

Scileanna agus Rath na Mac Léinn
Student Skills and Success



Thrive

Voices at the Table

A Partnership approach to
institutional project planning

NStEP

National Network Event
May 2025



MU Student Success Strategy



Our vision for Student Success at Maynooth:

Develop and embed a university-wide, integrated, and holistic approach to student success so that each student is empowered to recognise and fulfil their potential academically, personally, and professionally.



THRIVE: Building on the MU Student Success Strategy

Key Areas of Focus:

- Engagement & Student Partnership
- Transitions & Cultivating Belonging



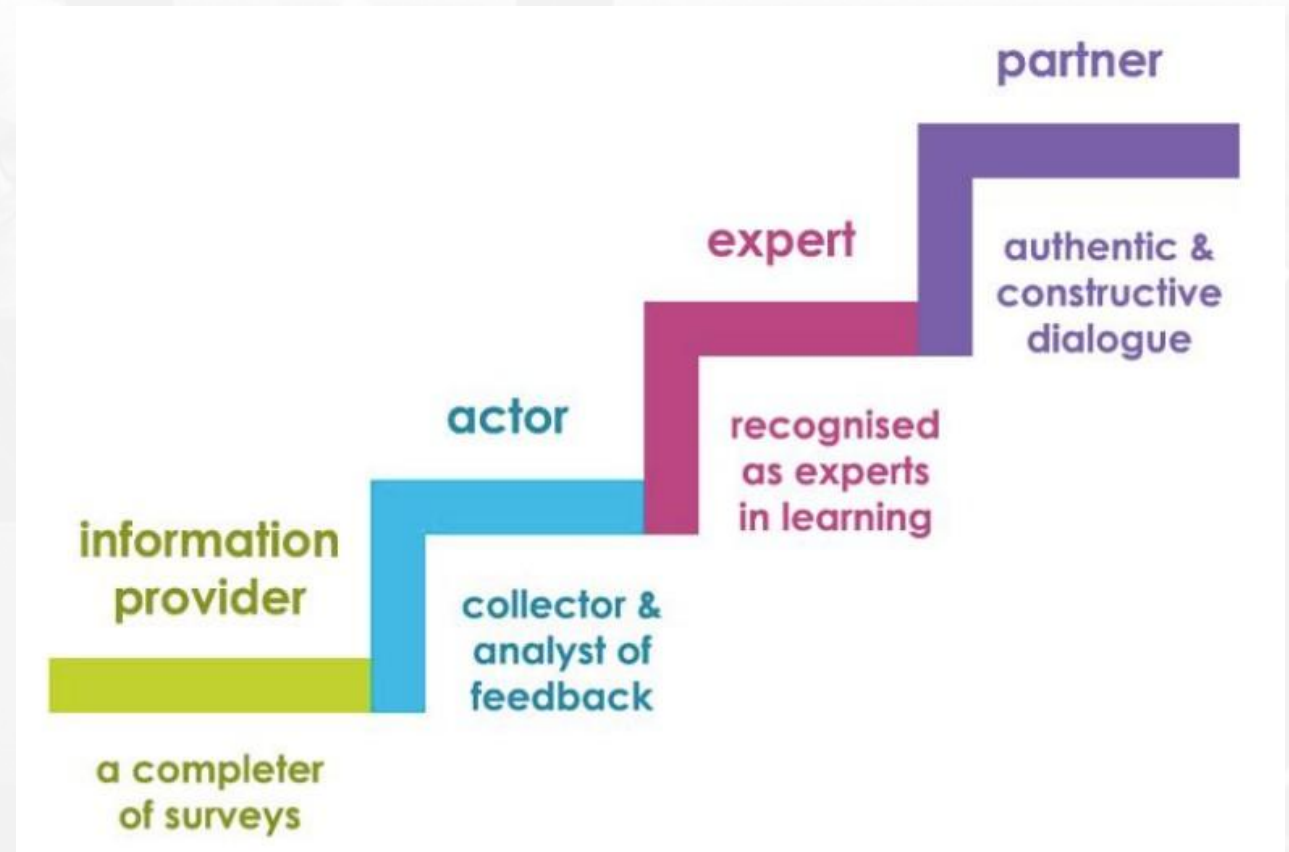
THRIVE: Building on the MU Student Success Strategy

Student Partnership Embedded:

- Student Interns (500+ Hours)
- Student Ambassadors
- Peer Supports
- Design Thinking Workshops

