

Note: 'Thank you's and general queries about the running of the event (volume, can't see slides, what's the menti code, great question, etc) have been removed here. We have also grouped some questions together.

Source	Content
Attendee	What is UCC's commitment to hybrid teaching and will it allow for the purchasing of equipment to facilitate hybrid teaching and meetings, such as microphones?
Attendee	While general technical support and colleagues were great..my opinion is that we need actual dedicated staff for courses...not just generic training but a system in place that allows us to maybe work in teams or have more dedicated access to technical support.... this is as much a time issue as a technical one...much more admin support is needed for academic staff..this is a pre covid, covid and post covid problem.
Attendee	All academic staff need more administrative support full stop.
Attendee	Interactive hybrid classrooms would need equipment
TOM	UCC 2022 Delivering a Connected University Pillar 1 includes the action '1.3 Invest in Digital Education'. This includes 1.3.3 'Prioritise investment in digital education through expanding infrastructural resources to staff....'. Part of the implementation of this will include costings, which will be presented for consideration to UCC 2022 Steering Group. However, it is likely that all other pillar implementation groups will similarly be presenting requests for additional financing. Because of the significant financial constraints under which the university is currently operating, additional funding for digital education resources cannot be guaranteed at this time.
Attendee	is the university supporting the use of Mentimeter? I am paying for it from my own personal funds? Is the university paying for open access?
Attendee	Can UCC please formally support mentimeter or a similar voting app (e.g. slido) as a part of the digital transition, in order to facilitate meaningful student engagement?
Moderator	It is def in the discussion! Been raised in a number of high level forums.
TOM	Currently, there is no institutionally licensed dedicated polling tool outside of the polling function in MS Teams and the survey function in Canvas. I think a dedicated polling app is very likely to come high up the list of digital education software requests during the year. We are aware that there are a variety of tools being used across the university informally to create live engagement - mentimeter, slido, polleverywhere, kahoot, padlet, all with slightly different functions and purposes. We need to do a bit of work yet if there are common functional requirements before requesting funding and launching a procurement process. Meanwhile, schools could consider a locally funded license as an interim step, being mindful of GDPR obligations of course. Currently, an annual license for Mentimeter for a single presenter is \$180.
Attendee	I'd like it if staff could propose the questions you are asking here.
Moderator	Please post any question you have on the Q&A function.
TOM	In addition to the pre-townhall questionnaire, the mentimeter polls and Q&A during the townhall, we think this has presented a lot of opportunity for engagement. If there is a particular question you feel we should have asked, please email vplearningandteaching@ucc.ie with your suggestions.
Attendee	Did the students have the same ten point response scale?
Moderator	Students scale was 1-5 AFAIK
Moderator	Hi **** - yes it means 3/5 for the student scale.
Attendee	How is digital education defined in this context?
Moderator	Digital Education is defined as: "Digital Education refers to both the delivery of education through digital technologies and also the education of those who teach to use digital tools effectively." From https://www.ucc.ie/en/digital-ed/about/
Attendee	Personally, I think my teaching has significantly improved since the shift to an online format. I have never recieved more positive comments from students, in terms of their engagement with the lecture material - although this is not be true for everyone in the university, I hope UCC will continue to support lecturers who feel that they can teach online in a successful manner.
TOM	The principle of subsidiarity is something that has served us well over the last year, allowing disciplines to make their own decisions about what works best for their students and staff. We see no reason why this would not continue.

MP	The principle of subsidiarity is something that has served us well over the last year, allowing disciplines to make their own decisions about what works best for their students and staff. We see no reason why this would not continue while also taking into account the need for a face to face teaching and providing a on campus student experience.
Attendee	The idea of subsidiarity does not materialise when it comes to the policies that are then circulated. Many of the suggestions are not viable for certain cohorts. There also needs to be a better way to guarantee that integrity. There should also be a requirement to engage with the course in order to take the assessment (it does not necessarily need to be based on attendance only, but engagement with the course in different ways).
TOM	I'm not 100% sure what is meant here, but if the question is about policies that are circulated from senior management or committees that cannot be applied in a specific discipline, I think this is a matter for local teaching and learning committees or school management to raise. On the second point, I would imagine any particular requirement to 'engage' before taking an assessment would need to be contained in the Book of Modules for that module as part of its Marks and Standards? Academic Programmes and Regulations can better advise on this. https://www.ucc.ie/en/apar/ Advice on eligibility for attendance at examination can be sought from the SREO.

