solutions, e.g. students on computer science and engineering programmes. But this is useful knowledge and in the second semester the project team started developing alternative solutions for autograding of assignments that were better tailored to students on the Chemistry programme, which can be implemented locally without incurring server costs.

Next Steps

In the second half of the project, the team started developing our own digital tools for assessing written reports, which are more friendly to students unfamiliar with interacting with computers, which is the case for many students on the Chemistry and Environmental Science programmes. These will be developed further.

For More Information

The resources are already available as open source software, at the following links:

https://jupyter.org/hub
https://github.com/jupyter/nbgrader
https://julialang.org

GenAI LEARN: Literacies and Ethics Activities, Resources and Navigation

Project Lead

Dr Loretta Goff, Skills Centre, OVPLT

Project team members

- Tadhg Dennehy, Skills Centre / Film and Screen Media
- Julie Butters, Language Centre
- Linda Doran, Access / Disability Support Services
- Ronan Madden, Library
- Sarah Thelen, Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning
- Ben Williamson, Library

Student Partners:

- Chara Charalambous
- Brian Curtin
- Clare Geraghty
- Moras Kashyap
- Rohitash Mishra
- Alison Ní Threasaigh (SU Education Officer 24/25)
- Tess O'Regan
- Pooja Prasannakumar
- Harikrishnan Ramakrishnan
- Kinza Salim
- Anubhav Vashistha
- Luke Watson

Project Overview

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) continues to impact higher education as GenAI tools advance and become embedded across other platforms. It is inevitable that these tools will be used both within and beyond Higher Education for a range of purposes, and it is therefore vital that students are guided in developing appropriate competences. The GenAI LEARN project addressed this by focusing on the practicalities of enabling students to use GenAI tools responsibly and effectively. The main objective of the project was to co-create, with students, resources for students that support their development of identified competences for using GenAI tools. The project framework and guiding principles centred around the human role when engaging with GenAI, ethical decision-making, evaluative reasoning, and critical thinking. The GenAI Learning Hub open resource aims to fill gaps in knowledge and training for users of GenAI and includes contextual information, learning activities related to core competencies, and resources to aid learners in their decision-making process when using GenAI.

The Approach

GenAI LEARN was designed as a students-as-partners project. We assembled a team of 6 UCC Staff – with experience running GenAI training centrally (Skills, CIRTL, Library) and specific expertise in language learning and accessibility (Language Centre and Disability Support) – and 12 students who also engage with the wider student body as Skills Centre Tutors. To establish our project framework and guiding principles, the project lead conducted a scoping exercise of existing AI competency frameworks and research, including the UNESCO AI Competency Framework for Students, and then consulted with the wider team. Surveys of UCC students and staff on their use and perceptions of GenAI, particularly in relation to learning and teaching, were conducted between October 2024 and January 2025 in order to identify any training gaps and to further inform the development of the projects resources. Sub-groups of student-staff partners were assigned various topics in our framework to further research and develop resources for and these were then reviewed for consistency and finalised as part of the GenAI Learning Hub open resource.

Results

The main outcome of this project is the GenAI Learning Hub which supports responsible and effective use of generative AI. The Learning Hub is designed to support decision-making regarding the use of GenAI and several processes and checklists in the Hub aid this, particularly How to choose a GenAI tool and Deciding when to use GenAI. Topics addressing various AI competencies are divided across three main sections: what to know before you use GenAI, what to know when you use GenAI, and what to know about AI-generated content and assessment. For each topic, several tabs of sub-topics contain relevant information, examples and/or interactive activities to aid understanding. Users can choose to start at the beginning and review all topics for a full overview, or go directly to specific topics of interest/relevance to them. While the resource is aimed at students, the majority of its content will also be useful to anyone using GenAI. This resource aims to fill in training/understanding gaps for those choosing to use GenAI, and it will also be useful to educators who can use content from it to guide class discussions or activities related to GenAI. The Learning Hub provides a useful supplementary resource for educators and students to develop AI literacy at UCC and beyond (as an open educational resource). It has been submitted to the National Forum resource hub and will be submitted to additional repositories (i.e., HEA GenAI Mapping, European Network for Academic Integrity educational materials) to extend its reach and impact. Additionally, the GenAI survey results of UCC students and staff that emerged as part of this project will usefully inform additional research and policy development at UCC and will be shared with relevant colleagues to aid this (i.e., the AI at UCC Teaching & Learning subcommittee).

Next Steps

Now that the GenAI Learning Hub is available, the next steps are to promote its use, to connect it with other existing and developing resources, and to maintain and it (keeping it up-to-date in a fast-moving area) and build upon it, adding additional resources to existing topics and potentially including subject-specific content if relevant. The Hub will be shared at all College Council meetings ahead of this semester and through Skills Centre social media campaigns and promotional stands engaging with students, as well as through digital signage and bookmarks etc. with QR codes distributed to students. Additionally, further examination of the survey data will be done to produce reports and research publications that contribute to an evidence-based learning and teaching response to GenAI.

For More Information

https://uccopen.instructure.com/courses/867

Facilitation Skills for Community Engagement

Project Lead

Dr Ruth Hally, CIRTL, OVPLT

Project team members

- Jennifer Rita Aherne PhD Student

Project Overview

The project aimed to deliver a workshop in Facilitation Training Skills provided by Dublin-based providers Partners; Training for Transformation. The student partner will assist me in co-designing the workshop with the training providers. They will factor in on-the-ground insights that will ensure the workshop content and delivery hits the mark.

The intention with the online and in person format is that it would allow participants to have experience of methods and skills in working with groups both online and in person. Having 3 separate sessions will allow the group to become familiar with one another and witness how dynamics evolve over time. The last session will intentionally allow space for participants to apply what they've learned within their CE projects and to solicit feedback from the wider group. While the time commitment is significant, the investment will pay dividends for those seeking to enhance their skills, and will also enhance the university reputation for high quality engagement. The facilitators will engage in significant pre and post workshop labour to ensure a customised experience is delivered. A resource capturing all the theories, exercises and resources will be produced for all attendees to serve as an aide memoire and practical guide. I will contextualise this resource for non-workshop participants before making it publicly available on the UCC Civic Engagement Toolkit.

The Approach

I employed a student partner to work with me on this project. She helped me to design and deliver a bespoke training programme with the external training providers for UCC staff. I sought EOI applications from staff and received over 40 with email communications continuing to come in seeking future training opportunities. We offered 23 spots in total as this was the ceiling for quality interactions. A challenge was getting staff to turn up and honour their commitment so that I could release a space to someone on the waiting list. A further challenge was securing gender representation - it was primarily women who enquired and attended. This raises the question of why women are coming forward for training in this space but men are not - are men doing engaged research and teaching?

Results

23 individuals now have up to date skills and knowledge to conduct their community engaged teaching and research activities to a high standard. They can enhance university reputation because they can confidently direct interactions and build trust with community partners for mutually beneficial outcomes. Staff capacity is increased and those who engaged on this programme can pass on their knowledge and expertise to their teaching team and research colleagues. The project has helped to signal that engaged teaching and research requires a

particular skillset and this skillset should not be taken for granted. Staff have a range of resources, tools, and a community of practice to connect in with to advance their work.

Next Steps

I wish to make Creative Facilitation Training a regular item on the UCC training calendar. I would like to build the training programme into my Civic Engagement Teaching and Learning budget and work plan. The lessons I've learned will reflect or relate more so to the administration of the programme, ensuring people who need the training can access it and that places are not taken up by individuals less committed and thereby less likely to attend all or some of the sessions. In future, owing to the demand for the course, I would ask for some documentation to demonstrate commitment, ie a letter from Head of School/Dept and or a Personal Statement.