Supported by Advisory Group

- 3x Prof. Services Staff
- 3x Academic Staff
- 6x Student Members



THRIVE Advisory Group

Staff Members	Student Members
Prof Services – Laura Connaughton (Library)	Charli Middleton (MSU Exec Officer, Nominee)
Prof Services – Sam Blanckensee (EDI)	Amina Traboue (MSU PG Rep, Nominee)
Prof Services – Emma McDermott (Student Services)	HuiTan Lee (MU Ambassador Rep, Open Call)
Academic – Dr John Keating (Assoc Dean T&L, S&E)	Rachal Henchy (MU Extra-Curricular Rep, Open Call)
Academic – Dr Susi Gottlöber (Assoc Dean T&L, A&H)	Timofe Oke (MU First Year Rep, Open Call)
Academic – Dr Helen Shaw (Assoc Dean T&L, SS)	Grace Millington (THRIVE Intern, Nominee)

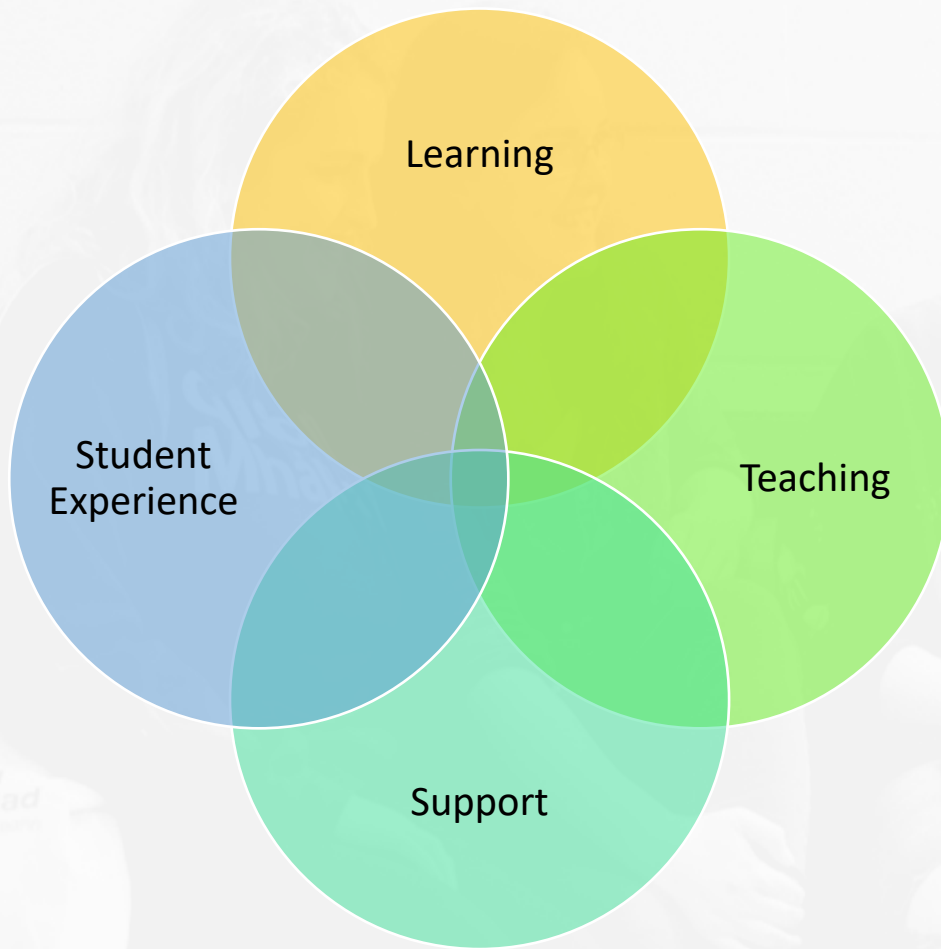
The THRIVE Initiative Advisory Group supports the Head of Student Skills & Success (Aisling Flynn) and Student Success Officer (Eddie Corr) in the work of the project

Student members not already in full-time paid employment within the University community will be compensated with a stipend of €450 in recognition of their experience and time commitment.