Attendee	Would have liked the "will form" to have been "should form" in question 2...
TOM	The question is about changing the grammar of question 2 from 'Once the present crisis has passed, to what extent do you think digital education will form part of normal your normal teaching practice?' to 'Once the present crisis has passed, to what extent do you think digital education should form part of normal your normal teaching practice?' Interpreting this, it seems the issue is about local conversations that need to happen about whether lecturers will be facilitated to continue teaching online. Once again, the principle of subsidiarity needs to be considered, so it would not be appropriate for senior management or a central function to prescribe this level of delivery. However, the position of the Office of Vice President for Learning and Teaching is that staff should reflect with colleagues and local management about what has worked over the last 12 months to carry forward any changes which would improve the learning and/or teaching experience. Actions 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 of UCC 2022 speak to the need to enhance the digital learning experience and enable further remote learning opportunities.

Attendee	on average, 50%, therefore blended learning/hybrid approach?
TOM	This seems to be a comment reflecting on the responses to Q2 asking whether digital education will form part of post-Covid practice. The average score from 91 responses seems to indicate a preference somewhere in the middle of the spectrum between 'little or nothing' and 'fully online'. I would interpret this to mean there is divergence in staff thinking with the majority feeling teaching practice in the future will include a significant amount of digital components. What that looks like will be bespoke for each module, contingent on module content, learning outcomes and staff and student needs and skills.

Attendee	I think if we ask staff the question about how they feel it would also be "stressed"
TOM	Yes, I think this is a very common response we have seen to this question. We did ask it in the pre-townhall questionnaire and the most common responses were a mixture of the more negative terms 'exhausted', 'difficult', and 'it was challenging', but also included a lot of staff reporting feeling 'proud', 'positive', 'it worked out better than anticipated'. So while experience has been varied across the university, there is no denying all staff are tired after a very tough year. We didn't include it in the townhall simply because we had too many other questions to get through.

Attendee	Pre-recording, flipped classroom, etc., is a non-option for staff who are only paid by the hour for teaching.
PMcS	We appreciate this problem and advise staff affected to discuss the situation with their head of school.

Attendee	Any chance we could get software more suited than MS Teams for lecturing. Something where we could see students but not record them would be really great. Students disengage the minute recording starts.
Attendee	MS Teams not the most user friendly, could be a little bit more intuitive
Attendee	I do not like Teams and many people don't. It is particularly difficult for people without a UCC address plus for breakout rooms. There are a lot of problems with it in the detail.
Attendee	Students email accounts aren't properly integrated with Teams & Outlook - this makes communication more difficult.