Partners in Co-creating Inclusive and Equitable Teaching & Learning (CIETL)

Project Lead

Dr Anna Santucci. CIRTL, OVPLT

Project team members

- Michael Dowling, Psychology, CACSSS, CIETL Student Partner Data Analyst
- James Coakley, Computer Science, SEFS, CIETL Student Partner Consultant & Ambassador
- Asma Zulfiqar, Dental Nursing, M&H, CIETL Student Partner Instructional Designer
- Bonnie Mullinix, Jacaranda Educational Development, Design & Implementation Consultant

Supporting partners from previous pilot:
James Northridge, Inclusive UCC; Olive Byrne, Access; Nuala Finnegan, SPLAS & Registrar; Loretta Goff, Skills Centre; Julie Butters, Language Centre; João Costa, Education; Clare Crowley, Nursing & Midwifery; Linda Murphy, Management; Dave Otway, Chemistry; Ciara Staunton, ACE

Project Overview

Building on a successful PATH4-funded pilot started in 2023, this project developed, and enacted key steps towards implementing, a sustainable model for the CIETL (Co-creating Inclusive and Equitable Teaching & Learning) Student-Staff Partnerships programme at University College Cork (UCC), to serve students and teachers across all UCC programmes, and to be administered through the Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching & Learning (CIRTL). This CIETL programme provides structured opportunities for UCC teachers to engage directly with Student Partners in a range of specific consultations focused on inclusive teaching practice. This approach is grounded in the importance of authentic dialogue between teachers and students, and particularly focuses on surfacing and platforming lived experiences, voices, and perspectives of student populations who are traditionally minoritized in higher education. Based on current literature, sector advancements, and internationally expanding research and practice about Students as Partners and Student-Staff Pedagogical Partnerships, the CIETL (Co-creating Inclusive and Equitable Teaching & Learning) Partnership programme is specifically designed to fit UCC's needs and context, enhancing both curriculum and professional development opportunities with a focus on how to design and facilitate more inclusive learning experiences for all UCC students.

The Approach

The project's main objectives and planned activities aimed to expand access across UCC of CIETL opportunities successfully piloted the previous year, by:

1. refining and implementing a learning module to equip interested students with the skills & knowledge to become Student Partners Consultants;
2. establishing related equity-minded teaching CPD structures for UCC instructors; and

3. exploring possible options and securing College-level commitment towards a sustainable model for instructors' access to/hiring of qualified CIRTL Student Partner Consultants.

Under the supervision of the Project Lead, experienced student partners from the pilot phase were hired as "CIETL Project Coordinators" with diverse roles, and took the lead in enacting all activities related to these three objectives (see below for results). The core project team was comprised of the below roles, who carried out the below activities:

Role 1 - CIETL Project Coordinator: Instructional Designer (PC/ID) - provides primary coordination, guidance, and management of project in relation to development learning modules.
Duties & Tasks: Develop Student Partners learning materials, Manage and organize documentation.
Request and co-guide data analysis support needed, Request support/guidance from PI &/or DSC as needed, Collaborate with PC/CA as needed.

Role 2 - CIETL Project Coordinator: Consultant & Ambassador (PC/CA) - provides primary coordination, guidance, and management of project in relation to liaising and communication activities with partners and collaborators.
Duties & Tasks: Manage communication with participating partners and collaborators; Engage, Coordinate and Support Partners (student and teacher); Facilitate related meetings (Hybrid - Online and in-person); Coordinate Partner matchings and conduct consultations; Document Partner consultations and impact (changes to modules); Reach out to colleges, academic departments, and related support Units on campus to explore and propose sustainable consultative models; Request and co-guide data analysis support needed; Request support/guidance from PI &/or DSC as needed; Collaborate with PC/ID as needed.

Role 3 - CIETL Project Coordinator: Data Analyst (DA) – working on specific data analysis tasks in support of project team
Data Analysis Tasks: qualitative highlights from CIETL pilot; processing support of mid-semester student feedback and PAITE observation protocol

Role 4 - Student Partner Consultants (SPC) – working on short-term consultations with teaching staff across UCC. All Student Partners team members contribute to fulfilling this task, upon request by Ambassador Coordinator and subject to availability.
Consultation options available: Teacher-driven open-ended (with justification), mid-semester student feedback, PAITE classroom observation (piloted tools).

Project Lead: Guide the work of Core Project Staff and Team Members; Serve as primary and supporting contact for UCC units and staff contributing to the project; Serve as primary liaison regarding SATLE grant funding and communications; Lead Team in identifying and pursuing opportunities to disseminate outcomes and accomplishments of project through presentations and publications.

Design & Implementation Consultant (DSC): Provides guidance to project design and development building from pilot for continuity.

Results

A. Learning module (Hybrid) was designed for skill & knowledge necessary to become a Student Partner, including: Fundamental principles of inclusive teaching partnerships; Consultation and communications; Observation and assessment (mid-semester feedback and PAITE classroom observation protocols). While initially envisaged as a University-Wide (UW) module, we pivoted to a Digital Badge format as a more appropriate route in terms of amount learning hours expectations (ca. 25 hours). Digital Badge application was successfully submitted and approved. CIETL Project Coordinator Instructional Designer is building the learning module in Canvas, and will be teaching it in 2025. CIETL Project Coordinator Consultant & Ambassador has recruited many interested students across UCC units dedicated to equity, access, and inclusion.

B. Number of expected consultations/hours (20) were conducted by qualified Student Partners for interested teaching staff/partners. Resulting changes were documented.

C. Two routes for related Equity-Minded Teaching CPD structures for UCC instructors were established:
1) New 5-credit module created and approved, to be offered as CPD elective option for CIRTL PG Certificate and PG Diploma, and as independent stand-alone CPD micro-credential:TL6013, entitled "DEEP Engagement: Difference, Equity, Evidence, Partnerships"
2) Building on the model of the Equity-Minded Teaching Retreat that was successfully conducted during pilot, a Digital badge was developed for future instructors interested in the intensive retreat route; completion of badge will be available to pilot participants, upon submission of reflective report outlining implementation of changes and application of insights gained (1-2 year impact).

D. Sustainable model for instructors' access to/hiring of qualified CIRTL Student Partners Consultants: possible options were explored and College-level commitment was secured. Project Lead and CIETL Project Coordinator Consultant & Ambassador presented proposal at College-level Teaching & Learning committees, liaised with relevant Chairs and Financial Analysts, and received approval. The approved future financial structure is as follows: Student Partners employment will be centrally coordinated by CIRTL; each college will commit an annual amount of funding to compensate CIRTL Student Partners for the hours dedicated to working with instructors within their college: 2 students x 80 hours x semester = 320 student hours per college per year.

Dissemination of project outcomes and accomplishments were shared in multiple formats through open-source documentation and professional conference venues, including an AISHE publication, an issue of the TLTHE journal, contributions for HEA national events, and presentations at POD Network and EuroSoTL conferences (see "For More Information" section)

Impact: Experienced Student Partners from the pilot further enhanced their leadership skills. Institutional sustainability of an emergent, internationally recognized, transformative approach to professional development was secured. Documented

benefits for teachers include: concrete pedagogical improvements, increased awareness of student voice and perspective, engagement in safe and productive dialogue, supportive framework that enables agency, and recognition of institutional long-term impact. Documented benefits for student partners include: insights gained from the project (understanding of teaching processes, awareness of inclusive practices, engagement in feedback loops), practical skills developed (feedback and communication, observation and analysis, teamwork and collaboration). Documented highlights about beneficial structural aspects of the project reported by participants include the development of: caring and compassionate relationships; power-balanced dialogue and mutual respect; processes that enable agency, mattering, reciprocity, and empowerment.

