



Centre for Teaching and Learning - Spring 2025 Newsletter

Welcome to the Spring CTL Newsletter

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Centre for Teaching and Learning team, I'm delighted to share with you our Spring 2025 Newsletter.

In this issue, we look back at Teaching and Learning activities from Semester One and highlight upcoming professional learning opportunities and events for Semester Two.

In particular, we invite colleagues to **Save the date** for the **Maynooth University Teaching and Learning Showcase** on **Wednesday May 14th, 2025**. This annual event is a valuable opportunity for us to collectively recognise and celebrate all those who teach, and support learning and teaching at Maynooth University.

With best wishes for the semester ahead,

Lisa O'Regan, Head of Centre for Teaching and Learning

Professional Learning Events for Staff

CTL are pleased to share details of our Spring 2025 professional learning workshops and events series for staff. This semester we include a range of educational development and digital learning topics including the MU UDL & U Campaign, LEAF Initiative, Education for Sustainable development (ESD), TEL Promoting Engagement Series, and GenAI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Many of the workshops and events are in collaboration with Maynooth University colleagues, and are open to all staff.

Full information and registration links are available [here](#).

Save the Date! Wednesday May 14th: Maynooth University Teaching and Learning Showcase 2025

We invite colleagues to save the date for the **Maynooth University Teaching and Learning Showcase**, which will take place on **Wednesday May 14th**.

The Teaching and Learning Showcase is a valuable opportunity for us to collectively recognise and celebrate all those who teach, and support learning and teaching at Maynooth University. It also offers an opportunity to connect with colleagues and facilitates the sharing of teaching practice, scholarship, and innovation.

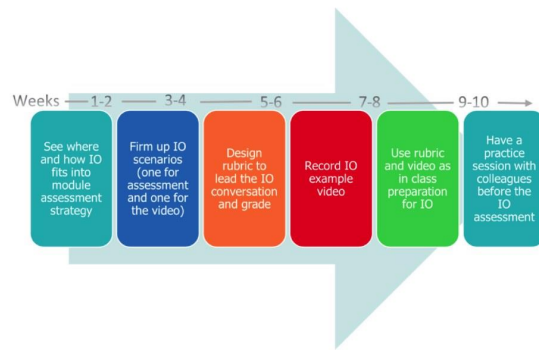
- **When:** 09.00-16.30 Wednesday 14th May, 2025
- **Where:** Maynooth University Campus
- **Who:** All staff involved in teaching and supporting student learning at Maynooth University

[Register here to add a Save the date to your calendar!](#)

Looking Back on Semester One

Over **350** staff participated in CTL professional learning workshops and events in Semester one with the largest attendance being at our 'GenAI Guidelines for Staff and Students', and 'Universal Design for Learning UDL – good practice and implementation' sessions.

In Semester one, we were delighted to collaborate with our colleagues from the Department of Adult and Community Education, **Dr David McCormack** and **Dr Mary Ryan**, who facilitated a workshop on the 'Towards a Relational Pedagogy of Kindness'.



1 - Image from 'Interactive Oral Assessment: User Guide', (O'Riordan et al., 2023) which was shared at the CTL Interactive Oral Assessment event held at the beginning of October 2024.

GenAI Teaching and Learning Updates

GenAI Guidelines and Workshops

Following a research-informed and consultative process, working guidelines for the use of [Generative AI \(GenAI\) in Teaching, Learning and Assessment](#) for staff and students have been drafted and shared with the University community.

In addition, a series of companion resources and workshops are currently being finalised and will be made available shortly to complement the GenAI working guidelines.

Maynooth University GenAI Community of Practice - Lunchtime Meetups!

As part of our GenAI project, we are delighted to initiate a GenAI Community of Practice, which will run on the **second Thursday of every month from 1-2pm!** Beginning February 13th, the GenAI project team will facilitate an informal community of practice meetup where staff can discuss approaches, and share ideas and resources, regarding GenAI in teaching, learning and assessment. The meetups will be in-person in **SE229 in the School of Education** and lunch will be provided. No registration required.

