Academic Advising Project

"Toolkit for Impactful Lifelong Learning in the 21st Century" (TILL21)

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AIM

This project aims to develop high-quality academic support through a proactive academic partnership with mutual expectations of faculty and students. This project will explore advisory and pastoral care needs of mature and part-time learners in order to co-design a toolkit (potentially resource guides, e-lectures, podcasts, assessment strategies) for academic teams that will positively encourage optimal integration of mature and part-time learners into their programmes.

OBJECTIVES

The project will co-design and develop a toolkit for academics focusing on greater integration of mature and part-time students into learning processes while supporting and advising them on their learning journey. Traditionally mature and part-time learners have been underserved with many HEIs lacking bespoke resources to support academic teams deliver for this diverse cohort (age, family status, caring responsibilities and employment status). Through the co-design of TILL21 with mature and part-time student input, our UCD academics will be able to refine their learning processes to readily acknowledge the learning journeys of mature and part-time learners and make their unique capabilities and experiences an asset in enhancing learning processes for all students. This will permit mature and part-time learners to fully realise their potential and flourish in an equitable fashion to their more traditional student peers.

STRATEGY

- Hold a suite of student focus groups where mature and part-time learners can share/explore unique challenges they face and discuss supports they find useful, what they would like academics to understand about being a mature and part-time learner, what their favoured learning approaches are and what interventions can support their lifelong learning.
- With student partner input, co-design a suite of accessible resources (guides, e-lectures, podcasts).
- Develop an evaluative tool/survey that can be deployed before and after instigation of new learning approaches to accommodate the experiences of mature and part-time learners (impact assessment). This tool will allow academic teams to determine impacts of new approaches.