



Incoming Postgraduate Research Students' Handbook



UL PSU

University of Limerick | Postgraduate Students' Union

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1 Introduction

We are very pleased to publish this handbook to support you as you start, or continue, your journey at the University of Limerick (UL).

The handbook was born out of a consultation process initiated by the Postgraduate Students' Union (PSU) with UL research students. While acknowledging that the university offers a wide range of support services both on campus and online, students noted that they sometimes found it difficult to navigate through the many services to find the one they were looking for.

The collaborative work between the PSU and the students gave rise to this handbook, which we hope you will find useful. It was designed to be a quick 'go-to guide' for anything or all you need to know. For ease of use, direct links have been inserted throughout to bring you directly to the service you need.

A very special thank you to the following people, all of whom contributed to this first edition of the handbook: Michelle Daly, Simin Arshi, Vedant Modi, Fernanda Zamboni, Aine O'Neill, Bríd O'Brien-May, Gerard Downes, Michael Frain, Elaine Kiely, Andrea La Touche, Rania Shadeed, Aimée McKenzie, Tom Cranley and Gráinne O'Donovan.

Going forward, the handbook will be reviewed annually by sabbatical officers, Council and Executive to ensure the details remain up to date.

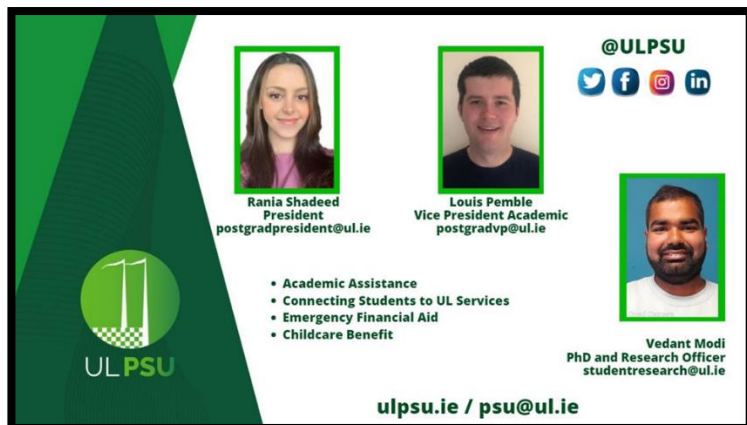
Rania Shadeed, PSU President, postgradpresident@ul.ie

Louis Pemble, PSU Vice President Academic, postgradvp@ul.ie

Vedant Modi, PSU PhD and Research Officer, studentresearch@ul.ie

Postgraduate Students' Union
University of Limerick/Ollscoil Luimnigh
Guthán/Tel: 00353 61213473
psu@ul.ie / ulpsu.ie

Follow us on our social media pages to keep up to date with all that goes on with the PSU!
[Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)



The graphic features a green and white background with the UL PSU logo on the left. It includes three profile pictures of Rania Shadeed (President), Louis Pemble (Vice President Academic), and Vedant Modi (PhD and Research Officer). Social media icons for @ULPSU on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn are shown. A list of services is provided: Academic Assistance, Connecting Students to UL Services, Emergency Financial Aid, and Childcare Benefit. The website ulpsu.ie and email psu@ul.ie are listed at the bottom.

2 Information Technology

2.1 IT Student Supports

A full list of the Information Technology Division (ITD) supports for new students can be found [here](#).

2.2 Your IT User Account

The Departmental Coordinator or Head of Department requests ITD to create an account for you by logging a support call with the [ITD Service Desk](#). The following details must be provided when the request is being made:

- Full name (including any middle initials)
- UL ID number
- Department
- Room/Office number
- Phone number

ITD will create your account within three working days of the request being made. The account will have the format [studentnumber@studentmail.ul.ie](#). Some research students are also given a staff email account [firstname.surname@ul.ie](#). If you use your staff account, be sure to check your student account regularly as it is used by the university to keep you informed on student matters. ITD can help you to set up both mailboxes on your Outlook account, one as your primary mailbox and the other as a resource mailbox.