- Thursday February 13th, 2025
- Thursday March 13th, 2025
- Thursday April 10th, 2025
- Thursday May 8th, 2025

The project is funded by the Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund in Higher Education ([SATLE](#)). If you would like to learn more about our work in this area, please check out our [project web page](#).

Open Publication Launch: ‘Using GenAI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Irish Universities’



On Thursday 23rd of January, the **Open Publication ‘Using GenAI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Irish Universities’** was launched at Trinity College Dublin. The publication was co-edited by representatives from each University, including Lisa O’Regan, Head of the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Maynooth University.

This publication aims to promote AI literacy, inspire new teaching, learning and assessment approaches, and spark innovation across disciplines. It includes **over 30 use cases** from across seven Irish Universities, which provide a valuable insight into how educators are responding to the challenges and taking advantage of the affordances of GenAI across a wide range of disciplines.

Four Maynooth University educators, including two recipients of [GenAI T&L Fellowships](#), contributed to this open publication:

- Dr Shane McLoughlin, School of Business, ‘[Navigating Paths of Resistance: Tight-roping GenAI’s role in Continuous Assessment Design](#)’
- Dr Simon Hewitt, Media Studies, ‘[Improving Visual Engagement Through Generative AI in Media Studies](#)’
- Dr Adrian Kirwan, Critical Skills, ‘[GenAI Dispositions and Literacies: Podcasting as praxis Writing in Media](#)’
- Prof Rebecca Chiyoko King-O’Riain, Sociology, ‘[Is GenAI Reproducing or Helping to Solve Social Inequality?](#)’

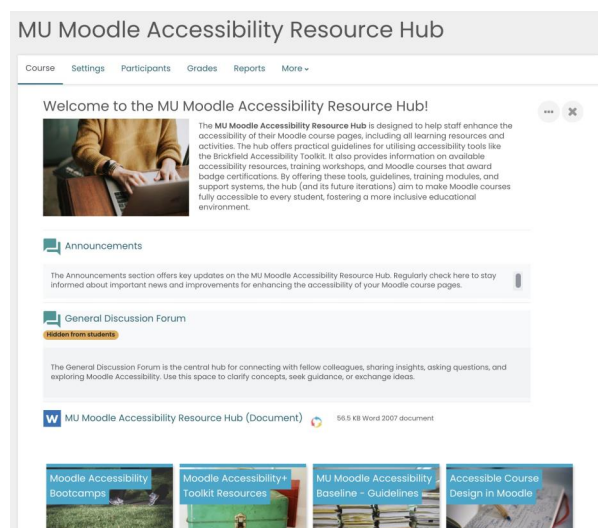
The full publication is available at: <https://ucclibrary.pressbooks.pub/genai/>

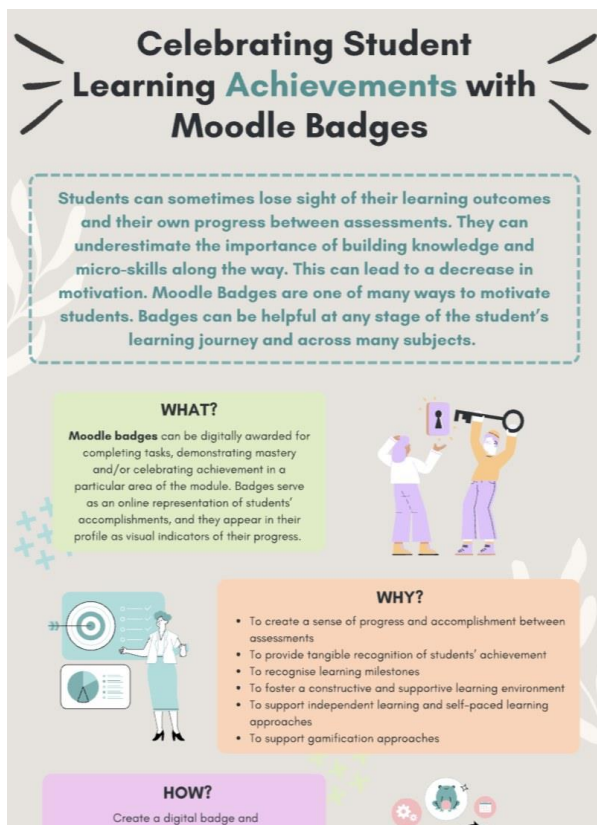
The Brickfield Accessibility Toolkit in Moodle

