Centre for Transformative Learning

Summer2024

Transforming Teaching

Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) in Learning Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education

We are currently accepting applications for our new PGCert in Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education starting in AY2024-25. It is a 30 ECTS one-year, part-time programme. It aims to enhance the professional practice of those who teach in higher education by providing high-level, scholarly, and practice-based professional development to develop expertise in learning, teaching and assessment.

For more details see: <u>PGCert in Learning, Teaching & Assessment in Higher Education | University of Limerick</u> (ul.ie)



Graduates of our Grad Dip in Teaching, Learning and Scholarship: Ann-Marie Creaven, Ruth Lynch, Caoimhe Tiernan and Emma Dolan pictured with Dr Michael Wride and Dr Ide O'Sullivan

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Conference: Naming, Sharing and Transforming Practice

Our inaugural UL Learning, Teaching and Assessment conference took place on 17th January 2024. The keynote speaker was Prof Tom Collins who spoke on 'Disruption or Dystopia - Remote Learning and the Higher Education Aesthetic'. The conference was very well attended by the UL Community who gained a great deal from the 40 Practice Papers, Workshops, Research Papers and Lightning Talks as well as the panel discussion. including several students whose contributions were very valuable. It was a wonderful opportunity to share best practice across UL. Thank you to all the speakers, session chairs, panellists and attendees.



UL Teaching Excellence Awards 2023/24 - Winners

- Teaching Excellence Award (Individual): Christina Morin (AHSS)
- Teaching Excellence Award (Team):
 Michael Walsh, Tara Dalton and John Mulvihill (SEN)
- Excellence in Pedagogic Support:

Angelica Risquez (CTL), John Walsh (KBS), Michael O'Brien (KBS), Donal Palcic (KBS) and Teresa Curtin (SEN)

The award panel comprised of Dr Jenny Lawrence, Director, Oxford Centre for Academic Enhancement and Development, Oxford Brooks University; Dr Matthew J. Williamson, Head of Learning and Teaching at Istituto Marangoni London; Prof Ronni Greenwood, Associate Vice President Student Engagement, UL; Lea Bachus, Bielefeld University (student rep) with Dr Mary Fitzpatrick, Head CTL chairing the meeting. The panel were extremely impressed by the incredibly high standard so heartiest congratulations and very well done to all! We look forward to the presentation of these awards at the Autumn Conferring.



Individual Award Winner Dr Christina Morin



Winners of the Team Award Prof Michael Walsh, Dr Tara Dalton and Dr John Mulvihill

UL Excellence in Teaching Awards—Pedagogic Support Winners

The project <u>STELA Live: Learning Analytics for Student Success</u>, was chosen as winner for the Pedagogic Support Awards 2024 by an international panel. The project was led by Dr Angélica Rísquez, Learning Technologies and Learning Analytics Lead at the Centre for Transformative Learning and the module leaders who participated in the project (Dr Michael O'Brien, Dr Donal Palcic, Dr Teresa Curtin) and Dr John Walsh – KBS. This large cross-institutional project focused on the use of Learning Analytics for student success and has been a first in UL in different ways.

	Dr. Angélica Rísquez	Learning Technologies and Learning Analytics Lead	CTL
	Dr. Michael P. O'Brien	Module lead	KBS
Ø	Dr. Teresa Curtin	Module lead	S&E
T	Dr. John Walsh	ADAA	KBS
Ral	Dr. Donal Palcic	Module lead	KBS





Peer Observation Network

The peer observation network at UL continues to go from strength to strength with over twenty staff engaging in providing feedback to each other on their teaching, whether fully online, blended or in-person. Participants continue to view this as an extremely positive and supportive process where teaching staff can take part in reciprocal peer observations or team up with a more experienced colleague to gain valuable insights about their teaching performance in a confidential, trusting and formative climate.

Please see: Peer Observation | University of Limerick (ul.ie)

Webinar Series Teaching, Learning and Assessment – What do you do?