Attendee	TEAMS needs to be reviewed. It is less stable for moving students in and out of breakout rooms etc. and is also problematic when collaborating with people outside UCC
Attendee	Teams has very poor functionality for non-UCC email addresses
Attendee	I feel more confident in using Teams rather than Zoom
Attendee	yes but if zoom is working better for staff this needs to be heard....you have to hear what we are saying, otherwise why bother asking us
Attendee	Zoom would have intergrated with both panopto and Canvas
Attendee	Team is an excellent one stop shop for Teaching, Guest lectures, one to one videos sessions with students, sharing files, staff chats, all in the one place.
GC	<p>Some people have given us feedback that they believe that Zoom is a better tool for lecturing than Microsoft teams. We are gathering this feedback as part of the review of our Systems to support our Digital Ambitions strategy . MS Teams was the default system that we had when this Pandemic Started, and it has served us well throughout this emergency. We are now so emersed in Digital Services, that there are a number of requests to support a variety of different tools (zoom, Mentimeter, Slido, Kahoot, Polleverywhere)</p> <p>The VP of Learning and teaching with support from the Quality office, has initiated a thematic review of learning and teaching in UCC and this will form part of our work on Pillar 1 of our Strategic plan, this review will seek the input and feedback from across the academic community and a full analysis will be completed of our needs and the services we need to deliver these needs. If that review means that we have to purchase additional products (such as Zoom) to support our strategy and to support our mission, then we will make provision for that before the next academic year. However it is neither sustainable nor affordable to just add more services , its also overwhelming for people, and we are actually trying to consolidate the tools we use for Digital Education. Any investment in new tools, will come at a cost of other services such as more instructional designers to support colleagues, and all this will form part of the evaluation.</p>
Attendee	I have found that 'camera on' substantially increased student engagement
Moderator	I have to disagree somewhat; its about making them feel involved maybe... - I've had, and also seen others, large and small classes where well over 30% have and do maintain cameras on even whilst recording. But one should never ever mandate cameras on but make it a choice as we cannot know all peoples environments.
TOM	<p>Many staff have been asking about whether they should mandate students to turn their webcams on for live meetings. The OVPLT view is that you should not ordinarily require students to turn on their cameras as there may well be very reasonable explanations as to why students may not wish to be seen.</p> <p>Many staff have been asking about whether they should mandate students to turn their webcams on for live meetings. The OVPLT view is that you should not ordinarily require students to turn on their cameras as there may well be very reasonable explanations as to why students may not wish to be seen.</p> <p>For instance,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> students may not wish to share their personal space with others; there may be perceived equality issues around a student's place of study; students might find it awkward for their faces to be visible; some students report increased anxiety with the idea that they are being closely observed; multiple faces onscreen at the same time can be distracting; or students may be juggling child or other caring responsibilities during class. <p>If you have a sound educational reason for requesting cameras are turned on, please explain this to students first and give them the opportunity to get in touch if it will present problems.</p> <p>However, you can make it clear that students are welcome to leave their cameras on, should they wish. You may also encourage students to add a profile picture to Teams rather than their initials.</p> <p>If you're worried about engagement, perhaps short polls, quizzes, or other verbal interactive exercises will also help to build a sense of community without the need to see everyone's faces onli</p>
Attendee	UCC needs to stop adopting an apologetic tone about online teaching. We should be trying to emphasise the quality of all our teaching. If we expect digital education to be a major part of the university going forward, we can't afford to continue with messaging of the form "well, we would like to do things differently, but. . . the government said we can't" or "we all know teaching happens in real classrooms". We need to emphasise that our teaching is strong regardless of the format.