The **Brickfield Accessibility Toolkit** is an accessibility checker that can help staff in identifying and fixing accessibility issues to enhance Moodle course pages and content accessibility. The toolkit also enables students to convert files into alternative and accessible formats.

To learn more about the toolkit, you can access guides in the [MU Moodle Accessibility Resource Hub](#), and/or you can attend one of the **30-minute** introductory Brickfield Accessibility Toolkit workshops which take place **every Monday in February and March 2025 at 4pm**. [Registration information here](#)

Digital Accessibility workshops are also available **every Wednesday in February and March 2025 at 4pm**. These workshops, which are facilitated by Brickfield Education Labs, cover four core accessibility topics on a rotational basis including: Accessibility Foundations, Web Accessibility, Media Accessibility, and Document Accessibility. Registration details will be posted by CTL as soon as they are confirmed.





In Semester One, we launched our **'Promoting Engagement' TEL Infographics Series**. This suite of Open Creative Commons licenced infographics focuses on Moodle tools you can use to boost engagement on your Moodle pages. The **interactive** infographics include quick guides, short videos and tips, and cover topics such as creating a module handbook, using weekly narratives, activity tracking, exploring conditional access and checklists, and celebrating success with Moodle badges.

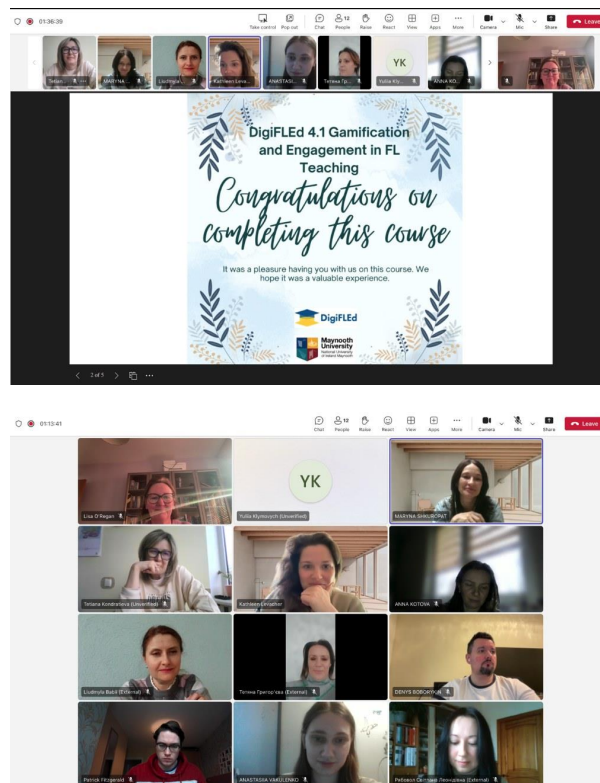
Staff who have used these materials particularly enjoyed the simplified approach the interactive infographic guides offered. They commented positively on their **'manageable and easily communicated size'**, on gaining **'insights into good practice'** and on getting the **essence** of the information **'in short bursts'**.

This semester, we will be facilitating the **TEL Engagement Series** again and including 30 minute webinars to guide you through each infographic topic. You can register through our professional learning [Workshop Schedule](#).

You can also access all infographics on our [Moodle Staff Help page](#). We welcome [your feedback](#) on the resources.

In November 2025, the CTL TEL team launched two online courses for [DigiFLEd](#) project participants. DigiFLEd, is a **collaborative EU funded project** with Higher Education partners from the Ukraine, Greece, Finland and Ireland. The project considers the ‘Modernisation of university education programmes in foreign languages (FL) by integrating information technologies’ and is supporting digital transformation through a range of development opportunities for Ukrainian academic staff.