A big thank you to all attendees and the speakers who shared their insights with us: Dympna Tuohy, Sarah Gibbons, Joanne O'Flaherty, Annmarie Ryan, Fabiana Hoffmann Sarda, Liz Kingston & Mairead Moloney. There was also a panel discussion that provided a very timely overview of 'Current Opportunities and Challenges for Staff and Students in Learning, Teaching & Assessment'. Thank you to the panel members, Michael Johnson (SEN), Yvonne Delaney (KBS), Maria Rieder (AHSS), Fionn McGrath and Mary-Claire Kennedy from the Academic Integrity Unit and the student panellists, Thomas Barry and Juliet Mulcahy for a very stimulating discussion.

Generative AI Short Course Success and Future Conversations

In May, the Centre for Transformative Learning (CTL) partnered with the Library, the IT Division, and the Academic Integrity Unit in a cross-divisional collaboration to host the well-received short course, "Let's Talk GenAI" on Bright-space.





Glucksman Library Centre for Transformative Learning Academic Integrity Unit Information Technology Division The asynchronous short course was designed to introduce UL staff to the practical applications of Generative Artificial Intelligence in academic, professional and research practices. It introduced UL staff to the practical applications of Generative AI (GenAI) in academic, professional, and research contexts. It featured structured, themed days covering topics from an introduction to GenAI, to prompt engineering, to its applications in teaching, assessment, research, and the workplace, concluding with reflections and discussions about the future. Over 200 staff members registered for the course leading to a very engaging a dynamic experience. See Let's Talk GenAI for more information.

This successful collaboration not only enriches participants' understanding but also acts as a catalyst for ongoing conversations within the newly formed Artificial Intelligence Community of Practice (AI CoP).

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This new UL podcast, launched in April, created by CTL and KBS, features student guests discussing how GenAI tools enhance their education from multiple personal and discipline perspectives. Topics include neurodiversity, Universal Design for Learning, authentic assessment, and day-to-day student challenges. Available on <u>UL Connect</u>,

Adopting a positive yet critical perspective on the use of Gen AI tools by students, we aim to gather, amplify, and learn from student voices about how they leverage it to enhance their learning, foster creativity, and deepen their understanding. Our goal is to bridge the gap between students and educators, highlighting innovative ways GenAI can enrich the educational experience. Through insightful conversations and real-world examples, we hope to inspire students to think of using GenAI in positive and ethical ways, and to inspire educators to design educational experiences and assessments that are not only creative but also authentically engaging.







Universal Design for Learning

Over sixty colleagues across the University of Limerick (UL) successfully completed the National Forum for Teaching and Learning Universal Design for Learning (UDL) digital badge this year. The 25-hour badge course covers the fundamentals of the UDL approach. Within this cohort, six colleagues undertook the newly developed Universal Design Beyond the Classroom badge, developed for those working in non-teaching roles. Participants were supported by the UDL Lead and Peer Group facilitators from across the university: Íde O'Sullivan, Mags Phelan, Jess Beeley, Tom Comyn, and Olubunmi Ipinnaiye. If you are interested in completing the digital badge, please contact suzanne.stone@ul.ie (UDL Lead) for more information.

The UDL Community of Practice, established in 2021, was relaunched in October by gathering existing and new members to explore opportunities for the community to connect. Speaking at the event, Provost Professor Shane Kilcommins emphasised the value of sharing practice for professional learning. A series of informal and structured events were scheduled for the year based on feedback from participants. Sincere thanks to Sinead Spain, Mags Phelan, Erika Marcet, and Olubunmi Ipinnaiye for sharing excellent presentations on their UDL practice at the March gathering.

In May, the UDL team (Suzanne Stone, Pam Wall, and Sian Fahy) contributed to Global Accessibility Awareness Week at UL in May by organizing a 'Dine in the Dark' experience. Students and staff donned sleep masks for lunch, prompting interesting discussions! Thanks to Aramark colleagues for supporting a slightly unusual catered event! The UDL team also collaborated with Tracy McAvinue (Disability Services) on a student panel discussion chaired by Katie Martin (Student Life), where students with a lived experience of disability shared their reflections on life at UL. In June, Pam and Sian volunteered with a group from Junior Achievement Ireland, where sixth-class pupils explored Universal Design in an experiential learning environment here on the UL campus.



Dine in the Dark event, May 2024



Curriculum Development

Integrated Curriculum Development Framework

The process of embedding the Integrated Curriculum Development Framework (ICDF) across the University involves working with programme teams through workshops, consultations, face-to-face and online, and the curation of resources to support the integration of the ICDF into our curricula.

