

Potential Submissions for Healthy Campus Conference

HEALTHY CAMPUS CASE STUDY	
Name of Institution	RCSI
Who led the initiative?	David Harris Sports Centre Manager & John Kelly, Sports Centre Specialist
Date and timeframe of the initiative	Ongoing and Semester 1 of each academic year
What was the reach of the initiative?	The cookbook is made available to all students upon registration and 250 students and staff participated in the Veg Pledge
Initiative Title	<u>New Student Cookbook and 'The Veg Pledge'</u>
Aims/ Objectives	<p>To smooth the integration of students into Irish life, create healthy eating habits from the very start of their life in Ireland and remove the potential habit of purchasing expensive, unhealthy take away food.</p> <p>The Veg Pledge was a short campaign of one week encouraging students to incorporate additional vegetables into their diet.</p>
The rationale for the action, including any identified health needs	<p>International students face additional obstacles in addition to the obstacles expected by all students. Transition to a new culture is cited by students commencing studies on an international campus in a different country to their own as a challenge (Masrou, Tondnevis and Mozaffari, 2012). Students who have moved to Ireland and are expected to become self-sufficient quickly face many challenges. One of these is knowing where to shop and what to buy to eat healthily.</p>
Identify all frameworks, policies, or strategies this initiative aligns to (Internal, local or national)	<p>Pillar 3 of the RCSI Strategic Plan 2018-2023;</p> <p>We will support 'Healthy Ireland' by promoting lifelong health and activity among our students and staff, and by engaging with our local and national community.</p>

<p>Summary</p>	<p>Recognising the challenges that new international student’s face when shopping in Irish supermarkets for the first time, the RCSI Gym team produced a recipe book for each of the five main shopping chains in Ireland (Tesco, Dunnes Stores, SuperValu, Aldi and Lidl)</p> <p>This cookbook contained 25 meals per shop and listed the ingredients, method, approximate prices, calories and macros.</p> <p>The meals chosen included Vegetarian, Vegan and Halal meat options. There were five breakfasts, five lunches, five dinners and five snacks included in each book.</p> <p>Using this book enables students unfamiliar with the produce on Irish shelves to create a shopping list and cook a range of nutritious and cost-effective meals.</p> <p>The book is located on Moodle and can be downloaded via QR codes located throughout the campus at the start of each academic year.</p> <p>Veg Pledge</p> <p>Through our daily interactions with students during fitness consultations and nutrition advice appointments, it was clear that a large percentage of students were not consuming a sufficient amount of vegetables. In order to encourage students to increase their veg intake, we conceived ‘The Veg Pledge’. This was a one week campaign in which students pledged to increase their veg intake. To support this, we created various content to illustrate how to increase veg in simple ways. These included recipes, cooking methods and how to make veg more appealing.</p> <p>Students registered via QR code and received a document with lots of tips, tricks and recipes to help them increase veg intake across all meals. Students uploaded and tagged their meals with the #RCSIgym so we could share people’s meals and ideas to illustrate to others.</p> <p>All participants received a branded RCSI Gym lunch cool bag as a reward and there were daily prizes of RCSI Merchandise and vouchers for students who sent in the best submissions across different categories.</p>
<p>Did you collaborate with internal and/or external stakeholders to deliver?</p>	<p>The Veg Pledge campaign included collaboration with our catering partners who offered additional veg pots, hummus and other products at a special rate for the duration of the campaign at all catering areas.</p>
<p>How was the initiative organised?</p>	<p>Each member of the Gym Team was given a shop and tasked with creating the cookbook. Regular communication was essential to ensure that there was no repetition across the five shops and recipes that reused staples</p>

	<p>were favoured. Each staff member recorded the costs, calories and macros of each meal. The team cooked the meals themselves over the course of summer 2020.</p> <p>The initiative was led by Gym Team members John Kelly who liaised with the suppliers, design team and catering partners to have everything in place to support the students.</p>
What resources did you need?	Ingredients for creating the 25 meals cost approximately 320 euro. 250 lunch bags at a cost of €4.20 each. Finally, there were internal design costs.
Has it been evaluated? How successful has it been?	<p>As the Cookbook sits on Moodle, it is difficult to quantify its success, however, anecdotally, students have reported that this has been a huge help in settling into life in a new city.</p> <p>Veg Pledge</p> <p>This initiative was originally launched in semester 1, 2021 and encouraged students to eat vegetables at every meal. Following a post initiative survey of participants, 71% of students struggled to add veg to every meal. In 2022, the initiative was changed to simply increase veg intake. The campaign was limited to 250 participants and all slots were reserved and all lunch bags collected.</p>
Any future plans, including the sustainability of the initiative?	The 2023 iteration of the cookbook will involve expanding the partnerships to locally owned shops which will support our students in purchasing fresh, local produce.
Key Learning Points	For 2023, there will not be a limit on the number of participants. We will also endeavour to cover the cost of the veg pot add on's from our catering partners as these cost students €2 in 2022.