Next Steps

Suggestions for next steps based on insights learned from project's outcomes include:

Further refining of annual model for how to best allocate the secured hours of Student Partners engagement (320 student hours per college per year) for each year, considering both breadth and depth of engagement:
For breadth: one semester's allocation could be dedicated to multiple one-off 5-hour consultation (model of this SATLE year, reaching more instructors)
For depth: the other semester's allocation could be dedicated to full semester-long partnership model (like in the pilot year), focusing on a high-priority module/programme chosen strategically by the Colleges (eg for AY 2025-26: in conjunction with the work of the Inclusive Assessment Champions working on first year reform)

Further integration of direct student-staff consultations across more CIRTL programs and offerings: Priority for available consultations supported by the College's financial commitment could be given to completers of existing relevant CIRTL programs, such as Digital Badges focused on UDL, Inclusive Assessment, and Inclusive Summer School. CIRTL staff and collaborators could provide additional developmental support in key knowledge areas for Student Partners, and reciprocally benefit from engaging with Student Partners' lived experiences and perspectives.

Investigation of specific case studies on how this partnership approach enables in particular opening of direct dialogue about Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence, grounded in reciprocity and mutual trust between teachers and learners.

For More Information

Mullinix, B.B., Santucci, A. & Ultsch, S. (2024). Pedagogical Partners: Designing Teaching & Learning Experiences that Foster Inclusion and Equity by Elevating Student Perspectives Vol. 16 No. 2 (2024): Special Issue: Universal Design in Teritary Education. For DOI, see: https://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/809

Integrating OER to enhance learning resources in UCC: a students as partners approach

Project Lead

Stephanie Chen, UCC Library, OVPLT

Project team members

- Declan Synnott, UCC Library

Project Overview

The purpose of this project was to build on ongoing work within UCC Library to incorporate open educational resources (OER) into teaching and learning in UCC. OER are teaching, learning, and research resources created by anyone in any medium which have been released under an open license. This permission means others can access, use, distribute, and adapt the resource (UNESCO, BCcampus). OER are a key component of open educational practices (OEP) wherein OER are used to support learning and openly share teaching practices to improve education at an institutional, professional, and individual level (BCcampus).

A previous SATLE-funded project involved the design and implementation of an OER pilot in the Spanish department. Results from this pilot project highlighted the potential of engaging with students as partners in creating OER.

In recognizing the key role students can have in open educational practices and in the creation of open educational resources, this project aimed to deepen student engagement by employing them to create OER.

By working with students as partners, the project sought to empower them as co-creators of their educational journey through the use of OERs, foster a sense of ownership in contributing to the academic landscape, and enhance the quality and relevance of teaching and learning resources.

The Approach

Due to a change in role from the project lead, the project was scaled back in scope although the core aim of partnering with students remained. This adjustment was necessary to due to limited capacity to fully partner with students and staff in light of new role responsibilities.

The project lead approached four lecturers, one from each College, who had previously engaged with the Library in some capacity. These lecturers either personally recommended a student or circulated an expression of interest to students. Four postgraduate students were hired: two from CACSSS (MA in Digital Arts & Humanities), one from SEFS (MSc in Interactive Media) and one from Business and Law (MSc in Marketing). Unfortunately, no student could be

sourced from College of Medicine and Health due to scheduling conflicts with students being on placement.

Students were employed between June and August 2025 and were able to work independently with check-in meetings from project members.

Challenges included limited student availability and capacity as all were completing dissertations over the course of the project. One student, due to personal circumstances, was unable to complete their project. To adapt for this, they contributed as a copy editor. Another student disengaged unexpectedly, and a replacement could not be hired.

Results

The project highlights the benefits of student engagement in educational initiatives and building partnerships with students. Additionally, it demonstrates one possible pathway for the publication of OER. Despite having to scale back the scope, the project successfully achieved its core objective of partnering with students to create original OER content.

Two OER books were developed and published using Pressbooks, a platform supported by the Library. Both books are openly licensed, making them freely accessible and adaptable by others.

The two books are:

- The Data Loom: Crafting Stories with Code, Yarn and Print
- Blender Beginner's Guide

These resources add to the body of OER available at UCC, supporting open educational practices and enhancing access to high-quality learning materials.

In terms of partnering with students, feedback from the students involved was positive. Participants valued the flexibility of the project, the opportunity to showcase their expertise, and the chance to publish work that could benefit others. A launch event was held to celebrate their contributions and the students presented on their work to peers and staff. The project also highlighted the need for flexible planning and support structures in student-led initiatives.

Overall, the project had a meaningful impact on teaching and learning in UCC by promoting student agency, showcasing a successful student partnership, and advancing the Library's commitment to open education.

Next Steps

While UCC Library is committed to leading on the establishment of open educational resources, as evidenced in its Vision and Plan 2024 – 2028, staffing changes have led to a temporary pause in OER-related projects within its current programme of works.

The Library remains committed to accelerating UCC's digital transformation and working with students as partners with projects that reflect this commitment. Lessons learned from this project, particularly around student capacity, timing and flexible engagement, will inform future approaches to student-led OER creation.

For More Information

https://www.slideshare.net/slideshow/cultivating-change-leveraging-oers-to-transform-higher-education-a-case-study-from-ucc-library/274846616

Blender Beginner's Guide by Xingchen Huang: https://ucclibrary.pressbooks.pub/blender-guide/

The Data Loom: Crafting Stories with Code, Yarn and Print by Yonghong Chen: https://ucclibrary.pressbooks.pub/weaving-data/

Publication of Student Created Open Educational Resources (OER) in UCC Library event video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTFIYzkkzV8

Small Grants

Utilizing 3D printing technology to fabricate teeth enhances interprofessional engagement and facilitates dental students' understanding and exploration of tooth morphology

Project Lead

Dr Mutahira Lone, Anatomy and Neuroscience, CoMH

Project team members

- Dr Andre Toulouse, Department of Anatomy and Neuroscience
- Jose Monagas, Department of Anatomy and Neuroscience
- Asma Zulfiqar, Department of Anatomy and Neuroscience

Project Overview

This SATLE-funded initiative enhances the teaching of dental morphology by integrating 3D-printed teeth into an interactive, gamified learning experience. Tooth morphology is fundamental in dental education, yet access to healthy, non-carious extracted teeth is increasingly limited. Our project addresses this challenge by using 3D models as supplementary teaching tools, co-designed with students to support hands-on learning, interprofessional engagement, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.

Digital scans from a previous UCC study form the basis for 3D-printed teeth, produced in collaboration with the Digital Scholarship Studio. Students are actively involved as partners and co-researchers—designing, testing, and evaluating the models and game. The gamified format encourages repeated use, self-assessment, and problem-solving, transforming traditional practical sessions into dynamic, student-led environments.

Implemented across modules AN2008 and AN1004, the project engaged dental and dental hygiene students from Years 1–5. Early feedback shows increased student confidence, deeper retention of anatomical knowledge, and stronger peer-to-peer learning.

By embedding tactile, inclusive learning tools and fostering a culture of co-creation and innovation, this initiative exemplifies sustainable, student-centered pedagogy with long-term benefits for dental education.

The Approach

To achieve the project objectives, the game was co-designed with students, who acted as both co-creators and co-researchers. Their prior experience with the Tooth Morphology module and

insight into student learning helped ensure that the game's challenges were appropriately tailored. Designed as a supplementary learning tool, the game was integrated into the Tooth Morphology module for Year 1 Dental Hygiene and Year 2 Dentistry students. A total of 63 students were invited to participate, with 53 engaging in weekly two-hour practical sessions over six weeks.