We regularly deliver information sessions to the university community on:

- Writing Learning Outcomes
- A Step-by-Step Approach to Programme Design: A Course Director's Guide
- An Introduction to ABC Learning Design

Faculty members from across the university also contact the Curriculum Development team for assistance and support on all aspects of curriculum design, centred largely around Learning Outcomes and the achievement of the UL Graduate Attributes. Often precipitated by beginning the Academic Programme Review Committee (APRC) approval process, we encourage programme teams to engage with a broader definition of curriculum design, following best practice and research-led advice.

Since the addition of Geraldine Grimes to the team in December 2023, we are also seeking to expand the information available on the <u>ICDF web pages</u>. These resources are designed to act as a starting point for programme teams, in their process of designing, or redesigning, programmes and modules, with information, links to further reading, resources for creating programmes, and diagrams to support the design and approval processes.





The Curriculum Development Team Dr Íde O'Sullivan and Dr Geraldine Grimes





Student Engagement

AICUR 2024

This year marked the 11th annual <u>All-Ireland Conference for Undergraduate Research</u> and it has gone from strength to strength. With the aim of promoting and applauding the fascinating and worthwhile research that is produced at undergraduate level, we welcomed 51 presentations from students from 5 universities covering subject areas such as music, product design, cyber security, applied languages, psychology, engineering, bioscience, and many more. The conference concluded with a round-table student panel discussion on their research.



This year's Keynote speaker, Jack Kavanagh was a university student and just 20 years old when he experienced a life-changing accident. He is actively engaged as an advisor to the World Health Organisation in relation to digital and assistive technologies and progressing the delivery of health outcomes for people with disabilities.



Spring Semester

This semester there has been 1939 student visits to the F7W Hub. This is in comparison to 1835 during weeks 1-3 of last semester.

There was 2325 followers on Instagram in week 1 of the autumn semester 2023 and there is now 4151 followers.

The F7W Interactive Handbook has had 5261 views in total.

Focus of F4W Spring Programme:

First and second year students, UL Global Students, Mature Students, Access Students Disability students

Themes Include:

Welcome to Second Semester (returning students and new international students), Meet Your Advisor, Academic Workships, Health & Wellbeing, Learner Support Centres, Volunteer.ie

Our Key Stakeholders:

Library, ITD, Student Engagement & Support Officers, Healthy UL, Orientation Officer, UL PVA, UL Global, Student Life.

Hub Staff Activities:

- Attending UL Open Day and promoting the F7W Programme.
- Hosting UL International students in the F7W Hub during their Orientation.
- Six Social Media Guides in the F7W Hub and online daily from 9am to 7pm posting information and answering queries from students in person.
- Promoting the 2024 AICUR Conference.
- Social Media Guides will also create some new videos on 'how to find your classroom in the Main Building'.
- Competition giveaway Airpods.



LevUL Up Digital Skills Hub launches on Brightspace

The <u>LevUL Up Digital Skills Hub</u> on Brightspace is a comprehensive one-stop-shop offering UL students and staff a suite of tailored workshops, resources and online lessons to enhance their digital skills and literacies.

It is open for anyone at UL to join. Firstly, join the Digital Skills Hub here, then the direct links below will work for you.

On the Hub, you can engage with a variety of activities, from <u>self-assessment tools</u>, to <u>live events</u> and <u>recordings</u>, to <u>lessons and resources</u>, and <u>curated LinkedIn Learning courses</u>, all aimed at fostering a digitally fluent university community.



Launch of First Digital Learning Lesson on Digital Skills Hub

To coincide with Global Accessibility Awareness Day, May 16 2024, a new 30-minute self-directed digital learning lesson on the topic '<u>Digital Accessibility and Assistive Technologies</u>' was launched on the LevUL Up Digital Skills Hub on Brightspace. To access the lesson you must firstly join the Digital Skills Hub here. Lesson content was collaboratively developed with expert input from Thomas O'Shaughnessy and William Nolan, Educational Assistive Technology Centre.







Brightspace

The event Shaping Education: Pedagogy, Technology and the Student Experience on March 7th gathered the campus community around a panel of international speakers to mark the completion of the transition to Brighspace as UL's new VLE. The new tools and resources that are available in Brightspace were showcased including PeerScholar, Vevox, Blackboard Ally, LinkedIn Learning, and the Digital Skills Hub.