2.3 PC/Laptop

Getting Set Up

If your department has assigned you a new desktop PC or laptop, you will need to log a support call with the [ITD Service Desk](#) to complete the configuration of the device. Please do not turn the device on as it needs to be connected to the network to complete the setup.

If you have been assigned a PC or laptop that is already set up and configured, your department administrator will supply you with a password. Log on as follows:

- Username: Firstname.Lastname
- Password: Supplied by the department administrator

Setting Up an Email Profile

1. Go to 'Start' — 'All Programs' — 'Microsoft Office 2016' — 'Outlook'.
2. Click 'OK' to profile name as Outlook and select 'Next' for all default settings.
3. Click 'Allow' to the message to configure your mailbox. Click 'Finish' to complete.

Changing Passwords

For security purposes, ITD recommends you [change your password](#) after your first login.

2.4 ID Card

The Graduate & Professional Studies office in E2-016 issues student ID cards. Students must present themselves to the office to have their photos taken. Your ID card will be required if you wish to access the [library](#), join the [Sports Arena](#) or avail of a [parking permit](#). If you have any issues with your card, call into GPS at E2-016 during office hours or email gps@ul.ie.

Students with older cards that have been used in the past should get a replacement card from [Student Academic Registry](#), Main Building, Block E, E0-001.

2.5 Troubleshooting

If you have issues with your login credentials, with accessing your student account, [Sulis](#) or [printing](#) or with [library laptop loans](#), contact ITD via ITSS@ul.ie. Advice and support are available from ITD Student Services [here](#).

Here are ways of requesting support from ITD:

1. Log a support call to the Service Desk using ITD's ticketing system [here](#).
2. Phone the Service Desk on 061 574 211.
3. Email service.desk@ul.ie.
4. Drop into the Service Desk, which is located in the library basement (GLG-051).

2.6 Specialised Software

Forticlient

UL uses the Forticlient VPN (virtual private network) to provide remote users with a secure connection to the university's internal network resources. To request access to Forticlient, log a support call with the [ITD Service Desk](#).

Core Portal

You must register for Core Portal the first time you use it. Registration is available [here](#). Once you are registered, you can access Core Portal using your UL network username and password. If you are accessing Core Portal off campus, you must first turn on the Forticlient VPN. Please refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section for information on how to use Core Portal, or email coreportal.contact@ul.ie or Stephen.Dunworth@ul.ie for further information.

Agresso

[Agresso](#) is the internal financial system used to log expenses for approval. The Agresso training user guide is available [here](#). All finance-related forms, documents, policies, procedures, statements, etc. can be found under Quick Links [here](#). Email Financial.Systems@ul.ie for further assistance.

3 Academic Student Supports

3.1 Academic Regulations

The documents and links listed on [this page](#) of the Graduate & Professional Studies website provide up-to-date information for UL researchers on relevant administrative processes, codes of practice and regulations.

Chapter 5 of the Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures (accessible from the [Policy Hub](#)) specifies all the regulations and procedures relating to postgraduate research (PGR) students.

3.2 Postgraduate Student Charter

As stated in the Postgraduate Student Charter, which is available on the [Policy Hub](#), both UL and the Postgraduate Students' Union (PSU) are committed to working together to support student involvement in developing and managing the postgraduate student experience. The charter specifies the responsibilities of the university, supervisors and research students in relation to making that student experience as beneficial as possible to all concerned.

3.3 Academic Registry

[Academic Registry](#) is responsible for the Student Portal, timetables, exam results, orientation, academic calendar and the student handbook. If you face a problem relating to any of these items, please contact Academic Registry through the Student Hub.

- The [Student Hub](#) is used to log issues relating to registration, timetables and enrolment. When you log in, click on Student Hub Online and then log a call in the relevant place depending on the type of query.
- Through the [Student Portal](#), you can add or change your personal details, such as your home address, to receive UL-related items or your transcripts, parchment, etc. You can also use the portal to access your tuition fees.
- [Sulis](#) is the virtual learning environment used at UL. Use your UL ID and password to log in.
- If you want to know which module a code links to, search for it in the [Book of Modules](#).