Realistic 3D-printed adult teeth were created by scanning extracted teeth to produce high-resolution mesh models. These were printed using PLA filament and hand-painted for anatomical accuracy. Dental arch bases with 32 slots were sculpted from modeling clay to hold the teeth. A set of 60 challenge cards, 20 for each difficulty level, was created, ranging from identifying two teeth (beginner) to six teeth (advanced).

Each session began with students selecting a difficulty level, drawing a challenge card, and racing against a stopwatch to identify and position the correct teeth in the arch. One challenge encountered was ensuring consistency in marking the students for the correct placement of teeth which was addressed through standardization guidelines and peer review. Another challenge was the limited time available in the lab and the insufficient number of facilitators to provide students with immediate feedback.

Results

The project successfully achieved its objective of enhancing student engagement and learning through a game-based approach to tooth identification. When asked whether the game added to their learning experience, 87% of students responded "yes" and 10% said "somewhat," confirming the educational value of integrating 3D-printed models into teaching.

Crucially, this learning translated into real-world applications: 88% of students reported that the game helped them identify features on actual extracted teeth, and 87% said the knowledge gained was transferable to working with real specimens. This indicates that the game effectively bridged the gap between theory and practice.

In terms of design, 81% of students felt the difficulty levels reflected on the challenge cards were appropriate. This outcome reflects the value of involving students in co-creating the game, ensuring the tasks were well-calibrated for different stages of learning.

When rating the educational value of the teeth used, both extracted and 3D-printed teeth received strong positive feedback. While extracted teeth had more "Very Good" ratings, 3D-printed models received no negative ratings and had more "Good" ratings overall. This suggests that 3D-printed models are a viable and accessible alternative, especially given the increasing scarcity of natural specimens.

Although 88% of students still preferred extracted teeth, the 3D-printed models were shown to enhance motivation and inclusivity in learning.

Student engagement with the game increased over time. In Week 1, most chose beginner-level challenges, but by Week 6, advanced-level participation had grown significantly, indicating increased confidence and willingness to take on complex tasks. Participation was somewhat limited by logistical constraints, including the availability of facilitators and competing demands during practical sessions.

Next Steps

Building on the success of this initiative, future actions will focus on expanding the library of 3D-printed teeth to include pathological variations and developmental stages, enhancing clinical relevance. We also plan to formally integrate the gamified activity into the assessment framework, using it as a formative self-assessment tool across multiple modules.

Key lessons learned include the value of student co-design in creating meaningful, accessible resources and the importance of iterative feedback in refining educational tools. Future projects will continue to embed students as co-researchers and incorporate interprofessional learning opportunities involving dental, hygiene, and potentially medical students.

We recommend broader implementation of 3D printing and gamification in anatomy education to foster engagement, support Universal Design for Learning (UDL), and promote independent, active learning. Collaboration with other institutions could further validate and scale the model for wider use in dental education.

Simulation of interpreter-mediated interaction in a healthcare setting

Project Lead

Margot Spencer, SLLC/French, CACSSS

Project team members

- Dr Nora McCarthy, School of Medicine, College of Medicine and Health

Project Overview

The need for this project arises from the fact that there is an increasing need for interpreter-mediated patient interaction in Ireland but, at present, student doctors in UCC do not receive training in such communication. If student doctors do not experience the benefits of working with interpreters, then they will not be able to lobby for the provision of interpreters in health care settings once they graduate. This lack of experience is a missed opportunity as it would enhance the work-readiness of our graduate doctors.

This project brings students from two discrete programmes (Medicine and MA in Translation Studies) together in a setting which will foreshadow their future careers. Students will be able to practise new skills in an environment which simulates a real-life situation but in a safe way. Teaching will be enhanced by the interdisciplinarity of the initiative and the opportunity to apply theory to as 'real' an environment as possible.

Student interpreters will interpret the information given by 'patients' to student doctors in a simulated setting (taking a case history for instance) and both sets of students will then get an opportunity to discuss the experience and what they have learned from the experience.

The Approach

We explained the benefits of taking part to both cohorts enabling them to practise skills which they will need to call on in the real-life practice of their professions in a safe environment. Students consented to take part and to give their feedback. This feedback will be used to improve the experience for all future cohorts of students.

Native speakers were recruited to play the part of patients using case histories from the School of Medicine. The student interpreters worked on preparing terminology for medical interpreting, knowing the broad area but not having all the case history details.

The medical students practised a skill which was to be evaluated later in the year (taking a case-history for example) while having the additional benefit of experiencing patient communication via an interpreter where the evaluation is merely formative (feedback from their lecturer) and therefore their participation is very safe.
The student interpreters got to practise their craft, in a new situation which cannot be replicated in the usual classroom situation as nobody has the requisite medical knowledge, and gained insight into the realities of working as an interpreter in a healthcare setting. They also got formative feedback which fed into the end-of-module assessment.

Results

This initiative has had a very positive impact on both teaching and student learning. Students were able to practise new skills in an environment which simulates a real-life situation but in a safe way. Teaching was enhanced by the interdisciplinarity of the initiative and the opportunity to apply theory to as 'real' an environment as possible.

The intervention itself was not assessed as such, but the benefits included a greater awareness of the importance of working with interpreters, the challenges of interpreter-mediated patient communication and an awareness of the strategies that can used by doctors to ensure that this communication is as effective as direct communication with patients. Student interpreters gained in awareness also, particularly in relation to the responsibilities attached to the interpreter's role in such settings.

The medical students gave their feedback at the end of each session and the student interpreters reflected on the experience in a piece of reflective writing which is part of the summative assessment of the module.

Both cohorts gave a very positive response to the project and suggested that the training should be embedded in the curriculum for both cohorts - a pleasing response as it aligned with our expectations and hopes prior to carrying out the project.

Next Steps

One possible future outcome would be to upscale this project by creating a micro-credential in Interpreting in Healthcare which would benefit the wider community as well as UCC students. Another is to extend this project to introduce the training to all disciplines whose graduates may have to communicate via interpreters, an increasingly common occurrence in Ireland today. With this in mind, I plan to approach colleagues in the School of Law in the first instance.

The difficulty remains financial as the student experience can only be authentic if the person who needs interpreter-mediated communication is not known to the student interpreter and if there is no funding to support this, the only other avenue is to rely on goodwill from colleagues who speak languages other than English and overtime that reliance could become exploitative.

Overcoming Reverse Culture Schock: Creating a Bilingual Study Abroad Memoir Book

Project Lead

Mariko Takishita, SLLC/Department of Asian Studies, CACSSS

Project team members

- Till Weingartner, School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, Department of Asian Studies

Project Overview

In this project, 13 students co-created a memoir of their study abroad experiences in five languages. They did this by writing about their sojourns and reflections, and by collaborating on the editing, designing, and publication processes both in print and digital formats.

The main objective of this project was to provide support for students returning from study abroad. Through writing their stories, students reflected on their study abroad and were encouraged to move forward positively. During the process of reflective writing, they observed their experiences from multiple perspectives and constructed or deconstructed their sense of self (Lengelle et al., 2014).

It was hoped that this project would support their re-entry into their home culture's university system, which they might feel distant upon their return (Fanari, Liu, and Foerster, 2021). The project had a significant impact, particularly on students who had studied outside Europe for an extended period.

Currently, there is no official departmental support for returning students. Another aim of this project was to establish a sustainable, student-to-student support system. For example, students compiled the memoir for future study abroad participants and presented it at a book launch event and workshop.

The Approach

To achieve the project objectives, an editorial team was formed, led by a student with editorial experience. Full-group meetings were held during class hours, and students decided the book's themes and content independently. While a bilingual format was initially proposed, students opted to write in both Japanese and another language of their choice.

Some students contacted individuals in their target-language countries for support, and the use of personal photographs was encouraged to aid memory recall. Two external proofreaders were hired, and final revisions were completed collaboratively by the students and teacher. A book launch event was held with exchange students, followed by a student-led workshop for future study abroad participants.