As part of the event, nominees shortlisted by public vote from the '<u>Show and TEL series</u>' delivered lightening presentations on their innovative teaching and learning practices through Brightspace, and Dr Elaine Walsh was recognised as the overall winner of the 'Show and TEL' awards.



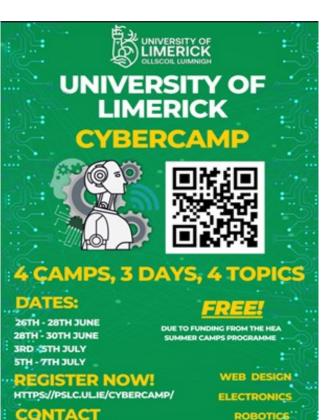
Prof Shane Kilcommins, Prof Ann Ledwith, Dr Elaine Walsh and Dr Angelica Risquez



We continue to support the use of the VLE through documentation updates in the <u>Staff Knowledge Base</u> and <u>Brightspace 101</u>, where we post our latest user advice, tips, tricks, and new features in Brightspace.

A new tool for peer review, <u>PeerScholar</u>, has been piloted and evaluated this semester in collaboration with the Learning Technologist in the Faculties, and we have produced <u>comprehensive documentation</u> to support its roll out during Autumn 2024. Watch the <u>UL Connect Brightspace space</u> for updates on new tools and functionality.

Learning Centres



Cybercamp

The UL CyberCamp's 14th year is underway, and the ICT Learning Centre and the Peer Supported Learning Centre has contined its collaboration in organising this event. This year, we will run four camps across two weeks catering to 160 second level students and introducing them to some of what they can expect to see in a third level ICT course.

We look forward to meeting and working with these future students. The camps run from the 24th of June to the 5th of July. visit <u>UL Cybercamp 2024</u> for more details. Each of the 3-day cybercamps consists of a day that focuses on a specific area of ICT namely: An introduction to programming, basic web design and Electronics/robots. The ICT Learning Centre and the Peer Supported Learning Centre manage the camps with funding from the HEA and additional help from both the CSIS and ECE departments.

ICT Learning Centre

CYBERCAMP@ULIE



During the AY 2023/24, the Information & Communication Technology Learning Centre (ICTLC) offered asynchronous learning support online and face-to-face support on campus. The face-to-face supports include drop -in sessions, one-to-one appointments, peer-led sessions, group targeted sessions, Prepare and Repeat (PAR) sessions and in-lab pair-programming support. In total, 760 students, primarily from core ICT courses, availed of the face-to-face ICT LC supports with a total of 3691 visits recorded. In addition, based on Panopto viewing figures, more than 160 hours of asynchronous ICT LC learning content was viewed by 245 students.

PROGRAMMING

Over 40 hours of targeted support classes for three firstyear and three second-year modules were delivered during the year.



UL BSc Computer systems (LM051) Lakeisha Lazo presents Web Design session at Cybercamp





ICT Learning Centre

The ICT Learning Centre delivered two 2-hour java programming workshops during the ECE Transition-Year camp and another three 2-hour Python workshops during the CSIS Open Day, both held in March.



Four first-year Computer Science Information Systems modules continued to be supported during AY2023/23 by the ICTLC using the <u>Digital Learning</u> <u>Support Hub (DLSH) framework</u> This content is then reviewed each following week in Peer-lead support sessions, both face-to-face and online to maximise reach and ensure that students can discuss any learning issues that they may have. These live sessions use the Peer Supported Learning

Group (PSLG) model with trained second-year peers leading the session. Two new modules received DLSH/ICTLC support during the year; The core Electronic and Computer Engineering first-year programming module and a second-year Graphics module with weekly online content dropped on the DLSH site, supported weekly by live targeted sessions in the centre.

During AY2023/24, DLSH learning content/support was developed and deployed for two non-ICT modules, the Science Learning centre developing online content for first-year science teacher students and the Maths Learning Centre developing and deploying weekly DLSH content for the module MA4701 (Technological Mathematics) which was supported by live peer-led support sessions in the Maths Learning Centre using the PSLG Model.