The courses were designed and facilitated by Kathleen Levacher, Graham Keane and Lisa O’Regan, and entitled ‘**Moodle Course Design Essentials**’ and ‘**Gamification Essentials in Moodle**’.



The courses reunited a total of 43 highly enthusiastic participants who commented extremely positively about their experience with us at Maynooth:

“It is quite simply the best course I’ve enjoyed in the past couple of years”

“This experience has transformed the way I approach course design, making it more student-centred and user-friendly.”

“The course has been incredibly beneficial. The practical applications have provided me with the knowledge and tools to improve my course design and ensure a better experience for my students.”

“Along the way, I unearthed a treasure - a treasure of knowledge that has transformed my approach to teaching foreign languages, making my classroom more engaging and interactive.”

HEA Teaching & Learning Conference 2024

The [HEA Teaching and Learning Conference, on Thursday December 12, 2024 - ‘Driving Changes in Teaching and Learning through Policy](#), featured strong representation from Maynooth University colleagues, who showcased just some of the innovative research and teaching development initiatives underway on campus.

Professor Denise Rooney, Department of Chemistry delivered a Spotlight Presentation on the [Virtual Laboratory Teaching & Learning: A Blended Approach](#) initiative.

Dr Aisling Fynn and Eddie Corr from Student Skills and Success showcased their poster case study [‘My Maynooth on Moodle’ – Maynooth University Online Orientation Programme’](#).

The [Maynooth University GenAI Guidelines Project team](#) involving colleagues from CTL, Student Skills and Success, and Critical Skills showcased their case study on [the GenAI Guidelines and Resources for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment initiative](#).

Lisa O’Regan and Dr Alison Farrell (CTL), and MU UDL Fellows Dr Margaret Flood (Education), Dr Marian Crowley Henry (Business), Prof Denise Rooney (Chemistry), and Prof Moynagh O’ Sullivan (English) showcased their case study on the [MU: UDL & U. Building a Culture of Inclusion on Campus initiative](#).

Conference presentations and case studies are available at:

<https://hub.teachingandlearning.ie/conference/>



2 - Professor Denise Rooney



GenAI Guidelines and Resources for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Name of institution/Organisation Maynooth University	Aims/Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop University guidelines to support Maynooth University staff and students' use of Generative AI (GenAI) in Teaching, Learning and Assessment, in the context of practice and policy at Maynooth University. To develop and facilitate related professional learning opportunities, to raise awareness of the MU GenAI Guidelines and provide expert views on GenAI and Assessment and Academic Integrity. To develop resources for staff and students to accompany the University Guidelines. To collate and disseminate good practice case studies of GenAI use across Maynooth University and in other HEIs.
Who led the initiative? Centre for Teaching and Learning, and Student Skills and Success	Rationale and Identified Needs <p>As the use of GenAI tools increased rapidly since the end of 2022, we sought to address the urgent need to provide staff and students with further University guidance for the use of GenAI in Teaching, Learning and Assessment.</p> <p>Developing GenAI guidelines for students and staff was deemed a necessity, serving as both a foundational step and a framework for fostering an environment where GenAI tools are used responsibly and ethically in Teaching, Learning and Assessment.</p> <p>The key aims of this initiative included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced staff awareness and understanding of best practices for the responsible and ethical use of GenAI in teaching, learning, and assessment. Improved student awareness and comprehension of the MU GenAI guidelines related to learning, teaching, and assessment. Reduced student anxiety and concerns regarding the use of GenAI in learning and assessment. Heightened awareness of both the benefits and risks associated with GenAI across the University community.
Date and timeframe of the initiative May-December 2024	Frameworks, Policies, or Strategies Aligned (Internal, local or national) <p>This small scale initiative is funded by the Strategic Alignment of Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund in Higher Education (SATLE), under the HEA and the National Forum.</p> <p>The Guidelines produced were closely aligned to Maynooth University's Policy on Academic Misconduct and Academic Integrity, Data Protection Policy, and Student Data Privacy Notice. They are also aligned to the NAIN/QQ GenAI Guidelines for Educators and the UNESCO Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research.</p>
What was the reach of the initiative? All Maynooth University staff and students.	