Key challenges included unclear role definitions, which caused coordination issues. Roles were clarified during the project, but initial delays affected progress. Time constraints also posed

difficulties, with students managing other commitments and illness affecting participation. As a result, proofreading and rewriting time was limited. Furthermore, some students felt the project consumed too much time relative to the Japanese language curriculum, reducing structured language learning. These issues highlight the need for clearer expectations, improved time management, and better integration of project work with language instruction in future iterations.

Results

Project Outcomes and Alignment with Initial Goals

"Creating a Study Abroad Memoir was like chemistry class. Because we combined our individual elements to create a new compound." (Student reflection)

The outcomes of the project closely aligned with its primary goals: enabling students to reflect deeply on their study abroad experiences, enhancing writing in their second languages, engaging with collaborative work, and encouraging students to share their insights to support future study abroad participants. However, the project had limited impact in supporting re-entry from study abroad and in improving students' English writing skills.

Survey results indicated that participants felt the process of creating the book fostered motivation, second language development, and intercultural competence. Reported benefits included improved clarity and confidence in writing in the target language, deeper cultural understanding, and the development of editorial and collaborative skills. Outcomes varied depending on participants' prior language proficiency and level of involvement in editing, but overall feedback highlighted the project's positive value for language learning.

The project presentation to UCC staff was well received at the school level. Several departments expressed strong interest in participating in workshops and replicating the project to create their own study abroad memoirs. Collaborative book creation was seen as a way to sustain student engagement in second language learning while producing meaningful resources for future study abroad students.

This project demonstrates the potential of multilingual, reflective, and creative activities to enrich post-study abroad language learning. This innovative approach for language teaching and learning contributes to ongoing conversations at UCC about students' engagement, multilingualism, and intercultural competence.

Next Steps

Building on the project's outcomes, several future actions are planned. The completed book will be used in pre-departure seminars, with reading groups formed to engage prospective study abroad students. Completing the book earlier in the academic year will allow for more workshops and wider use in teaching and learning contexts.

In the future, editorial notes from the project can be compiled into a student-friendly guideline to support future cohorts in creating their own memoirs, fostering a sustainable, student-led approach. Offering support for writing in students' first languages alongside second-language development is also recommended.

Key lessons include the importance of clear timelines and communication between staff and student editorial teams, especially given the time-intensive nature of proofreading and rewriting. Finally, while book publication can be integrated into the curriculum, flexibility should be maintained to accommodate students who may not participate directly in the editorial process.

For More Information

Project website https://uccstudyabroadmemoir2025.my.canva.site/

Department of English Undergraduate Journal Enhancement Initiative

Project Lead

Dr Heather Laird, Department of English, CACSSS

Project team members

- Dr Miranda Corcoran, Department of English

Project Overview

The Department of English Undergraduate Journal Enhancement Initiative was built on an existing Teaching and Learning initiative, a student-run undergraduate research journal. The need for the Initiative is best explained in relation to the journal and the principal ways that it benefits students. DoubleSpace was established by Dr Laird in the academic year 2021/22. This online research journal showcases the academic excellence of students enrolled on undergraduate English modules in UCC. The journal is comprised of undergraduate essay work that wins or is highly recommended in the Department's four annual awards: Undergraduate Awards, Patricia Coughlan Award, Louise Clancy Memorial Prize, and Eoin Murray Memorial Prize. The journal also includes essays by UCC English students that have been placed in the Global Undergraduate Awards.

DoubleSpace benefits undergraduate students based in the Department in two key ways. Firstly, it provides students with an opportunity for publication. Secondly, DoubleSpace offers valuable editorial and design experience. Students enrolled on UCC's BA English programme (co-ordinated by Dr Corcoran) are invited to volunteer as editors and are mentored in this role by Dr Corcoran and Dr Laird. Five undergraduate students volunteered as student editors for the inaugural issue, 2021-2022. Fourteen undergraduate students volunteered as student editors for the 2022-2023 issue, and the same number volunteered for the 2023-2024 issue. DoubleSpace's student editors develop transferable skills (such as editing and web design) that enable success in their future professions, especially within publishing, journalism, and arts management. They also learn about academic integrity, publishing ethics and copyright, with last year's editors successfully securing a Creative Commons (CC) license for the journal.

The Approach

The Initiative funded an editorial workshop and a design workshop for the student editors. The editorial and design workshops were led by PhD students in the Department of English with editorial experience of postgraduate research journals. The PhD mentors also consulted with the student editors in advance of the publication of the journal issue, providing guidance on final enhancements of it.

Results

The outcomes were enhanced transferable skills for the student editors, an enriched online forum in which to showcase award-winning undergraduate essays, and valuable experience for the two PhD students. Moreover, the student editors not only further developed skills in the fields of web design, editorship and academic best practice, they also displayed increased

confidence in their own abilities as researchers and members of the wider academic community.

Next Steps

Future actions include discussions with Hardy Schwamm, Head of Research Services, UCC Library and Information Services, regarding the possibility of providing a library supported platform for the journal going forward.

For More Information

https://doublespaceucc.wixsite.com/doublespace2025

https://hub.teachingandlearning.ie/resource/doublespace-the-undergraduate-journal-of-the-department-of-english-ucc/

An evaluation of innovative and e-volving approaches to student learning outcomes

Project Lead

Dr Margaret Buckley, School of Applied Social Studies, CACSSS

Project team members

- Dr Conor Cashman, School of Applied Social Studies
- Brian Slocum, School of Applied Social Studies

Project Overview

The project was undertaken to evaluate students' and teaching practitioners' experience and reflections on the use of digital tools within teaching and learning environments. The background to the project/evaluation stems from recent updates to the assessment of a social research methods module in which students were asked to submit an online presentation (in advance of a written proposal). The project, therefore, sought to evaluate this experience, as well as gain further reflections from students and practitioners regarding the role of digital tools / technology, and barriers and challenges offered by such tools. This project offered a valuable opportunity to take stock of the role and impact of digital tools and technology against the backdrop of an increased use of hybrid and online teaching methods, as well as the specific changes made to the aforementioned social research methods module. The project was further contextualised by reflection on teaching and learning literature and recent research as to the perceived value and challenges posed by technology within third level (e.g. the use of Artificial Intelligence, the move to online during the Covid-19 pandemic, the ongoing trend towards embedding of online platforms such as 'Canvas' within third level programmes).

The Approach

To address the objectives of the project (i.e. evaluate perspectives on digital tools and specific reflection on the updates to a research methods module), a qualitative evaluation of students' and teaching staff's views and experience on online assessment methods related to social science research was undertaken. This involved participation from students on the relevant programmes as to their experience dealing with technology (through a survey using Qualtrics). The survey was designed to gain specific experience and feedback through (e.g.) Likert Scale responses, as well as more qualitative data on students' views about barriers to using technology within their learning experiences. These responses were used to inform and develop a series of themes for a subsequent workshop / focus group stage of the project held with students and staff members.

Challenges encountered related mainly to the ethical considerations that arise from conducting research with current students and the scheduling of workshops during a busy part of the academic year. These were addressed through following the SREC process, as well as scheduling the focus group after the end of the semester.

Results

The project outcomes involve specific, identifiable outputs and more substantive, ongoing impacts in the teaching and learning context of the School.

Regarding specific outputs, the data collected in the surveys and workshop / focus group stage has been analysed and have formed part of two publications – a news item for the Higher Education Authority (link below) and the creation of report that contextualises the evaluation within the broader literature regarding teaching and learning, with a focus on digital tools and technology (draft ongoing).

