



University College Dublin  
Ireland's Global University

# HEALTHY UCD STRATEGY 2022-2026



Healthy  
UCD



# FOREWORD FROM CHAIR, HEALTHY UCD STEERING COMMITTEE

Significant advances were made in the lifetime of UCD's inaugural Health Promotion Strategy 2016-2021. Through the development of Healthy UCD from its inception in 2016 as a result of the initial strategy, UCD has brought all health and health-related activities for staff, students and the UCD community under one umbrella organisation. The Healthy UCD Steering Committee membership is derived from across the full breadth of the University and our collective desire to improve health on the campus has achieved significant goals. The Strategy for 2022-2026 will continue to build on our collective achievements. To succeed, this Strategy needs the continued support from University Management, the continued dedication of the Healthy UCD team (in particular the Director of Health Promotion, the Healthy UCD Research Assistant, and the Culture and Engagement team), the support from the UCD Steering Committee and the continued collective working across the University.

I would like to thank all the members of the Healthy UCD committee for their work in developing this strategy. I would particularly like to thank Dr Olga Murdoch, Deputy Director of UCD Agile, who worked with the Committee Subgroup to facilitate the strategy development process.



**Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**



# INTRODUCTION

Healthy UCD, a health-promoting campus initiative, was established following the publication of a health promotion strategy for UCD in 2016. A cross University Steering Committee for Healthy UCD was established, with a research committee supporting its work. UCD funding supports Healthy UCD and facilitates a Research Assistant/Health Promotion Officer to support the Director of Health Promotion and the Steering Committee Chair. The membership of the Steering Committee includes representatives from student societies, the Students' Union, Culture and Engagement, UCD Estates, UCD Student Health, UCD Student Counselling, UCD Registry, UCD Residences, the University Management Team and faculty from a number of Schools.

The past five years have seen the successful implementation of the initial strategy. Highlights include:

- > Ground-breaking research that resulted in the permanent removal of high sugar sweetened beverages from the campus.
- > Successful delivery of an annual Healthy Eating Week run by students and supported by Healthy UCD.
- > Active promotion of numerous physical health activities to staff and students.
- > Provision of smoking cessation support for staff and students.
- > Development of a social media profile promoting the healthy campus on several platforms.
- > Provision of experiential learning with graded assessment for students.
- > Provision of placements for health promotion students from outside UCD.
- > International engagement with universities throughout the UK.
- > Contribution to development of a healthy campus initiative introduced by the Irish Department of Health.

The inclusion of Healthy UCD in the UCD Strategy "Rising to the Future" under the "Building a healthier world" theme emphasises the importance of the healthy campus in the UCD of the future<sup>1</sup>. Along with UCD's "Rising to the Future" strategy, the development of this strategy is underpinned by key documents including The Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges<sup>2</sup>, and the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan, 2021-2025<sup>3</sup>.



**Brian Mullins**  
UCD Director of Health Promotion





# VISION

## Healthy UCD Vision

Our vision is to establish UCD as a model for a healthy campus, advancing the health and wellbeing of all members of the UCD community through a coordinated approach.

## Our vision explained:

We aim to embed health and wellbeing as an integral part of the University's culture and everyday life. With this strategy we aim to ensure the best use of the many facilities, expertise and services in place to meet the health and wellbeing needs of students, faculty and staff, and build awareness of available supports. Ultimately, we aim to ensure that the University is a healthy place to study, work and visit and that the University strives for a culture of compassion - creating an environment that accommodates and promotes wellbeing nested in social relations and community. The World Health Organisation defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"<sup>4</sup>.

A vibrant research programme is in place to evaluate the development, impact and outcomes of health promotion activities across the University community.

In the next five years, we will continue the international dissemination of our experience in order to consolidate UCD as a global health promotion exemplar.



# GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

## **Goal 1: Health and wellbeing is embedded in the University for all members of the UCD Community**

Embedding health and wellbeing in the UCD experience ensures that our vision is sustained - this is a crucial aspect of this strategy. Over the next number of years, a programme of integrating health and wellbeing into academic programmes, as well as staff professional development, will be a Healthy UCD priority.

### **Objectives:**

- > Staff and student health and wellbeing needs are being met in a continuous and integrated fashion.
- > Demonstrate that health and wellbeing is a priority at all levels in the University.
- > Healthy UCD will strive to ensure that University policies, services and processes are resilient and adaptable to prioritising the promotion and protection of the health and wellbeing of our community and enabling support when needed for students and staff.

### **Actions**

1. Develop a health and wellbeing framework with Schools and units to provide them with tools and support to empower them to build health and wellbeing into their plans and operations.
2. Explore the potential for extension of the existing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) impact assessment for policies to include health and wellbeing.
3. Review and identify areas relevant to Healthy UCD within the Healthy Ireland Healthy Workplace Framework<sup>5</sup>.





# GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS (CONTINUED)

## **Goal 2: Increase the reach and inclusivity of Healthy UCD messaging and supports across the University Community**

UCD is home to a large number of students and staff from a wide range of backgrounds, therefore we need to ensure that Healthy UCD is accessible to all. While we have developed strong partnerships with the Students' Union and UCD Culture & Engagement including very active involvement on the Healthy UCD Steering Committee, among others, there remains scope to improve the reach of Healthy UCD, and engage directly with minority groups to ensure their needs are being addressed. UCD is a global university with a diverse student and staff population who may have varying needs, but advocating for mental wellbeing will be a key priority.

### **Objectives:**

- > Improve the accessibility of health and wellbeing information and supports to diverse groups within the community of UCD.
- > Increase knowledge and awareness within the UCD community of the importance of health and wellbeing and the supports available to them including in the areas of mental health and smoking cessation, and opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating.
- > Improve our communication strategies to ensure that we engage with all parts of the UCD community.

### **Actions**

1. Identify key student and staff stakeholder groups, where and how they currently interact, and use this information to formulate a targeted communications plan.
2. Embed Healthy UCD information with student/staff touchpoints regularly throughout their UCD experience.
3. Plan and deliver Healthy UCD initiatives, supports and messaging in conjunction and collaboration with school/unit and Students' Union plans.
4. Continue to engage with, and broaden the range of, existing Healthy UCD mechanisms to communicate and measure this communication reach.
5. Engage with minority groups through practical workshops to identify and address health and wellbeing needs and opportunities through Healthy UCD initiatives, messaging and supports.
6. Seek representation from UCD Student Communications on the Healthy UCD Steering Committee.



# GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS (CONTINUED)

## **Goal 3: Develop and improve our capacity to measure, research and report on indicators of student and staff health and wellbeing**

Evidence from high quality research is essential to identify the health and wellbeing needs of the UCD community and to work with them to develop and implement effective initiatives to best serve their needs. The Steering Committee for Healthy UCD has a subgroup Research Committee, with additional members co-opted to provide the necessary skills across the range of research activity.

### **Objectives:**

- > Identify, through data and other resources, areas where staff and students may need more support to improve and protect their health and wellbeing.
- > Use evidence to tailor Healthy UCD initiatives to the changing needs of our staff, students and the local community.
- > Implement a systematic approach to tracking indicators of health and wellbeing over time.



### **Actions**

1. Engage with other Universities to exchange research initiatives and methodologies and highlight opportunities for research collaboration.
2. Identify and prioritise indicators that are necessary to evaluate effective implementation of the strategy.
3. Build evaluation into all Healthy UCD initiatives at planning stage.
4. Where possible, use existing UCD sources of data and integrate with existing UCD data collection efforts to increase efficiencies.
5. Build in a 'closed loop' approach to data collection wherever possible - providing feedback to all who contribute.
6. Continue to take an evidence-based approach to the planning of Healthy UCD initiatives, messaging and supports.



# GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS (CONTINUED)

## **Goal 4: Build on existing and develop new relationships and increase the impact of Healthy UCD**

Continuing to forge stronger collaborations with national and international wellbeing-focused colleagues – including Irish 3rd level partners – is an important part of our strategy. It is vital we listen to and learn from others, and share our learnings to improve quality of life and wellbeing on all university campuses.

### Objectives:

- > Contribute to international best practice in university campus health promotion.
- > Determine feasibility of benchmarking internationally through review of published data and engagement with international universities.
- > Develop a collaborative approach with other Universities in developing and sharing best practice.
- > Support UCD's efforts in relation to the health of individuals, populations and the environment, as described in theme 3 of UCD's Rising to the Future Strategy, 2020-2024<sup>1</sup>.

### Actions

1. Identify suitable national and international conferences/publications to disseminate research on Healthy UCD activities based on our planned activities.
2. Host a Healthy UCD event that brings together people from other Irish third-level institutions to share experiences and learn from one another.
3. Work with the new Healthy Ireland Third Level Network to identify ways to benchmark UCD's performance in this area.
4. Continue to contribute to the U21 Sport Community of Practice.
5. Continue to work with the UK Healthy Universities Network.





# TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION



## Actions to be completed in the short-term (1-2 years)

- 1.3 Review and identify areas relevant to Healthy UCD within the Healthy Ireland Healthy Workplace Framework.
- 2.2 Embed Healthy UCD information with student/staff touchpoints regularly throughout their UCD experience.
- 2.5 Engage with minority groups through practical workshops to identify and address health and wellbeing needs and opportunities through Healthy UCD initiatives, messaging and supports.
- 2.6 Seek representation from UCD Student Communications on the Healthy UCD Steering Committee.
- 3.1 Engage with other Universities to exchange research initiatives and methodologies and highlight opportunities for research collaboration.
- 3.2 Identify and prioritise indicators that are necessary to evaluate effective implementation of the strategy.
- 4.1 Identify suitable national and international conferences/publications to disseminate research on Healthy UCD activities based on our planned activities.
- 4.2 Host a Healthy UCD event that brings together people from other Irish third-level institutions to share experiences and learn from one another.