Categories	Elements	Topics	Target Groups
	Curriculum and Assessment	Digital Transformation	Students Staff
Consult	Innovation in Teaching	Academic Integrity	
Create	Professional Development	Inclusive and Equitable Teaching Practices Innovations in Assessment and Feedback Student Engagement and Partnership Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approaches Artificial Intelligence	

3 - Access "My Maynooth on Moodle' - Maynooth University Online Orientation Programme" poster




MU: UDL & U. Building a Culture of Inclusion on Campus

Name of institution/Organisation Maynooth University	Aims/Objectives <p>The aim of the MU UDL & U initiative was to contribute to inclusive education on campus by drawing on the principles and practice of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).</p> <p>The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) in collaboration with the Maynooth Access Programme, awarded four UDL-focused TAL Fellowships to Maynooth University colleagues under the HEA PWT4, Phase 1 - Universal Design for Education Fund, for a two-year period. The UDL Faculty TAL Fellows worked together with CTL staff to co-design and implement the MU: UDL & U initiative within which we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collated and developed UDL educational resources and guidelines to assist staff in learning about and applying UDL principles in their practice designed and implemented a short UDL awareness campaign to prompt and support MU staff to make small incremental changes to increase the inclusiveness of their teaching, learning and assessment practices collated faculty specific exemplars of good UDL practice to inspire and share good practice across the University contributed to cross-campus conversation, including those with senior leaders, about how to nurture a culture of inclusive education co-sponsored the UDL International Symposium: Learning Together, 8-9 June 2023. <p>Shared our work in institutional, national and international settings.</p>
Who led the initiative? Centre for Teaching and Learning Faculty UDL Teaching and Learning Fellows	Rationale and Identified Needs <p>This initiative responds to the growing diversity of the Maynooth University student population and reflects our commitments under the 'Students and Learning' heading of the Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023-28 to 'educate our students in an inclusive environment in which everyone can thrive personally and intellectually, in which they have a space to understand themselves as people, as engaged citizens and as independent thinkers' (2023, p. 34).</p>
Date and timeframe of the initiative Academic years 2023 - 2025 (Phases 1 and 2 of initiative)	Frameworks, Policies, or Strategies Aligned (Internal, local or national) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher Education Authority (2022) Inclusive Access Plan: A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2025. Accessible at: https://hea.ie/policy/access-policy/inclusive-access-plan-2022-2025/ Maynooth University (2023) Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023-2028. Accessible at: https://strategy.maynoothuniversity.ie/ Maynooth University (2023) Maynooth University Student Success Strategy. Accessible at: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sites/default/files/assets/document/MU_SSP%20-%20Student%20Success%20Strategy.pdf Maynooth University (n.d.) Maynooth University Student Charter. Accessible at: https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/edu/students-charter National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2011) Next Steps for Teaching and Learning: Moving Forward Together. Accessible at: https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/wp-content/uploads/Next_Steps.pdf
What was the reach of the initiative? 12 Plus One Guides 6 Universal Design for Learning Open Education Resources 6 Staff Practice Exemplars 4 MU: UDL & U. UDL TAL Fellow videos 9 MU: UDL & U. staff and student videos 1 MU: UDL & U campaign, over 4 weeks. No. of participants 47 1 Social Justice Week event, 7 March 2024. No. of participants 29 1 MU: UDL & U. Open Mic session, 1 May 2024. No. of participants 21 3 international conference presentations 1 Staff information session on 'Creating a Culture of Inclusion in the Classroom' Research Foundation for Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Models of Good Practice, 15 November 2024. No. of participants 51 1 co-sponsorship of the 'UDL International Symposium: Learning Together' 8-9 June 2023 1 commissioned research report to explore the evidence on the effectiveness of UDL as an approach to creating more inclusive higher education practice. 1 short review of models of good practice in embedding inclusive higher education in teaching and learning practice.	