Attendee	Lecturers also need to review what they are teaching and question is the content nice to know or need to know. Then students can be more prepared and fit for practice.				
Moderator	excellent point Caroline ! (Caroline O'Connor asked "Lecturers also need to review what they are teaching and question is the content nice to know or need to know. Then students can be more prepared and fit for practice. ")				
Attendee	UCC needs to stop adopting an apologetic tone about online teaching. We should be trying to emphasise the quality of all our teaching. If we expect digital education to be a major part of the university going forward, we can't afford to continue with messaging of the form "well, we would like to do things differently, but . . . the government said we can't" or "we all know teaching happens in real classrooms". We need to emphasise that our teaching is strong regardless of the format.				
PMCS	While we wish future developments in on-line teaching to evolve organically from the schools rather than by top-down dictat, we do expect digital education to be a major part of our future. We are actually quite proud of the way UCC has responded to the pandemic and the standards of our on-line delivery are some of the best in the country and comparable to best international practice.				
Attendee	Lecturers also need to review what they are teaching and question is the content nice to know or need to know. Then students can be more prepared and fit for practice.				
TOM	We agree - clearly some content is not suitable for online delivery, so this needs to be carefully considered. Think about what works best on campus and what works best online. In flipping the classroom, the emphasis is on providing content that students engage with beforehand and then using a live scheduled session to have some applied discussion afterwards.				
Attendee	Do lecturers retain copyright on posted material, or does it transfer to UCC if a university platform is used to host it?				
Attendee	On recorded, and "posted", lectures: (1) how secure are these -- what degree of security can UCC stand over? and (2) who holds the intellectual property rights?				
TOM	<p>If staff use Panopto and/or MS Teams for recording content, all data is secure and covered under contractual obligations between UCC and those platforms. UCC negotiates contracts with providers to ensure that all student and staff data is managed securely. A list of software can be found at https://www.ucc.ie/en/it/services/software/.</p> <p>Staff members are reminded not to use third-party software for the storage of personal data that has not been approved by the UCC's External Hosting Committee. https://www.ucc.ie/en/it/services/externaldatahosting/</p> <p>In terms of Intellectual Property, technology has no impact on this. Nobody else has access to recorded content unless granted by the creator, except IT Services who require access in order to be able to support staff with technical difficulties.</p> <p>UCC's Intellectual Property Policy may be reviewed at https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/techtransfer/UCCIntellectualPropertyPolicyApprovedbyGB201020.pdf.</p>				
Attendee	What about tools like mural? miro? etc.				
TOM	UCC does not hold institutional licenses for mural or miro. A list of software currently available to staff in UCC can be found at https://www.ucc.ie/en/it/services/software/ .				
Attendee	took me the full year to get a laptop and monitor. still don't have some of the equipment but good the budget is there and people now being told about it				
TOM	<p>UCC set up two activity codes to track expenditure incurred due to the Covid 19 outbreak and the necessity for remote working. These activity codes can be tagged to any cost centre, as required, and should be used where expenditure is incurred as a direct result of the Covid 19 pandemic. They are, as follows:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>AM1057</td> <td>HSE Covid 19 Costs</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AM1058</td> <td>UCC Covid 19 Costs</td> </tr> </table> <p>As part of ongoing consultations around Pillars 1 and 5 of UCC 2022, it is anticipated that future hardware and software requirements will be identified and considered by the UCC 2022 Steering Group.</p>	AM1057	HSE Covid 19 Costs	AM1058	UCC Covid 19 Costs
AM1057	HSE Covid 19 Costs				
AM1058	UCC Covid 19 Costs				
Attendee	Are you referring to staff pre-recording or recordings in the lecture rooms?				
TOM	I'm unclear what this question is referring to, so if the submitter could email tom.omara@ucc.ie to clarify, I will put the answer up here at that time.				

Attendee	Recording does not support the uninhibited participation of students in the classroom. We have to take that into account,
TOM	This is a fair and important observation. The OVPLT has noted that there are many reasons why some students choose not or are unable to engage fully online. See https://www.ucc.ie/en/digital-ed/happenings/should-students-be-required-to-have-their-cameras-on.html for some of these reasons.

Attendee	The record-all policy is precisely an example of one-size fits all way of thinking. It does not take into account disciplinary differences
TOM	<p>There is no 'record-all' policy. The Lecture Recording Policy states:</p> <p>'Where reasonable, as a consequence of Covid-19, all teaching delivered synchronously (including classroom discussion) is to be made available to students online in order to ensure equity of access for all. We recognise that circumstances may arise where staff are unable to provide a recording. It is noted that some teaching may not be appropriate for recording, e.g. teaching containing confidential information or teaching containing personal data.'</p> <p>(https://www.ucc.ie/en/media/support/academicsecretariat/policies/learningandteachingpolicies/LRU_COVID-2020v41.pdf)</p> <p>So while students are clearly requesting recording to continue and it is generally encouraged as good inclusive practice, OVPLT recognises the principle of subsidiarity and the need for those involved in teaching to decide what is best for a given cohort in any given discipline.</p>

Attendee	professional courses where students are assessed on communication/relationship skills camera off policy may need further consideration
TOM	I'm not sure I understand this comment. Perhaps the contributor could email me tom.omara@ucc.ie to clarify what is meant and we can amend this record afterwards?

Attendee	Menti, poll, quizzes and breakout rooms have all been positive methods of engaging students
TOM	Agreed, it takes bit of time to figure out what works for you and your students, but there are some great tools that allow greater engagement. Within our current software collection, you can create surveys and quizzes within Canvas and polls and Breakout rooms within MS Teams.

Attendee	more a comment... but we do need to significantly increase our spending on our online campus - it needs to be multiplied several times over
TOM	Agreed this does seem inevitable. However, it isn't possible for UCC to support an unlimited range of software solutions, so we need to do some work under Action 1.3 of Pillar 1 of UCC 2022 to figure out what functionality is needed, so that a coherent resourcing request can be compiled for UMT to consider. A project to determine teaching and learning requirements and then to cross match that to existing technology has just been initiated through the Centre for Digital Education.