3.4 Fees

If you face a problem in relation to fees, please contact the [Fees office](#) through student.fees.office@ul.ie. You will find more information on fees [here](#) on the Graduate & Professional Studies website.

3.5 External Funding Opportunities

There are numerous [research centres](#) around Ireland that focus on a wide range of research areas. The centres regularly recruit graduate students and post-doctoral research staff, usually by advertising positions on their websites for researchers at all stages of their careers.

The following research agencies have various funding programmes for researchers. Please click on the links below to see which programme might be relevant to you.

Science Foundation Ireland

[Science Foundation Ireland](#) (SFI) provides grants to outstanding investigators and to researchers from around the world who wish to relocate to Ireland. Grants can be used by researchers to attend conferences and symposia and collaborate with industry.

Irish Research Council

The [Irish Research Council](#) (IRC) manages a variety of inter-linked research schemes. It funds scholars at various career stages, from postgraduate study to senior research project-based awards.

Enterprise Ireland

[Enterprise Ireland](#) (EI) is the government organisation responsible for developing and growing Irish enterprises in world markets. EI supports companies and researchers in higher education institutions to develop new technologies and processes that will lead to job creation and increased exports.

Health Research Board

The [Health Research Board](#) (HRB) provides funding to people at different stages of their careers who carry out high-quality, innovative health research.

3.6 Glucksman Library

A full list of library supports and services can be found [here](#). You can email the library via libinfo@ul.ie.

Entrance to the library is by turnstile operated by your UL ID card. Here are some troubleshooting tips:

- *Newly issued card*: If you are a new student who has just been issued your ID card and the card does not work, wait two hours and try again.
- *Forgotten card*: You can obtain a day pass, subject to a maximum of five passes per semester, from the kiosk at the library entrance. Passes issued from the kiosk must be retained for entry and exit until the end of the day.
- *Unknown card error*: You can get a day pass from the kiosk for immediate access, subject to a maximum of five per semester, but make sure you resolve the problem with your ID card as soon as possible.
- *Lost or damaged card*: You can get a replacement from the Graduate & Professional Studies office in E2-016.

3.7 Centre for Transformative Learning

The [Centre for Transformative Learning](#) (CTL) encourages and facilitates excellence in teaching and learning within and beyond UL. Its role is to encourage scholarship, research and

innovation in teaching and learning and to help ensure that effective teaching is valued, supported and developed. For more information, contact ctl@ul.ie.

3.8 Learning Support Centres

The CTL operates five learning support centres: Science Learning Centre, Mathematics Learning Centre, ICT Learning Centre, Regional Peer-Supported Learning Centre and Regional Writing Centre.

Science Learning Centre

The [Science Learning Centre](#) (SLC) provides teaching and learning support for the disciplines of science and engineering. The SLC works with staff and students to support the development and implementation of transformative pedagogies. If you are interested in joining the SLC team, contact slc@ul.ie.

Mathematics Learning Centre

It is well known that many capable students, for a variety of reasons, can find it difficult to achieve the required standards in mathematics to support their degree studies. All UL students studying courses that have a mathematics or statistics module can avail of the services of the [Mathematics Learning Centre](#) (MLC) free of charge. If you are interested in joining the MLC team, contact Richard.Walsh@ul.ie.

ICT Learning Centre

The [ICT Learning Centre](#) (ICTLC) aims to support and promote active learning among UL students of ICT-related programmes. The ICTLC uses proven learner support approaches, tutoring innovation, research and evaluation to develop confident and effective ICT practitioners. Contact: Clem.Odonnell@ul.ie.

Regional Peer-Supported Learning Centre

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 all Shannon Consortium partner institutions, particularly that relating to [Peer Supported Learning Groups \(PSLG\)](#), UL's highly successful academic enrichment programme. Located in room C2061 in the Main Building, the PSLC is an initiative of the Department of Electronic and Computer Engineering. Contact: James.Murphy@ul.ie.