During the academic year, the ICTLC implemented Pair-Programming (PP) support for two of the core first-year Java programming modules in the Electronic and Computer Engineering (ECE) Department. PP is a development technique in which two programmers work together at a single workstation to design/code a solution. The person who writes the code is called a driver, the other partner called the navigator engages in discussion with, and information finding for the driver to ensure that they, as a pair, focus on creating and learning the best solution. PP has been shown to increase engagement and performance for students that utilise the method in labs. In total, 490 students were targeted with this additional in-lab support.

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At the start of the Spring semester, Prepare and Repeat (PAR) support was implemented by the ICTLC for two core first-year programming modules (CSIS and ECE) with a follow-on module. In week 1, At-Risk students are informed by email of the PAR support and given access to online learning content to review prior to fully supported oncampus evening labs that commence in week 2. Each week, the PAR support covers the core content and concepts taught during the first semester using this flipped classroom model. This allows targeted students to be better prepared for the follow-on module and any repeat exam they may have to undertake. In total, 35 first-year students were targeted for this additional learning support.



Robocode Winners

The ICT Learning Centre (ICTLC) organised and ran an internal Robocode competition, which is a national programming competition for first year undergraduate students, to select a team to represent UL in the National final held as part of the 2024 Games Fleadh at TUS, Thurles, Tipperary <u>Games Fleadh</u> in March. In total 11 students from two undergraduate courses attended the mentoring sessions during February resulting in three 3-person teams taking part in our internal competition. We last won this title in 2016 so are very proud of our students achievement.



ICT Learning Centre Director Clem O'Donnell with National Robocode champions Lewis Ubebe, Maksims Gerkis and Nathan Ndlovu (Computer Science Common Entry – LM121 Students)



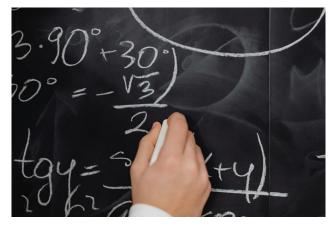


Learning Centres

Mathematics Learning Centre

The Mathematics Learning Centre (MLC) provided both in-person and online support to students throughout the academic year 2023/24 in the MLC and on the MLC Drop-In Centre Online Brightspace site.

A total of **4,650 attendances** were made to the MLC's live (in-person and online) services in the period between summer repeats 2023 and the end of week 13 in Semester 2 2024. These were recorded via 1,671 attendances at the MLC drop-in centre for in-person support and 2,979 attendances at the MLC's online group support sessions. A further **4,200 hours (approx.) of the MLC's 24/7 support material**



was viewed by 1,389 students throughout the year on Brightspace. Student feedback collected via the MLC's anonymous end of semester surveys (n=67) was very positive on the MLC's services throughout the year. 46% of users stated that they feared that they would fail their maths module(s), however 97% of MLC users reported that their use of the MLC would contribute to a better grade for them in their maths examination(s).

Noteworthy achievements during the year include the continued running of the Head Start Maths summer bridging programme for mature students who were starting in UL in September 2023, the MLC's tutor-training programme to mathematics PhD students who would be teaching in UL throughout the year, and MLC staff's completion of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Badge.

In collaboration with colleagues in the School of Education, staff in the MLC are co-organising the CETL-MSOR 2024 conference. The conference will take place at the University of Limerick on 29th and 30th August 2024. The event is aimed at practitioners from the learning, teaching, and support communities within the disciplines of Mathematics, Statistics and Operational Research, and includes those working in related disciplines, mathematics education, and staff developers. For further information, please visit <u>www.cetl-msor2024.com</u>

Peer Supported Learning Centre

Another busy year for the Peer-Supported Learning Centre (PSLC). Eleven modules were supported by Peer-Supported Learning Groups (PSLG) this year (6 in the Autumn semester, 5 in the Spring) targeting a total class size of 2375 students (1325: A, 1050:S). 24.42% of those targeted attended at least one session. Analysis is only available for the Autumn se-

mester as the Spring results are not available at time of printing. In the Autumn, those who did not attend sessions earned a Quality Point Value (QPV) for their module of 7.23% below the class average, with those attending 4 or more sessions in the semester achieving an average QPV 29.32% above the class average – a difference of 36.55%.

