



# 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

<b>Name of institution and initiative lead</b>
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.
<b>Date and timeframe</b>
September 2023-April 2024
<b>What was the reach?</b>
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%)
<b>Aims and Objectives</b>
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.

<b>Aligned frameworks, policies, or strategies</b>
HEA Healthy Campus Charter and Framework Healthy Ireland Framework (2019-2025) The Okanagan Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges
<b>Project Collaborators</b>
Cross-university collaboration with Academic and PMSS staff (as applicable) to enable and facilitate in-class participation during the second iteration of the survey.
<b>Key Learning Points</b>
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.

<b>Summary</b>
"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	