Attendee	This year has been the most stressful in terms of work I have ever experienced. It actually made me sick in the end. How will the university consider staff well-being in terms of exploitative working practices? (Rather than only offering well-being sessions that many do not have time to attend.)
Attendee	Preparations of online teaching (pre-recorded videos, post-production editing etc.) has been very time-consuming and exhausting. Maybe a reward for this additional effort via a balanced workload model? Reduced teaching in the future? More academic staff? Instructional designers for all schools?
Attendee	How is the university going to manage the time needed for training and reading up on digital education in addition to already heavy workloads?

TOM	<p>Action 1.3.3 of the UCC 2022 Delivering a Connected University seeks to address the issue of Instructional Design-type support in colleges and schools. This action is owned by Kathryn Neville, College of Medicine and Health Manager.</p> <p>The Action is: 'Prioritise investment in digital education through expanding our range of infrastructural resources to staff, deploy Instructional Design expertise in Colleges and Schools.'</p> <p>In support of this action, the Centre for Digital Education has initiated a project to gather information on current practice across the university. Once we have a better picture about the current teaching and learning practice, we intend using this evidence to inform recommendations around support later in 2021. However, we are conscious of the financial constraints under which the university is operating and we anticipate many other areas seeking support for change initiatives at the same time, so cannot be sure what will be delivered in the short to medium term. Long term, the Centre for the Integration for Research, Teaching and Learning have started work on developing a post-graduate qualification in digital education with a view to upskilling existing UCC staff to take on new roles in this area.</p>
Attendee	A list of products we do have a site license for would be helpful
TOM	This is available on https://www.ucc.ie/en/it/services/software/ .
Attendee	In science and engineering programmes levels of classroom participation in discussions, etc. can be extremely low. This was a frequent topic of discussion pre-covid. Lively debates might be a big part of Political Science but unfortunately this is rarely the case in STEM - when people mention "classroom interaction" in STEM it is often (though not always) a red herring. Speaking as a former student and a teacher.
TOM	Thank you for this comment. Yes, I think one size won't fit all, as Paul says, so it's a case of better understanding what is required in terms of 'interaction' for each discipline and then seeing if this can be accommodated through technology in any way.
Attendee	external participants report ongoing difficulty with connecting to our meetings./events/cpd via teams, they have to use personal emails etc and miss out on joining meetings/events regularly due to this. gdpr brilliant on teams and for registered students and staff
GC	The University must apply strict controls to how its accounts and systems are used, in particular given the real and growing threats from Cyber Attacks. So only UCC accounts are allowed to use our services, this is the same for MS teams or Zoom or any other services and it's required to protect against unwelcome external participants of cyber actors. External Parties that require access to canvas or teams can be allocated a free licence, by following the process in this link which allocates a sponsored account, https://www.ucc.ie/en/it/services/logonaccounts/
Attendee	Another issue is that with the exams online we cannot easily reuse exams in future years.
TOM/SC	All examination papers (with the exception of some MCQs), whether delivered in person or online, are expected to be archived with the Library who will then make these 'past papers' available to students (See: https://libguides.ucc.ie/examinationpapers/submittinexampapers). It is expected that examination papers reflect the presentation of an evolving understanding of a discipline to students and thus would vary according to this and any alteration in the assessment design.
Attendee	The No Academic Disadvantage Policy is very damaging for staff morale. If I was a student, I would register for resits for all my modules and decide later for which I will show up. Huge uncertainty for staff.
Attendee	Agree with other posts on "no academic advantage". Good in principle, but has offset a lot of work towards module coordinators
PMcS	The "No Academic Disadvantage" policy is an emergency measure for the duration of the pandemic and is kept under review by ALF. I anticipate a return to the status quo post-covid.
Attendee	The basic digital skills of students is appalling. Not emphasised enough pre-third level anymore.
Attendee	We assume a level of digital literacy that may not be there, many students struggled with typing speed. If we are to continue with hybrid learning extra Skills Centre sessions would be helpful to ensure equality of access to learning and assessment
Attendee	I have been asking for many years for first year students to be put through a digital bootcamp. Their S U P E R S L O W typing speed, lack of familiarity with even basic fonts, text size, etc to meet essay requirements makes their work terribly labour intensive for themselves. And things like comments in chat are impossible with slow typing