## Actions to be completed in the longer term (3-5 years)

- 1.1 Develop a health and wellbeing framework with schools and units to provide them with the tools and support they need to build health and wellbeing into their plans and operations.
- 1.2 Explore the potential for extension of the existing EDI impact assessment for policies to include health and wellbeing.
- 2.1 Identify key student and staff stakeholder groups, where and how they currently interact, and use this information to formulate a targeted communications plan.
- 2.3 Plan and deliver Healthy UCD initiatives, supports and messaging in conjunction and collaboration with school/unit and Students' Union plans.
- 3.3 Build evaluation into all Healthy UCD initiatives at planning stage.
- 3.4 Where possible, use existing UCD sources of data and integrate with existing UCD data collection efforts to increase efficiencies.
- 3.5 Build in a 'closed loop' approach to data collection wherever possible - providing feedback to all who contribute.
- 4.3 Work with the new Healthy Ireland Third Level Network to identify ways to benchmark UCD's performance in this area.



## TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION (CONTINUED)



### Ongoing actions to be continued

- 2.4 Continue to engage with, and broaden the range of, existing Healthy UCD mechanisms to communicate and measure this communication reach.
- 3.6 Continue to take an evidence-based approach to the planning of Healthy UCD initiatives, messaging and supports.
- 4.4 Continue to contribute to the U21 Sport Community of Practice.
- 4.5 Continue to work with the UK Healthy Universities Network.

## REFERENCES

1. UCD Strategy 2020-2024. University College Dublin. [Accessed May 07, 2021]. Available at: [https://strategy.ucd.ie/#editor\\_2](https://strategy.ucd.ie/#editor_2)
2. Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges. Canadian Health Promoting Campuses. [Accessed 20 December, 2021]. Available at: <https://healthpromotingcampuses.squarespace.com/okanagan-charter>
3. Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025. Department of Health. [Accessed 20 December, 2021]. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/441c8-healthy-ireland-strategic-action-plan-2021-2025/#>
4. WHO. Constitution of the World Health Organisation. [Accessed 9 February, 2022]. Available at: <https://www.who.int/about/governance/constitution>
5. Healthy Ireland at Work: A National Framework for Healthy Workplaces in Ireland 2021–2025. Department of Health. [Accessed 20 December, 2021]. Available at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/445a4a-healthy-workplace-framework/>







# Healthy UCD Spring Nutrition Webinars



“ I really appreciate organization of such an initiative! It keeps reminding me to wake up and go for a run, to make a small walk between classes and work and explore places around just by walks: ”



Culture & Engagement

Register now at [ucd.ie/engage](http://ucd.ie/engage)

Programme includes:

Breda McCague

Dr Keith Gaynor

NATIONAL WORKPLACE WELLBEING DAY  
WORKING TOGETHER FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE

UCD 100 WALK | JOG | RUN

1000+

Participants in UCD100



Culture & Engagement  
Healthy UCD

7 o'clock YOGA

Live from UCD



SAFE OUTDOOR SOCIALISING

WITH Healthy UCD

Try to avoid peak times for visiting attractions and choose times that are likely to be less crowded

Consider carrying hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes and spare masks with you

Maintain at least 2m social distance even when outdoors and wear a mask in busy places where this is not possible

Check government websites ([www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) in Ireland) for the most up-to-date advice and guidelines

# Healthy UCD

BAKE OFF FINALISTS

Raw Raspberry Cashew Tart

Rustic Plum and Almond Galettes

Ingredients include oats, almonds, pecans, cashews, raspberries, lemon and maple syrup.

Ingredients include wholemeal spelt flour, almonds and plums.

KENWOOD

Wellbeing Your Way

@healthyucd @kokombucha #wellbeingyourway



BAKE OFF FINALISTS

Spinach Garden Cake

Ingredients include wholewheat flour, spinach, lemon, eggs, butter and milk.

KENWOOD

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

TORTILLA PIZZA

true or false

extreme browning of toast, fried foods and potatoes is harmful.

true

The browning that happens on the surface of toast is called the Maillard reaction. It's a chemical reaction between amino acids and simple sugars that gives browned food its distinctive flavor. It's not harmful.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

VEGAN BAKED FETA PASTA

true or false

if exercise is not uncomfortable, it is probably not working.

false

'NO PAIN, NO GAIN'

It's a common belief that you have to be uncomfortable to get a good workout. However, this is not always true. You can get a good workout without feeling uncomfortable. The key is to challenge yourself, but not to the point of pain. If you're in pain, you're likely over-exercising and you're more likely to get injured.



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