Regional Writing Centre

The [Regional Writing Centre](#) (RWC) offers a free and friendly place where students can come to address any aspect of their writing. The RWC is dedicated to helping students develop strategies to become more confident, critical and autonomous writers. Using peer-tutors and experts to work with undergraduate students, postgraduate students and staff, the RWC practises a non-invasive, inductive approach to writing development. There is a limited number of sessions available per week so early booking is strongly advised. Contact: writingcentre@ul.ie.

3.9 Graduate & Professional Studies

As well as being responsible for the postgraduate and professional programmes offered by the university, [Graduate & Professional Studies](#) (GPS) deals with all administrative matters relating to PGR students, such as applications, admissions, academic progress (in conjunction with Academic Registry), thesis submission and examinations. Furthermore, GPS is responsible for UL's research and taught postgraduate strategy, academic regulations and procedures relating to PGR students, and postgraduate recruitment and advertising.

GPS provides workshops and advice on postgraduate funding and scholarships and facilitates student induction and training. For PGR students, training and professional development comprises programmes in research skills, workshops in statistics, quantitative and qualitative research, and regular research-related seminars and workshops.

GPS manages the Summer School in Generic and Transferable Skills, which runs annually from May to August, and facilitates the Thesis in Three biennial competition, which provides PhD and research master's students with the opportunity to present their ongoing research on three slides in three minutes.

GPS is located in the Engineering Research Building, Level 2. Contact: gpsresearch@ul.ie. Information about upcoming events for PGR students can be found on the [Current Research Students](#) section of the GPS section of the website under 'Training & Development'.

Weekly Webinars

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, GPS has been providing UL PGR students with weekly webinars on aspects of doctoral studies, professional development and career preparedness. Held each Friday at 12 noon via Microsoft Teams, the webinars focus on areas of particular relevance to PhD and research master's students. Topics include research skills, how to do a literature review, ethics and social understanding, communication skills, career management, entrepreneurship and innovation, data management planning, writing a successful funding proposal, working with your supervisor, getting published in peer-reviewed journals and disseminating your research.

Letter Request

Current research students can request a status letter through this link: <https://www.ul.ie/gps/current-research-students/postgraduate-research-online-letter-request-form>. The letter request will normally be processed within two or three working days from the date of the request.

You can request letters relating to:

- Visa renewal
- Re-entry visa application
- Multiple entry visa application
- Bank account
- Registration
- Other

3.10 Research Clusters

Information on UL's research clusters, programmes and postgraduate opportunities per faculty can be found through these links:

- [Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences](#)
- [Kemmy Business School](#)
- [Science and Engineering](#)
- [Education and Health Sciences](#)
- [Irish World Academy](#)

3.11 EMerge PhD Network

The EMerge PhD network is an informal and interdisciplinary peer-support network and supportive space for UL PhD students. The purpose of the network is to provide opportunities for PhD students to connect informally with peers, participate in relevant events and receive information about other support structures that are available to them around campus. PhD students can join the EMerge PhD network by emailing emerge@ul.ie and asking to be added to the Microsoft Teams site.

4 Non-Academic Student Supports

4.1 Postgraduate Students' Union

The [Postgraduate Students' Union](#) (PSU) represents all postgraduates, be they master's taught or research students, doctoral candidates or graduate diploma students. *"We are your go-to people"*.

The PSU is your students' union. Andrea La Touche is President and Rania Shadeed is Vice President Academic Research.

Welcome

Click this link to view a welcome video from President Andrea and Vice President Rania: [Welcome to UL Postgraduates 2021/2022 from the President of the Postgraduate Students' Union](#)



Services

The PSU office is located in the Stables courtyard in the heart of the campus. These are the services we offer to students:

- Academic assistance
- Connecting students to UL services
- Emergency financial aid

- [Childcare bursary](#)
- Promoting mental health and wellbeing
- Promoting a balanced student life
- Cultural inclusion, which will be realised through events throughout the year, all of which are subject to COVID-19 guidelines

Please email us to postgradpresident@ul.ie, postgradvp@ul.ie or psu@ul.ie for details on any of the above services.