Categories	Elements	Topics	Target Groups
Coordinate			Staff
Consult	Innovation in Teaching		Wider community
Create	Professional Development	Inclusive and Equitable Teaching Practices	
Celebrate & Continue	Research and Evaluation	Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approaches	

4 - Access "MU: UDL & U. Building a Culture of Inclusion on Campus" poster



HEA Teaching and Learning Conference December 2024
Driving Changes in Teaching and Learning through Policy and Innovation

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'My Maynooth on Moodle' - Maynooth University Online Orientation Programme

Name of Institution/Organization	Aims/Objectives
Maynooth University	The 'My Maynooth on Moodle' programme aims to present important orientation information to students in an engaging manner across the entire first-year experience. It achieves this through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing crucial information to students in advance of on-campus orientation • Delivering asynchronous, self-paced and modular content on Moodle, MU's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) • Providing holistic content to students preparing them to develop themselves personally, professionally, and academically • Partnering with students to develop relatable and engaging content across a variety of mediums • Releasing new content on a monthly basis to meet students where they are with relevant information
Who led the initiative?	Rationale and Identified Needs
Student Skills & Success	
Date and timeframe of the initiative	When Maynooth University transitioned back to an on-campus orientation programme following the pandemic, we appreciated the role an online orientation could play in supporting the more traditional on-campus orientation activities. The identified needs for such a programme are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide students with relevant information in advance of their on-campus welcome, easing anxiety and building belonging. • To allow students to become familiar with the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) in advance of commencement of teaching & learning. • To assist students in developing their learning style while also signposting learning and support services. • To ease the 'information overload' that students face at orientation by splitting content across a year-long programme. • To provide a source of empathy, validation, and reassurance through sharing student peer experiences.
What was the reach of the initiative?	
3,500+ first year undergraduate students each academic year.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maynooth University Student Success Strategy (Maynooth University) • Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023-2028 (Maynooth University) • A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2028 (HEA) • Next Steps for Teaching and Learning: Moving Forward Together (National Forum) • Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework (National Forum) • Guide to Developing Enabling Policies for Digital and Open Teaching and Learning (National Forum) • Steps to Partnership: National Student Engagement Programme • National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (Department of Education)

Categories	Elements	Topics	Target Groups
Control	Leadership, Strategy & Governance	Digital Transformation	Students
Coordinate			Staff
Control	Innovation in Teaching		
Create			
Celebrate & Continue		Student Engagement and Partnership	
		Collaborative and interdisciplinary Approaches	

5 - Access "My Maynooth on Moodle' – Maynooth University Online Orientation Programme' initiative" poster

CTL Postgraduate Programmes – Conferring and Celebration

The Centre for Teaching and Learning congratulates our latest cohort of participants to graduate from the **Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education Teaching, Learning and Assessment (PDHETL)**, the **Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Teaching, Learning and Assessment (PCHETL)** and the **Professional Certificate in Teaching and Learning**.

The programme graduates are

- Professor Ian Speller, Centre for Military History and Strategic Studies, Department of History (Diploma)
- Dr Ting Bi, Maynooth International Engineering College / Hamilton Institute (Diploma)
- Dr Amir Azadnia, School of Business (Certificate)
- Ms Orla Granville, School of Business (Certificate)
- Dr Lucia Vazquez-Mendoza, Faculty of Social Sciences (Certificate)
- Dr Siyuan Zhan, Centre for Ocean Energy Research (Certificate)

- Mr Thomas Lysaght, Computer Science (Certificate)

CTL also extends our warmest congratulations to the **forty-one** postgraduate researchers who completed the **Professional Certificate in Teaching and Learning** in Semesters 1 and 2, 2023-24.

CTL held an event to celebrate our awardees where Head of Department Lisa O'Regan and Programme Lead Dr Orla Hanratty welcomed and congratulated the participants.

Full details of our programmes are available on the [CTL website within the Accredited Programmes section](#). Any queries, please contact us at ctlprogrammes@mu.ie.



