

Seán Mulkern

Deputy President Welfare Officer Candidate

2021/22



My name is Seán Mulkern, and I am asking for your vote to become **Deputy President, Welfare Officer** for UL Student Life.

Throughout my time UL I have been lucky enough to be involved in various aspects of student life on campus. I spent three years as a Peer Advisor in the Glucksman Library assisting students with everything and anything from our help desk. I have served on the committees of both the Brazilian Jiu jitsu Club and an Cumann Gaelach in UL and have worked hard with both to organise events and activities online during this past year.

I was heavily involved in the hugely successful AreUL? Movember team in 2020 which raised over €16,000 for charity. I am incredibly passionate about the welfare of students in UL and that, combined with my personal experiences of organising and advocating is what makes me the ideal candidate for this role. I will ensure that as we make the transition back to campus life in the next year, we do so in a safe and healthy way, while still enjoying our student experience as much as we can. Here's how;

#Seán4Welfare #SeánCares

Physical and Mental Wellbeing

- As someone who has had their own struggles with mental health in the past, I understand how hard it can be to reach out or open up. I will **organise workshops on how to have these conversations in a sensitive and supportive way** and **how to spot the signs that someone you know is struggling**. This will be coupled with **education and awareness** in conjunction with our counselling department around **learning tools to help you look after your mental health** – so you how to look after yourself before you look after others.
- I want to make sure that **when on-campus education returns, we can all get out and get moving together**. We've been inside long enough! I will **run activities on campus to bring UL back together again**. These activities will have a mental and physical focus, as looking after our physical health will help maintain our mental health!
- Other events I will organise are, for example, fun runs and challenges to raise money and awareness for mental health initiatives. I want to work with Pieta House to make **UL an official venue for the Darkness into Light (DIL) event**. This is a fantastic initiative and a huge opportunity for us as the UL community to show our support for this incredible charity. I want to see more support and collaboration with groups in UL who have already facilitated this including the OPC's DIL hike and the ULKC's DIL paddle.
- This pandemic and the extended lockdowns will have had a lasting effect on student's mental health. Some people may find it hard to **readjust to being in groups or crowds again**. As soon as we make the move back to UL, **I will make sure information is circulated to help people feel safe and supported**.

Sexual Health and Wellbeing

- We need to make sure that as we get back to less.. 'socially distanced' relationships that we look after ourselves sexually. I will be pushing for campaigning on safe sex awareness including **STI prevention and protection**
- I also hope to run a campaign on **STI testing on campus** but since some people aren't comfortable going for tests, I also plan to make **Access to at home STI kits available** for students.
- I will be running a **serious awareness and education campaign around sexual consent**. All students should be properly educated in how to ensure consent is given by all parties in a sexual interaction.
- I will ensure **free pregnancy testing and serious support for crisis / unplanned pregnancy is available for all UL students**.

Our relationship with drugs and alcohol

- We are not going to change how people interact with drugs or alcohol. What I want to focus on is **ensuring that people understand the effects both mentally and physically these substances have on our bodies**
- I plan to campaign to **provide access to drug quality testing kits**. I am in no way condoning the use of drugs but I think that drug use is happening no matter what in UL. Therefore we must ensure it can be done in as safe a manner as possible.
- I also want to make sure people can **identify if they themselves or a friend might be using drugs or alcohol to mask mental health problems**. This is very common among students and a seriously dangerous issue.
- I also want to promote information about **how to care for people who have taken too much drugs or alcohol**. Leaving someone alone who is overly intoxicated or letting them 'sleep it off' is not always the right course of action and is potentially very harmful.

The welfare of ALL our students

- If elected I will **ensure that the university has a very clear and up to date policy on misconduct and harassment sexual and otherwise**. I want to make it clear that this is something that can no longer be accepted or brushed off. I will work closely with the university to **ensure there are clear penalties for those who are in breach of such a policy**.
- I want to continue the work UL Student Life has done in the past year of providing free period products too all students who have periods. **I will campaign to have free period products provided all over campus not just in the student life centre**.
- I will endeavour to **create a welcoming intersectional and accepting campus for students of all abilities, backgrounds, identities and beliefs**. UL must be a safe space for EVERYONE.
- Loneliness in college is a real issue. I want to ensure that everyone finds their place in college. **I will work closely with clubs and socs to promote the incredible range of interests catered for in UL**. C&S helped me find my place in UL so I know it can do the same for others.
- I will work with first and second year rep groups to **ensure that those who missed out on their new college experience last year are fully supported in their transition to campus life**.

I fully support the campaigns of my teammates Dylan Reeves-Wasik for President and Jasmin Griffin for Academic Officer #dylan4president #jasmin4academic

Issued by Robert Guest, campaign manager for Seán Mulkern