



Peer Supported Learning Centre



Dear Colleagues,

The regional **Peer Supported Learning Centre (PSLC)** is a cross-institutional centre for promoting effective, learner focused peer-supported learning systems by building on the experience and expertise in peer-supported learning in all Shannon Consortium partner institutions, particularly that related to UL's highly successful academic enrichment programme known as **Peer-Supported Learning Groups (PSLG)**. The centre, which is based in the University of Limerick and located in Room **C2061** in the **Main Building**, is an initiative by the Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering funded by the HEA under their SIF- II programme.

The PSLG programme is what makes the PSLC centre different to other learning centres in UL. PSLG is a proactive academic enrichment programme, that targets difficult modules/subjects, fosters cross-year support between students on the same course, encourages students to support each other and to learn co-operatively under the guidance of students from the year(s) above. In specific, PSLG is:

- Learning enhancement programme designed to organise and improve the ways in which students prepare for class outside of class;
- Attached to course modules/subjects to provide students with a systematic and disciplined approach to processing the subject material assigned by the lecturer;
- Have academic/subject focus yet supports social learning through small group discussions and co-operative learning: hence provides peer-to-peer support and advice throughout the first year and beyond, and improves students experience of university life;
- Supplementary to teaching but NOT a substitute: subject content for discussion drawn from existing course materials (lecture notes, workbooks, textbooks, etc);
- One or more PSLG Leaders are assigned to a module/subject. These are students from the years above who have demonstrated excellent ability in a target subject and undergo PSLG training. PSLG Leader schedules and conducts at least one PSLG session/meeting weekly at times convenient to all involved;
- During PSLG sessions, the PSLG Leader uses interactive learning strategies which encourage participation, involvement, understanding and synthesis of module/subject content. In addition, she/he will incorporate demonstrations of effective study techniques;

Having successfully run the programme for more than 10 years in UL, our surveys and evaluation data consistently show that, compared to non-participants, PSLG participants integrate quicker to university life; acquire a clear view of course direction and expectations; enhance their understanding of the subject matter of their course; prepare better for assessed work and examinations; and gain higher grades especially in targeted modules.

The PSLC is currently looking at expanding its PSLG programme and is looking for new modules who would like to avail of PSLG support. If you would like to register your interest and/or know more about this project and what we plan to provide, please visit our web site at: <http://pslc.ul.ie>. Alternatively, you can email:

Mr James Murphy - PSLC Manager (james.murphy@ul.ie), or
Dr. Hussain Mahdi – Centre Director (hussain.mahdi@ul.ie)