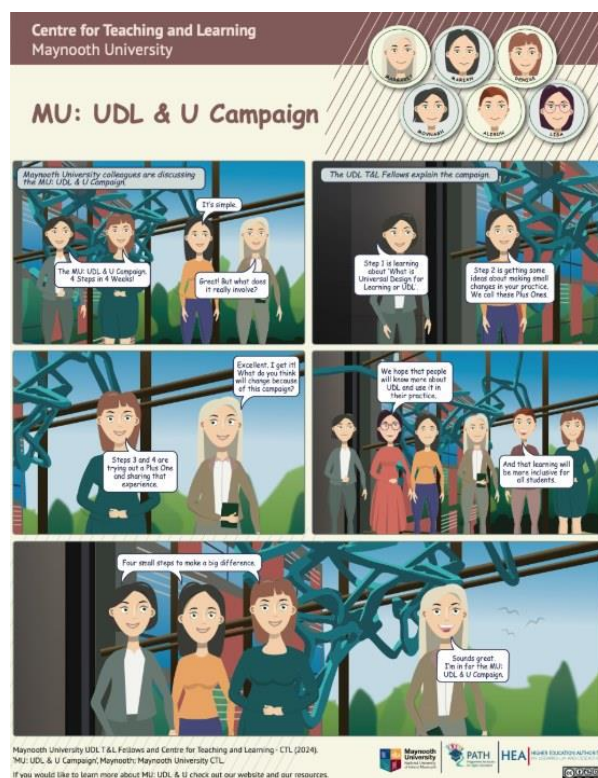
Inclusive Education

MU: UDL & U Campaign 2025

Following the success of last year's 'MU: UDL & U Campaign' CTL is delighted to partner with the [Faculty UDL T&L Fellows](#) to present this year's campaign which will run for five weeks over **February and March 2025**. This 2025 campaign builds from last year's focus on Plus Ones and making small, incremental changes towards more inclusive practice, and concentrates on the three UDL principles of **Engagement, Representation, and Action and Expression**. The campaign comprises five half-hour online sessions which you can attend as stand-alone events or as part of the series. You can register for the campaign sessions through the [CTL Semester 2 Event programme](#).

What the research tells us about UDL and models of good practice

As part of the PATH4 ‘**MU: UDL & U. Building a Culture of Inclusion in Maynooth University**’ initiative, towards the end of Semester 1 Dr Ciara O’Farrell shared with Maynooth University colleagues the outcomes of her CTL supported research. Dr O’Farrell’s findings addressed what the research says about UDL under the following headings: (1) the evidence base for UDL, “**What evidence is there to suggest the effectiveness of UDL as an approach to creating more inclusive higher education practice?**”, and (2) institutional models of good practice regarding the implementation of UDL. This research complemented other aspects of the ‘**MU: UDL & U**’ initiative which included an awareness raising campaign and the development of suite of resources. Colleagues interested in learning more about making their practice more inclusive may find the Plus One and other Open Education Resources (OER) in the [Inclusive Education: UDL & U Resource Hub](#) useful.



Arqus Alliance

As the Maynooth University representatives for **Arqus Working Group 5**, Lisa O’Regan, Head of Centre for Teaching and Learning and Dr Alison Farrell met with Alliance colleagues in November as part of an event hosted by Maynooth University.

The key objectives for Working Group 5 are as follows:

- To promote a culture of **innovative student-centred learning, teaching and assessment**
- To promote **excellence** in teaching

- To bridge **research and education** to prepare young Europeans for existing and emerging grand societal challenges



CTL will continue to contribute to ARQUS Alliance work in a visit from **University of Minho** colleagues this February 2025 which is being organised in collaboration with colleagues from the **Faculty of Science and Engineering**, and that **Faculty's Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning Dr John Keating**.

The Arqus European University Alliance brings together the universities of **Granada, Graz, Leipzig, Lyon 1, Maynooth, Minho, Padua, Vilnius and Wroclaw**. Further details can be found [here](#).