You can find @ULPSU on all social media platforms to keep yourself up to date on important university announcements and what we are doing in the PSU.

While we are here to offer you the best experience at UL, we are also here to help you deal with any challenges you may encounter. Please remember that these are unprecedented times, and we will work to the best of our ability to support you and deliver our services to you within the COVID-19 health guidelines.

What we hope to do this year is provide you with the best experience, which centres on you achieving your academic goals. We also want to provide all students – local and international alike – with memorable experiences of what life can be like for a postgraduate student at UL.

Financial Assistance and Childcare Bursary

The PSU works closely with the UL Chaplaincy to offer financial assistance as well as [childcare bursaries](#) for those in need of them. You can download the childcare application form from the [Childcare Support](#) page of the PSU website. Please email postgradpresident@ul.ie or postgradvp@ul.ie with any queries you may have.

4.2 Career Services

A subsection of the [Cooperative Education & Careers Division](#), UL [Career Services](#) delivers professional development programmes to PGR students through a 3-credit professional development module. The module is delivered twice a year in an intensive series of short time blocks. You can ask for details of the module by contacting careers@ul.ie.

In addition to providing programmes for PGR students, Career Services provides all UL students with access to an extensive range of employability-focused activities, including:

- One-to-one career consultations
- Job search/LinkedIn
- Job vacancy system
- CV review drop-in clinics
- Psychometric testing
- Employer presentations
- Interview preparation
- Online aptitude tests
- Personality and values assessments

The primary access point to all appointments and events is the online booking system [CareersConnect](#).

4.3 Student Counselling

[Éist](#), UL's Student Counselling and Wellbeing service, seeks to help you focus on and understand more clearly the issues that concern you. By respecting your own values, choices and lifestyle, the counsellor can work with you to help you make choices or changes that are right for you. Counselling is not any one thing but is adapted by the counsellor to fit the needs of the individual. The relationship is based on support and advice, education and challenge, warmth and empathy.

Sessions are normally on a weekly or fortnightly basis for as long as both counsellor and student consider necessary. Each session usually lasts up to 50 minutes. The first meeting involves a detailed assessment and evaluation of the situation presented by the student. Here, also, the counsellor explains about the nature of the work and what the student might expect. The goals and objectives of counselling are established at this point. While most people are seen individually, group counselling can be offered when appropriate. The service's comprehensive [website](#) offers further information and a range of bespoke toolkits and self-help advice for students. Contact: counselling@ul.ie.

4.4 Disability Support Services

[Disability Support Services](#) is committed to providing educational opportunities to students with disabilities, including mature and international students, on full-time undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes. It is important that all incoming students with a disability register with the service so that an initial needs assessment, tailored supports, assistive technology solutions and specific exam requirements (extra time, reader pens, etc.) can be provided to them to support their learning and development at UL. Contact: Brenda.Shinners-Kennedy@ul.ie or Michelle.Hartnett@ul.ie.

4.5 UL Chaplaincy

The UL [Chaplaincy](#) works to meet the many and varied religious needs of the global university campus. The Chaplaincy recognises that life at UL is a dynamic, ever-changing experience, which brings all kinds of new opportunities and challenges to students. The chaplains offer a welcoming space and supportive presence to students and staff. They promote an open and caring environment where diversity is respected.

The key activities of the Chaplaincy fall into three categories: (i) support; (ii) worship/spirituality; and (iii) outreach/volunteering. The Chaplaincy works very closely with the PSU to administer the Student Financial Assistance Fund for those in most need throughout their period of study. Contact: John.Campion@ul.ie or Sarah.Orourke@ul.ie.

4.6 Student Complaints

From time to time, you may have legitimate complaints about UL's provision, facilities, services or staff. The university aims to ensure that student complaints are treated seriously and dealt with promptly, fairly and consistently. Complaints you make or concerns you raise will be treated sensitively and professionally.

The Student Complaints Policy is available on the [Policy Hub](#). Please ensure you read the document fully before invoking the policy. Furthermore, the PSU President and Vice President are available to have an impartial discussion with you about the options available to you through the policy.