Regarding ongoing impacts, the data collected for this evaluation has highlighted a need for further understanding between students and teachers as to the role of digital tools and expectations regarding technology. In this regard, the feedback/evaluation underlines a need for more consistency in the use of online platforms across modules and programmes, the nature and use of presentation software (by teachers), and a potential mismatch between teachers' expectations and realties of students' digital literacy (particularly when uploading presentations or engaging with technology that may require some level of 'troubleshooting' by students). A further point of note (particularly within qualitative data collected) relates to the negative impact technology may have – creating a barrier to face to face or more interactive discussions within classes. Technology emerges here as a block to meaningful engagement with course content and the ability to critically discuss topics within groups. A key output in this regard will be the communication of these results to programme teams and an agenda item for the Teaching and Learning Committee within the School of Applied Social Studies.

Next Steps

As noted above, the project has highlighted the need to further engage with student and staff experience and expectations around digital tools and technology. In particular, future actions will involve the feedback/evaluation output being presented at the Teaching and Learning Committee in the coming academic year and highlighting an opportunity for programme teams to reflect on their expectations of students when it comes to technology and digital tools.

For More Information

An Evaluation of Innovative and E-volving Approaches to Student Learning Outcomes - National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education - https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/2025/03/24/an-evaluation-of-innovative-and-e-volving-approaches-to-student-learning-outcomes/

AI-ntegrity: The Future of Assessments Survey

Project Lead

Dr Marie Ryan, Economics, CoBL

Project team members

- Dr Sarah Thelan CIRTL Lecturer, CIRTL
- Dr Loretta Goff Skills Centre Academic Integrity Education Officer
- Dr Orna Farrell Digital Education Associate Professor of Education
- Dr Ger Ryan Accounting and Finance, CUBS Senior Lecturer and Vice Dean Learning and Teaching CUBS
- Prof Mark McEntee Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy, CoMH Prof and Chair and Vice Head of Learning and Teaching, CoMH
- Dr Alan Morrison Electrical Engineering Associate Professor and Head of Learning and Teaching, CSEFS
- Prof Cathal O'Connell Applied Social Studies Prof and Head of Learning and Teaching, CACSSS

Project Overview

The AI-ntegrity project addresses the critical need for evidence-based responses to the rapid integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools in higher education. As GenAI chatbots become increasingly sophisticated, they present both significant challenges and unique opportunities for teaching, learning, and assessment practices across Irish higher education institutions.

The project emerged from recognition that established assessment methods are being fundamentally rethought as educators grapple with GenAI's implications for academic integrity. While these technologies pose challenges to traditional assessment design, they also provide unprecedented opportunities to reimagine how assessments reflect institutional priorities including inclusivity, accessibility, and authentic learning outcomes. The partnership with DCU enabled cross-institutional learning and provided broader insights into GenAI adoption patterns across Irish higher education.

Main Objectives:
- Map current GenAI knowledge and engagement levels among UCC staff
- Understand how GenAI tools are being integrated into teaching and assessment practices
- Identify specific training and support needs within departments and units
- Establish evidence-based foundations for institutional GenAI policies and support initiatives
- Facilitate comparative analysis between UCC and Dublin City University (DCU).

Key Stakeholders:

- UCC academic staff across all colleges and departments

- Students navigating GenAI-enhanced curricula and assessments
- Vice Heads and Vice Deans of Learning and Teaching
- The broader Irish higher education community through collaboration with DCU

The Approach

Phase 1: Institutional Support and Ethics Approval
The project secured endorsement from UCC Vice Heads and Vice Deans of Learning and Teaching, ensuring institutional buy-in across all colleges. Comprehensive ethics approval was obtained from UCC's Social Research Ethics Committee (SREC), including subsequent amendments to expand the research scope.

Phase 2: Staff Survey Implementation
A comprehensive Qualtrics survey was distributed to all UCC staff, utilising an instrument previously developed and validated at DCU. The survey explored four key themes:

- GenAI tool familiarity and usage patterns
- Perceptions of GenAI's impact on education and academic integrity
- Current and intended integration of GenAI into pedagogical practices
- Training and support needs for effective GenAI integration

Phase 3: Ethics Amendment and Expansion
To enhance data richness and capture more nuanced insights, the project scope was expanded through a comprehensive ethics amendment process. This included:

- Addition of staff focus groups to gather qualitative perspectives
- Integration of a classroom case study component examining real-world GenAI applications

Phase 4: Student Integration
Following the "students as partners" approach, the project incorporated student perspectives through assessment feedback that examined authentic GenAI integration in academic assignments.

Challenges and Solutions:
The primary challenge involved expanding the research scope while maintaining rigorous ethical standards and avoiding bias in student assessment. This was addressed through:

- Strict separation of consent collection and academic grading processes.
- Delayed access to participation information until after grades were finalised.
- Independent researcher coordination to maintain participant confidentiality
- Comprehensive data protection protocols aligned with UCC policies

Results

Research Outputs and Dissemination: The project has generated scholarly impact through multiple high-profile presentations and an online blog post (see below).

Alignment with Strategic Themes: The project successfully addressed both targeted SATLE themes:

- Digitally enabled Learning, Teaching and Assessment: Mapping current digital tool usage and identifying pathways for enhanced integration
- Academic Integrity: Developing evidence-based approaches to maintaining academic standards while embracing technological innovation

UCC Strategic Goal Alignment:
- Student Success: Developing support systems and resources to help students navigate GenAI-enhanced educational environments.
- Our Staff, Our Culture: Building institutional capacity for GenAI integration through targeted training and support.
- Research and Innovation: Contributing to the broader scholarly discourse on technology adoption in higher education.

Cross-Institutional Impact: The collaboration with DCU will provide valuable comparative insights (work in progress), contributing to national conversations about GenAI integration in Irish higher education. The project's methodological approach will serve as a replicable model for other institutions seeking evidence-based GenAI policies.

Next Steps

- Staff Focus Groups: Conduct qualitative data collection to capture perspectives on GenAI integration challenges and opportunities.
- Compare results with DCU.
- Academic Publication: Prepare comprehensive research paper for publication in a peer-reviewed teaching and learning journal.

Future Recommendations:

Institutional Level:

- Develop evidence-based GenAI integration guidelines informed by project findings.
- Aid the establishment of ongoing professional development programs for staff GenAI literacy.
- Aid the creation of student support resources based on identified needs and successful integration practices.
- Aid the implementation of regular monitoring and evaluation systems for GenAI policy effectiveness.

Scalability and Transferability:

- Share methodological frameworks with other Irish higher education institutions (MTU are interested).
- Aid the development of a toolkit resources for institutional GenAI integration planning.
- Establish communities of practice for ongoing cross-institutional learning.
- Create adaptable survey instruments for broader institutional use.

Research and Innovation:

- Pursue follow-up longitudinal studies to track GenAI integration evolution.
- Investigate discipline-specific GenAI applications and challenges.
- Explore student learning outcome impacts of GenAI-enhanced curricula.
- Develop assessment design frameworks that leverage GenAI capabilities while maintaining academic integrity.

Lessons Learned:

- Reduce survey length to increase response rates.
- Better cross-institutional collaboration for broader impact and validation.
- Student-centered approaches were key positioning learners as partners in educational innovation.