THRIVE Initiative Advisory Group



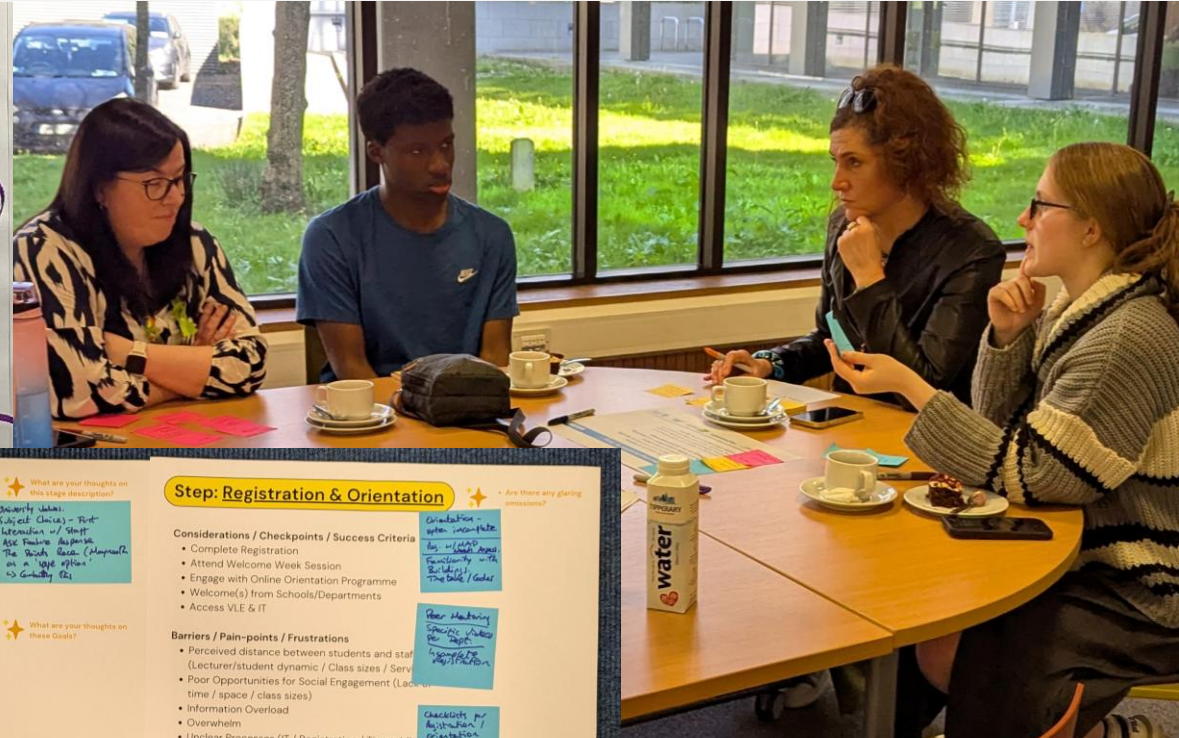
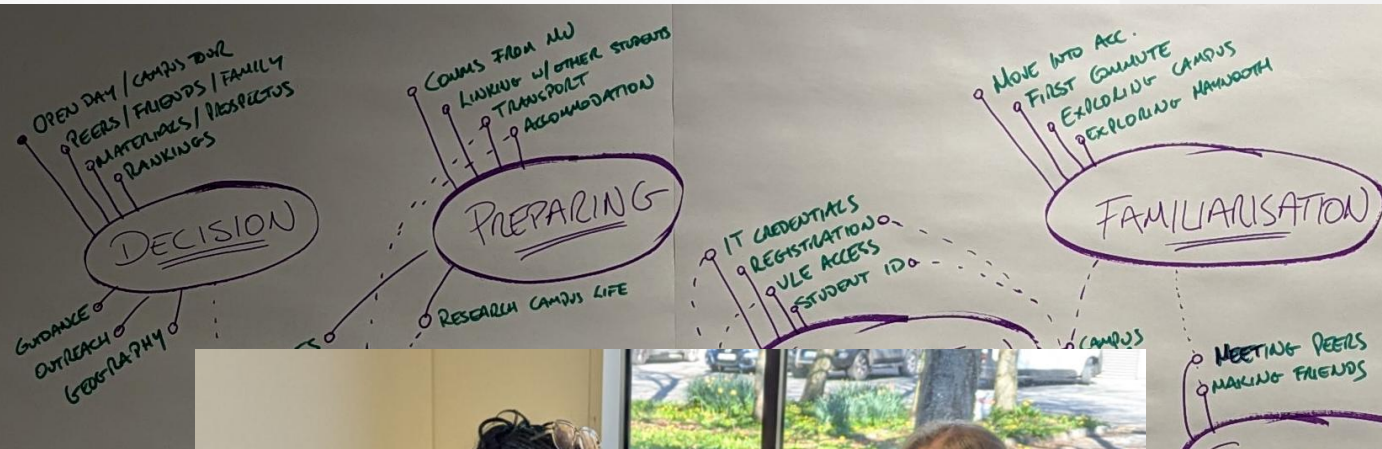
As a group, we have experience and valid insight into all areas of the Maynooth University experience.



Shared Values:

Empowerment
Trust
Respect
Courage
Collaboration

AG Meeting Structure



Stage: Start of Year

The first few weeks of the academic year is a time when students 'settle in'. They (re)connect with other students, their lecturers and their hobbies and interests on campus. They also adjust to their living situation, their studies and modules and campus life.