The centre again facilitated a number of soft-skills seminars for fourth year and PG students of the Electronic and Computer Engineering department. This year, we have continued the flipped classroom online Ask Me Anything approach, and we had good attendance all sessions. The material, and forum for Q&A, is delivered online through the PSLC's DLSH offering on the DLSH BrightSpace site.

This year, the PSLC celebrated 20 years of operations and we held a small celebration to thank our leaders, past and present, and staff involved in the PSLG programme. We have updated our website to provide a sample of



testimonials from academic staff, leaders, and students users: <u>Testimonials</u> Anyone who would like to further contribute to this evolving page please contact us at <u>peerlearning@ul.ie</u>.



Regional Writing Learning Centre

The RWC is hosted the <u>2024 European Writing Centres Association</u> <u>Conference</u>, June 11-14th. 115 delegates registered.

Lawrence Cleary joins a UL team contributing to *AIWrite*, an Erasmus+ project investigating the use of AI tools for teachers of writing in academic contexts led by Universität Hildesheim in partnership with University Limerick, Universiteit Antwerp, Universitet Mälardalen, Universität Innsbruck.

Roumaissa Nechad of Abou Bakr Belkaid Tlemcen University, Algeria, will be interning in the RWC from Aug. to Nov., 2024.

13 tutors facilitated 205 tutoring sessions for 146 students from across the disciplines. Our tutoring staff comprised students from across the disciplines and from six different countries including the US, Ireland, Turkey, India, Algeria and Gana, altogether offering talk about writing in nine different languages.

International students continue to represent a third of those availing of RWC resources.

EHS just edges out AHHS for the number of peer tutor appointments made.

Uptake of tutoring opportunities still well-below pre-covid years, but slowly rising.

The RWC hosted 4 active PhD Writers' Groups, logging over 300 hours in the centre's Writers' Space.

229 students attended the 20 online workshops offered.

Social media continues to be an important line of communication for the RWC with over 1000 followers on, each, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook and our recently created TikTok account.

Six student volunteers (studentvolunteer.ie) adjudicated the essay submissions from 40+ secondary school students from across Ireland to determine the three winners of the <u>RWC's 13th Annual National Secondary School</u> <u>Essay-writing Competition</u>. AVPSE Dr. Ronni Greenwood presented certificates and prizes at an award ceremony here at UL on May 23rd, 2024.



AVPSE and Regional Writing Centre staff with the winners of the 13TH Annual National Essay Writing competition.

Molly McNamara, the RWC's Administrative Assistant, will be handing over the reins to Nicole Kenihan in the last week of June, 2024 and will be with us until the 10th of January, 2025. Nicole is working on her BA in Journalism and Digital Communication. Molly will be leaving us for her Erasmus stint in, don't be jealous, Granada, Spain. Recent tutor acquisitions include: Luisa Murphy, Bachelor Medicine, Bachelor Surgery; Luke Slattery, PhD Clinical Psychology; Lisa Aleksevva, Masters in Speech and Language Therapy; and Natasha Horan, BA in English and Sociology.







Science Learning Centre

This year, we received funding from the National forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in order to create an online self-paced 'crash course' in Physics for 1st year Science Education students on the Digital Learner Support Hub. This course will be available from the Autumn Semester of AY 24/25 onwards for students

Student support

The Science Learning Centre finished support services to students in Week 13 of the Spring Semester. We provided support in the fields of Physics, Engineering, Chemistry, Chemical Engineering/Process Technology and Biology. This academic year, our PhD tutors provided:

- 528 hours of unstructured support at our campus Drop-in Centre in the main building (B0-021a)
- 120 hours of structured support through our Online 1-1 Appointments via MS Bookings
- 112 total hours of structured support via weekly **Group Support Tutorials** for 19 different modules as requested directly by students
- Bespoke on-demand support to any students requesting support with any science-based modules who are registered with Disability Services.



The SLC presented at the SAI summer seminar "Creating, Engaging and Enhancing Community for Student Success" at the Technological University of the Shannon, Moylish Campus, Limerick, on Tuesday, June 18th, 2024. Our presentation is titled "The Science Learning Centre at the University Of Limerick – a case study for facilitating meaningful engagement & support for undergraduate students".



Science Learning Centre