TOM	<p>This is a very valid point and something I think we all have been aware of for quite some time. I don't think too many people still hold to the notion that a 'digital native' coming from secondary school has the appropriate level of digital skills to engage at third level.</p> <p>Indeed, this has been a focus of the EU DigComp 2.0 project (https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/bc52328b-294e-11e6-b616-01aa75ed71a1/language-en), looking at the skills necessary for equal participation in a digital economy and society. Connected to that, the DigCompEdu (https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fcc33b68-d581-11e7-a5b9-01aa75ed71a1/language-en) framework addresses the digital skills required by staff and students to engage in education.</p> <p>The Skills Centre within the Office of Vice President for Learning and Teaching runs courses that may be useful to students on this area (https://www.ucc.ie/en/skillscentre/) and also maintains the Success Zone course on Canvas (https://ucc.instructure.com/courses/7281) which includes information on the free IT training resources (MS Learning Pathways) and ICDL certification available to students.</p>
Attendee	Canvas Teacher App is really poor for leaving annotated feedback. Constantly crashing.
TOM/SC	This isn't something we have noticed being reported through the Tier 1 Canvas help system. If you have already logged a case through the Canvas system, can you please email the Learning Technologies Unit (ltu@ucc.ie) with details for us to follow up? Delivery of Feedback through alternate means (e.g. recording) may be beneficial as an alternate approach in the short term?
Attendee	Many of us were already using online grading in a substantial way
TOM	Yes, we've had good feedback from people who use it, so just trying to spread the message.
Attendee	I was very resistant to correcting online initially, but ultimately have found it much much better.
TOM	Great to hear, thank you. We've had feedback from quite a few staff members to say it wasn't as bad as they feared.
Attendee	A lot of responsibility has been asked this year of staff, not so much of students. The crisis is there for both and this needs to be acknowledged
PMcS	That is true. The situation over recent months has been very fluid and the efforts put in by staff have been exemplary, have really been noticed and need to be acknowledged. Increasing student engagement in future digital education adventures is firmly on our agenda.
Attendee	How are resits handled for alternative ways of assessment? Eassys, project work...
TOM	The Student Records and Examinations Office ran two excellent live sessions answering this question. A recording of these is available to view on...
Attendee	I think you need to offer both options for students for lectures as many students might have the set up at home to study effectively. It makes it more inclusive of different student needs.
TOM	The Student Records and Examinations Office ran two excellent live sessions answering this question. A recording of these is available to view on...
Attendee	What we've achieved has come at an enormous cost.
TOM	Unquestionably, it has been a very difficult year for staff and students, and everyone has had to make the best of an unprecedented situation.
Attendee	question 10 dosent have enough options or is deliberately vague
TOM	Question 10 asked 'What do you think is the best future option for the teaching very large classes?' and gave three options. We agree, this needs a lot more teasing out over the coming months.
Attendee	Caring is a huge issue
TOM	Absolutely. The student centric nature of assessment, as, of and for learning and supporting students in achieving their academic ambitions cannot be stated strongly enough.
Attendee	Timetabling will change, wont it - online on Mon & Friday, Face to face on tue-wed-thur?
TOM	I'm not sure if this is a rhetorical question or a suggestion. There is no current plan to develop a timetable that would prescribe different days for different activities. But again the principle of subsidiarity means schools and departments will be facilitated to decide what works best for their students ans staff, taking into consideration university policies and whatever public advice is in place at that time.

Attendee	UCC needs to make a decision early on. The last minute change this year was a joke and perfectly avoidable.
PMcS	UCC management are bound by public health advice and with the rapid evolution of Covid-19 and the country's vaccination plans, it is difficult to make hard and fast decisions too early. We saw in the summer of 2020 several other institutes made decisions that they had to change as the virus developed.
Attendee	Administrative staff need more administrative support!
TOM	I'm not sure what is meant by this, so perhaps the author could email tom.omara@ucc.ie with further details.