For More Information

Three conferences and a blog post

1. Generative AI Integration: Faculty Development Research and Economics Student Applications
EuroSoTL Conference 2025: Making Connections through the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, The University of Groningen (UG), Netherlands.
2025-06-20 | Conference paper
https://www.rug.nl/about-ug/organization/service-departments/teaching-academy-groningen/activities/eurosotl-2025/eurosotl-programme/7-5-2025-eurosotl-preliminary-programme.pdf

2. Where are We and Where Do We Need to Be? Supporting Staff and Student GenAI Literacy
Athlone Technical Univeristy, DigitalEd Conference 2025, Ireland
2025-05-13 | Conference paper
URI: https://www.digitaled.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/DigitalEd-2025-Conference-Programme-Final-Updated.pdf

3.AI-ntegrity & GenAI LEARN: Evidenced-based responses to GenAI in teaching, learning, and assessment
European Learning & Teaching Forum.2030 and beyond: towards responsive and adaptable higher education
2025-02-28 | Conference paper
URI: https://www.eua.eu/images/Session_abstracts.24.02.pdf

4. "AI-ntegrity: The Future of Assessments Survey". Economics Case Study: Turning Disruption into Opportunity
HEA National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
2025-03-24 | Blog post
URI: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/2025/03/24/ucc-satle-project-ai-ntegrity-the-future-

Community engaged learning (CEL) activities in health professions education, benchmarking, and T&L framework development

Project Lead

Dr Katie Ryan, School of Pharmacy, CoMH

Project team members

- Grainne Egan, School of Pharmacy
- Conor Browne, School of Pharmacy
- Caoimhe Murphy, School of Pharmacy

Project Overview

Community engagement is defined as a process whereby universities engage with external organisations to undertake joint activities that can be mutually beneficial, even if each side benefits in a different way. Community engaged learning (CEL) is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience that allows students to participate in an organised community-based activity that meets identified community needs. Communities include groups of individuals or organizations that have a commitment to solving problems with university cooperation. Students gain academic credit for engaging and reflecting on learning or research on issues in society, in partnership with external partners. However, integrating meaningful and sustainable CEL activities into academic programmes, especially regulated, professional programmes like pharmacy are challenging due to busy and demanding curricula, in addition to staffing and resource constraints. This research sought to determine, using the published literature, the type of CEL activities being used in the education of healthcare professionals. In addition, we were interested to audit the MPharm programme in UCC to identify the variety and extent of CEL activities embedded in the programme. To develop a framework for integration, we also sought to devise a list of additional CEL activities that could be incorporated across the MPharm and other healthcare programmes.

The Approach

In a bid to understand the extent to which CEL is employed in the education of healthcare professionals; a literature review (2010-2024) was conducted. A total of 382 papers was screened, and 26 studies were evaluated. In relation to the education of Pharmacy students in UCC, an overview of the CEL-type activities detailed in the program's module content, learning objectives, and assessments was recorded using Canvas and the Academic programme. Modules containing CEL-type activities were identified and activities were ranked as either high, medium or low, depending on the extent of community engagement. Modules that could facilitate inclusion of CEL activities together with suggested ideas and supporting rationale were compiled. Interviews were conducted with module coordinators (n=8) to gather further insights into specific activities. A short-list of additional activities that could be included in the MPharm curriculum was compiled. Using the "Towards a European Framework for Community

Engagement in Higher Education" (TEFCE) rubric, engagement level and the extent of mutual benefit for student and community partners was assessed.

To boost meaningful collaboration and engagement, organisations that could potentially collaborate with UCC pharmacy students on CEL activities were identified (n =23) and local Cork branches were contacted during August 2025.

Results

The published literature (n =26 studies) indicated that the use of CEL in Health profession's education predominantly related to medical students (n =15 studies) and the studies emanated from North America (n=20).

An audit of the MPharm programme in UCC was conducted to understand the extent to which CEL type activities are utilised in the education of Pharmacy students and to identify opportunities for enhancement. Of the forty-four modules audited on the MPharm programme in UCC, nineteen modules already included some low and medium level CEL activities. An additional 11 modules were identified as suitable for CEL inclusion, based on their content and learning outcomes and method of assessment. Guest lectures and case-studies ranked lower in their alignment with CEL principles. While sustainable, they offer lower levels of engagement and reciprocal benefit for students and the community. Experiential learning opportunities gained through placements had a medium level alignment. No teaching and learning activities were defined as "High" level. To further boost CEL adoption in Health professional education, a total of 25 potential activities with low to high alignment with CEL was compiled. Further, of the community partners (n=23) contacted to date, a response was received from four organisations. Two of which were interested to pursue learning opportunities, while the others had capacity constraints (n=1) or had no available opportunities (n=1).

The work from this project has been presented as poster presentations at the Teaching and Learning showcase in the College of Medicine and Health, UCC (2024 and 2025) and as an oral presentation at the Irish Network of Healthcare Educators (INHED) conference, (May 2025).

Next Steps

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on CEL in pharmacy education by providing insights into the current CEL initiatives at UCC. Next steps in the research will focus on identifying projects that can be undertaken with community partners and conducting a customised SWOT analysis to identify opportunities for improvement and for further development, to maximise benefits for students and communities alike.

Creating a NeuroInclusive Postgraduate Research Student Experience

Project Lead

Dr Niamh O' Mahoney, School of Chemistry, SEFS

Project team members

- Prof Eric Moore, School of Chemistry

Project Overview

This project aims to explore the lived experiences of neurodivergent postgraduate research students to co-design more inclusive and supportive academic environments. As increasing numbers of students identify as neurodivergent—such as autistic, ADHD, dyslexic, or otherwise cognitively diverse—there remains a significant gap in institutional understanding of their needs, especially within postgraduate research, where autonomy and unstructured expectations can heighten barriers. The project was initiated in response to ongoing feedback from neurodivergent students and wider national conversations about equity in higher education. It is grounded in the principles of participatory research and universal design, with a commitment to centring neurodivergent voices in shaping policy and practice.

The Approach

This project employed a mixed-methods approach to investigate the experiences of neurodivergent (ND) postgraduate research (PGR) students. A qualitative survey (n = 100 participants; n = 38 deemed eligible to participate) was used to gather both structured data and open-text responses. Thematic analysis identified core challenges, with recurring themes including sensory environments, supervision, and academic flexibility. These themes were triangulated across both narrative and numerical data to enhance validity.

To enrich the survey findings, two supplementary focus groups were conducted—one with ND students from the sciences and another from the humanities (three participants each). These sessions explored disciplinary differences in supervision styles, working environments, and academic expectations. While broadly consistent with survey results, the focus groups added depth: science students emphasised overstimulating lab conditions, whereas humanities students spoke of isolation and ambiguous academic norms.

Accessibility was a guiding principle throughout the project, ensured through the use of plain language, flexible response formats, and full anonymity. A key challenge was creating a safe environment for participants to discuss sensitive experiences. This was addressed through informed consent processes, participant-led engagement, and trauma-informed facilitation.

Results

This project shed light on the lived experiences of neurodivergent (ND) postgraduate research (PGR) students at UCC, highlighting areas where current structures and practices lack inclusivity. Drawing on survey responses, the study identified recurring challenges such as sensory barriers, inconsistent supervisory support, limited academic flexibility, and a high

administrative burden.

Students reported that overstimulating environments, unclear academic expectations, and a lack of flexibility often hindered their ability to engage fully with their research. Disclosure status also played a significant role in whether students felt comfortable raising accessibility concerns, emphasising the need for safe, supportive communication channels within academic settings.

These findings closely align with the project's aim to generate evidence that can inform more inclusive postgraduate policies and practices. While no formal changes have yet been implemented, the project has helped raise awareness within UCC about the structural barriers ND students face and the importance of addressing them.

The findings encourage more inclusive supervision practices, clearer academic guidance, and greater flexibility in research processes. More broadly, the project contributes to ongoing discussions in higher education about creating research environments and institutional systems that are more responsive to the needs of ND students.

Next Steps

This project highlighted the need for systemic changes to better support neurodivergent PGR students. Future actions should focus on co-designed interventions, including developing sensory-friendly study spaces and clearer, more flexible academic structures. Supervisor training in neuroinclusive practices is a key priority, alongside redesigning administrative processes to reduce cognitive load.