Student Goals

- Making friends
- Developing independence
- Explore Opportunities
- Learning/Developing Learning Styles
- Develop Sense of Belonging or Connection
- Finalise Programme/Subject Choices

What are your thoughts on this stage description?

University Union, Subject Choices - First Information w/ Staff, Acc. Finding, Support, The Study, Social, Play, as a 'light' option, to Greeting the

What are your thoughts on these Goals?

Step: Registration & Orientation

Considerations / Checkpoints / Success Criteria

- Complete Registration
- Attend Welcome Week Session
- Engage with Online Orientation Programme
- Welcome(s) from Schools/Departments
- Access VLE & IT

Barriers / Pain-points / Frustrations

- Perceived distance between students and staff (Lecturer/student dynamic / Class sizes / Services)
- Poor Opportunities for Social Engagement (Lack of time / space / class sizes)
- Information Overload
- Overwhelm
- Unclear Processes (IT / Registration / Timetabling Venues)

Considerations / Checkpoints / Success Criteria

- Connecting with new/existing friends
- Early University/Department/School icebreakers/events/programmes
- Beginning Tutorials
- Building Lecturer/Student relationship
- Student-Led Activities (Representation / Clubs / Societies)

Barriers / Pain-points / Frustrations

- Perceived distance between students and staff (Lecturer/student dynamic / Class sizes / Services)
- Poor Opportunities for Social Engagement (Lack of time / space / class sizes)
- Commuting Challenge

Advisory Group Members

- [illegible]

Reflections

3. Reflecting on your experience so far as an Advisory Group member, please rate the following statements

● Strongly Disagree ● Disagree ● Neutral ● Agree ● Strongly agree

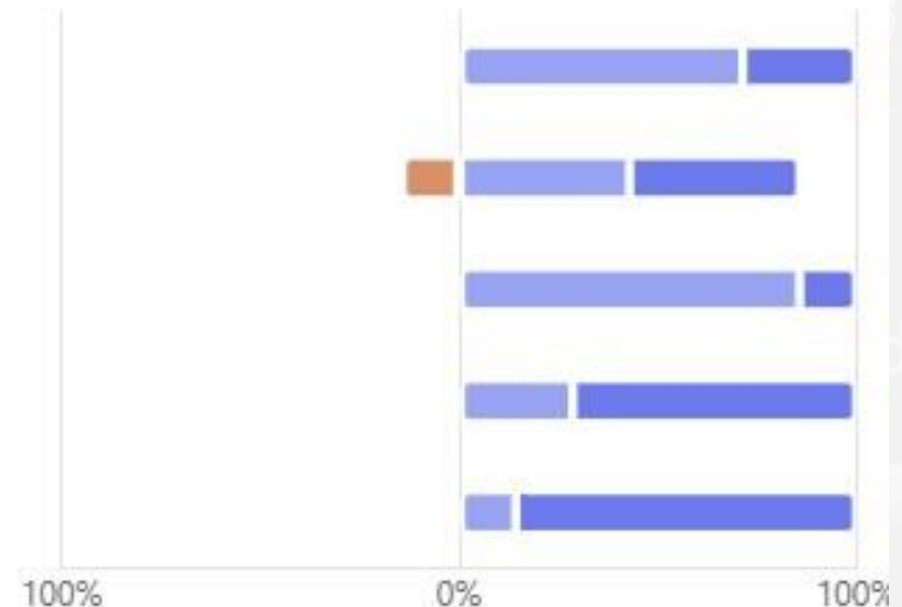
I felt that my voice was valued and my contributions influenced the direction of the project

The balance of student and staff members created a meaningful environment for shared decision-making

I have had opportunities to implement strategies or changes that are likely to improve the student experience

I experienced a culture of respect & trust within the team

I experienced an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced and heard



Takeaways



A mixture of **opportunities** for involvement-nomination, co-opting, open calls.

Workshop formats that allow space for groups to mix and enter dialogue.

The power of developing **shared Values** and continually referring to them.

Acknowledging that everyone has **valid experience** in differing areas to share.

Taking the time to provide content and readings **in advance**.

In their words...

Having the opportunity to hear from students in a **safe space**, where their opinion is genuinely valued has been really rewarding.

The best and most rewarding part of this role were the workshops. The format allowed for **purposeful discussion** followed by insightful workshops and brainstorming.

It felt like a comfortable space to have **meaningful conversations** surrounding improving the student/staff experience in college.

Meeting and working with such **engaged, wonderful students** who genuinely want to make a difference for the people that come after them

Often **power dynamics** do not allow for students to fully embrace the activities, but here in THRIVE AG they can be their **authentic** selves.

It was also a brilliant **chance to network** with different faculties and departments I would otherwise not get the chance to!