



Healthy Campus Case Study



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AN tÚDARÁS um ARD-OIDEACHAS

‘A Healthy MTU’: An Investigation into the Dietary Behaviours and Alcohol Consumption Patterns of First Year Undergraduate Students During the Transition to Higher Education

Name of institution and initiative lead
Munster Technological University. Healthy Campus Research Team within the ‘HEX-SPO’ Research Group (Health, Exercise & Sport Sciences). The current case study was implemented by HEX-SPO PhD Candidate Ms Karrie-Marie Mc Carthy.
Date and timeframe
September 2023-April 2024
What was the reach?
All registered Year 1 undergraduate students across six campuses of the multi-campus University were contacted to participate in a bespoke ‘health and wellbeing’ survey. The survey was disseminated during two successive academic years, as follows: 2022/2023: (Wave 1) Target: 5,077 Reach: 330 (6.5%) 2023/2024: (Wave 2) Target: 4,969 Reach: 1,580 (31.8%)
Aims and Objectives
Aligned with a broader ‘Healthy Campus’ entity, the current case study aimed to examine self-reported dietary behaviours and alcohol consumption patterns amongst Year 1 undergraduate students in a multi-campus University in Ireland.

Aligned frameworks, policies, or strategies
HEA Healthy Campus Charter and Framework Healthy Ireland Framework (2019-2025) The Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges
Project Collaborators
Cross-university collaboration with Academic and PMSS staff (as applicable) to enable and facilitate in-class participation during the second iteration of the survey.
Key Learning Points
Sub-optimal dietary behaviours, and hazardous alcohol consumption patterns, similar to international research were prevalence across this multi-campus university setting. A high prevalence of overweight and obesity was observed. Utilising in-person recruitment methods not only boosts absolute participation rates compared to online email dissemination but also increases representativeness.

Summary
"A 42-item web-based questionnaire was disseminated via e-mail to all first-year undergraduate students at MTU during Semester 1 of the academic year 2022/23 (Wave 1). This process was repeated in Semester 1 of 2023/24 (Wave 2), supplemented by in-class recruitment efforts to enhance participation rates. Over 63.0% of participants did not meet the minimum recommended daily intake of 5 servings across both waves. A significantly higher proportion of males compared to females reported daily breakfast consumption at both W1 (45.6% males vs. 29.1% females) and W2 (36.6% males vs. 27.6% females). The prevalence of participants with overweight and obesity was 27.7% at Wave 1 and 32.2% at Wave 2. Among students who reported habitual alcohol consumption (88.6% at Wave 1, 89.9% at Wave 2), over two-thirds, 63.6% at Wave 1, and 66.4% at Wave 2 exceeded hazardous gender-specific thresholds, with no significant gender differences across waves. "

Healthy Campus Process	Whole Campus Approach	Topic	Population Group
Create	Campus Environment (Facilities & Services)	Alcohol	Students
	Campus Culture & Communications	Healthy Eating / Food	
		Health & Sustainability	