A key lesson was the importance of cross-disciplinary engagement—students in science and humanities faced different but overlapping barriers, suggesting a need for tailored, context-sensitive solutions. Going forward, collaboration with institutional stakeholders (e.g., Graduate Studies, Disability Services) will be essential to embed these insights into policy and practice.

The study also underscores the value of involving ND students in decision-making, not just as participants but as co-creators of change. Building on this foundation, the next phase will explore pilot projects and further consultation to test and refine inclusive practices across research environments.

Building a Resilient Mindset: A Train the Trainer Seminar

Project Lead

Yvonne Harding, Career Services

Project team members

- Amy McMullen, Career Services

Project Overview

2.4 of the UCC Strategic Plan 2023-28 states that we aim to support student success, health and well-being to achieve the overall goal of Student Success. Resilience is a core value of the university and supporting students to develop it is a key objective of the UCC Graduate Attributes Programme (GAP). With this in mind it is critical that UCC staff who support a student's transition to the workplace must stay informed of best practice in relation to resilience building to improve students' mental well-being, to support them in developing a growth mindset and to optimise their performance on placement. This in turn, fosters employability through teaching real-world coping skills, giving UCC students a competitive advantage and leading to an increased conversion rate from work placement to graduate positions.

This project forms part of a Career Services Teaching & Learning Seminar Series building on the first successful Seminar entitled 'Emotional Intelligence – A Catalyst for Student Success'. This successful project aimed to equip UCC faculty and staff with evidence-based, practical strategies, techniques and resources to support students (work placement students in the first instance) build resilience to survive and thrive throughout their time in UCC and beyond.

The Approach

An expert practitioner in the area of Resilience was recruited to deliver a Train the Trainer style workshop and to provide a 'teaching resource pack' to UCC's Placement Managers & Coordinators, Allocations Officers, Practice Education Coordinators, Careers Consultants, Work Placement Programme Academic Directors, and colleagues in UCC Central Support Units such as DSS, who have a placement, internship or graduate employability remit. This interactive Seminar was designed to equip UCC staff and the wider UCC community with strategies to help students develop resilience. Attendees learned how mindset, optimism and agility shape resilience and gained hands-on-tools to foster adaptability and well-being. Attendees had the opportunity to connect, focus and share information on this common interest of Resilience. The Seminar ran on April 29th from 10am-1pm and was attended by a diverse range of colleagues throughout the University.

Results

Positive Impact on Teaching

- Placement practitioners and colleagues had the opportunity to connect, focus and share information on this common interest of Resilience.
- Placement practitioners and colleagues had an opportunity to hear from subject matter experts to gain a better understanding of what Resilience looks like in industry.

- Staff enhanced their teaching capabilities in pre-placement modules and workshops in Resilience, preparing students to transition out of the university, enhancing UCC's teaching and learning agenda.
- Staff were made aware of the range of resilience-building resources available within the university and have the opportunity to embed them in their teaching content.

Impact on Student Learning

We want our UCC graduates to be recognised as well-rounded, curious, self-aware individuals who continually learn new skills, are open to new ideas, and make things happen. UCC students belong to a dynamic and diverse community where many people wish to support them on their learning journey. Attending the 'Building a Resilient Mindset' pre-placement module will enhance their academic, personal and professional development journey throughout their time at UCC.

We want our students to be world-ready and work-ready and this workshop will equip them with coping strategies they can employ to overcome challenges they face both within and outside of the workplace. Resilience is needed in all areas of life and this initiative supports students to develop a value they can harness when facing challenges not only in the workplace, but in their study, and personal lives.

Attendee Feedback

'I champion resilience as an essential strength to obtain and develop. Any support or training for resilience is a win for me. I commend all involved in making this training available, fantastic job and thank you! Interactive activities, exciting, engaging presenter and great contribution from participants. Love the morning refreshments and gorgeous lunch.'

'Facilitators delivery was positive and lively and contributed greatly to the enjoyment of the session. Some nice tools in the session which could be applied when working with students'

'Very well delivered and coordinated. I found the content relevant and thought provoking.'

Next Steps

We plan to apply for funding to continue the Career Services Teaching & Learning Seminar Series. The proposed theme for the next seminar is Transactional Analysis. Over 80 internal staff registered to attend the Resilience session but a number of these did not attend on the day (despite numerous reminders). Whilst the attendance was healthy a key lesson learned from this project is that we would make the Seminar available to our colleagues in local colleges and professional bodies to attend if available.

Transforming UCC Skills Centre learning and teaching opportunities through implementation of sensory accessible interventions

Project Lead

Dr Éadaoin Regan, Skills Centre, OVPLT

Project team members

- Skills Centre

Project Overview

To expand current UCC Skills Centre learning and teaching offerings by correcting current barriers to a sensory inclusive learning and teaching environment. The aim was for the Skills Centre to provide sensory improvements to ensure the success of neurodiverse students and tutors who ordinarily would find our facility environment a barrier to their wellbeing.

The Approach

The Skills Centre is located in Q-1, the basement floor of the library, and has no access to natural lighting. To compensate for this, harsh fluorescent lighting is installed in the reception area, small office used for one-to-one consultations with students, and our classroom which accommodates 23 students. The furnishings (tables and chairs) are hard and come in two bright colours that are uncomfortable for many neurodiverse students to interact with: bright red and green. The 'whiteboards' are fluorescent yellow. The lighting can be dimmed however there are only three settings: off/on/very low dim which can make it hard for students to see. A complete refurbishment of the Centre was not possible. I contacted Access UCC colleagues to discuss temporary but effective solutions: Sue Knight (Occupational Therapist), Linda Doran, Gavin Deady, and Emma Landry (DS).

Results

This funding was used to improve the Skills Centre's accessibility for both tutors and students by providing the following equipment that are all easily cleaned with antibacterial supplies between uses and reusable:

- A quiet diffuser with various dim settings can be placed in the reception area, small office, and classroom during set time slots throughout the week for the full academic year
- Weighted blankets for students to use during their sessions
- A choice of seating in sensory appropriate colours (sage green, sky blue, lavender, grey): bean bags, hexagon chair, wobble seat, and wobble cushions to protect existing hard plastic chairs
- Fidget boxes which include various textured stress balls, Schylling nice cubes, spinners, tactile balls, etc.
- Variety of CDs and YouTube playlists for rain, sea, or brown noise according to the students request

The outcome of these changes allowed the Skills Centre to extend its services specifically as follows:

- Building upon the success of our current one-to-one booking form that provides optional fields for students to provide us with their preferences for their appointment with a tutor, we will be able to offer a the 'Sensory Skills' Centre one-to-one booking form that offers drop down fields on preferences such as seating, lighting level, background noise, and more.
- Advertise 'Sensory Drop-In' times where the above can also be ensured for students during this time where no bookings or prior information is required
- Ensure our regular workshops provided also include 1-2 timeslots where the workshop can be delivered with these sensory considerations in mind, for the benefit of students and tutors .

The Sensory Friendly 1-2-1 service was booked an impressive 29 times in its first two months, accounting for 1/5 of our total 1-2-1 requests during this period.

Next Steps

For the coming academic year I have created a dual role to help maximise coverage and promotion of this service given it was successful but at a later stage in the year. One of our postgraduate tutors is also going to take over our social media and do student takeovers, reels, and day in the life to promote the sensory friendly service. This tutor will also meet the Student's Union monthly to assess opportunities for collaboration and improvement.

For More Information

Website Booking Form for students to indicate preferences in the Sensory Friendly 1-2-1:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScAkpcvCcLUBdGEmdVXjaXR2Pou8L4ZgT6QLgg7lIrhgVSnBw/viewform?pli=1