4.7 Clubs and Societies

UL's clubs and societies are known collectively as [UL Wolves](#). There are over 80 clubs and societies to choose from, and trips at weekends are subsidised. Membership is open to all students. Visit the [UL Wolves](#) website for details.

4.8 Health and Wellness

Student Health Centre

If you become unwell, contact the [UL Student Health Centre](#) on 061 202434 during office hours (09.00 to 13.00 or 14.00 to 16.30). Services include access to a doctor (GP), nurse, blood tests, contraceptive clinics, sexual health clinic, physiotherapy and exam-related services, as required. Medical services are delivered by 'telephone triage' under the current COVID-19 restrictions so it is important that you call or send an email first to make an appointment. These initial consultations take place over the phone, after which you are advised to visit the medical staff, if necessary, in a safe and secure clinical environment. Contact: Ria.Toland@ul.ie.

Important Phone Numbers

- Call 999 for medical emergencies, i.e., for serious illness or injury or if someone's life is at risk.
- UL Campus Emergency (24 hours), tel: 061 213333
- Dr Ronan Ryder, [Old Windmill Medical Centre](#), Limerick city (out of hours), tel: 061 313919
- Limerick Doc (out of hours), tel: 087 7551570
- [Shannon Doc](#) (out of hours), tel: 1850 212999
- [HSELive Coronavirus Helpline](#), tel: 1850 241850 or 01 2408787 (Mon-Fri 08.00-19.30; Sat, Sun 09.00-16.30)
- [Text about it](#) to 50808, where crisis volunteers are available 24/7 for anonymous text conversations about anything that might be bothering you.

Medicine Delivery

Lloyds Pharmacy, Castletroy will deliver medicines to those who are ill or have been advised to self-isolate. If you are on regular medication, your prescription has to be from an Irish doctor and you need to give it to Lloyds Pharmacy to be kept on file. There are no delivery charges. Telephone Lloyds Pharmacy on 061 339454. Address: Unit 8 Centrepoint, Castletroy Shopping Centre, Castletroy, Co. Limerick.

COVID-19 Protocols

You can review UL's COVID-19 student guidelines and responsibilities [here](#).

4.9 Accommodation

On-Campus Accommodation

[Campus Life Services](#) is responsible for on-campus accommodation and can be contacted via accommodation@ul.ie. If you face accommodation issues after you have moved out or when you are trying to change your accommodation, [Threshold](#) and the [RTB](#) offer useful resources.

Off-Campus Accommodation

Information about off-campus accommodation can be found [here](#). Off-campus student villages within walking distance of the university include [Brookfield Hall Student Accommodation](#), [Courtyard Student Village](#) and [Park View Hall Student Accommodation](#).

Irish Property Rental Websites

[DAFT](#) and [RENT](#) have useful information about renting properties in Ireland.

4.10 Transport

Leap Card

The Student Leap Card is the national student travel and discount card. Using the Leap Card is the only way for full-time students to get their student discount on fares for Go-Ahead Ireland, Dublin Bus, Luas, Bus Éireann, DART and Irish Rail. You can find details on the Student Leap Card [here](#).

Bus Services

Campus-to-city bus routes and times can be found [here](#).

Travel Apps

Real Time Ireland, Leap Top Up App, My Taxi and Swift Taxis are some apps that can help you plan your travels. Download them from the App Store or Play Store.

4.11 Food Delivery Services

Limerick-based [Country Munch](#) delivers meals to on-campus students at a reduced cost. Deliveries are made on Monday and Wednesday. Packages such as three meals for €20 or five meals for €30 are available. Contact: eoин@countrymunch.com.

Students can avail of local grocery delivery services from supermarkets such as [Tesco](#), [SuperValu](#), [Aldi](#) and [Dunnes](#). Students can order a wide range of food from online food order and delivery services such as [Just Eat](#) and [Deliveroo](#).

4.12 Department Stores

[Deals](#) and [Euro Giant](#) discount retail stores offer a wide range of products, the majority of which are priced at €1.50. International retailers [Primark](#) and [TK Max](#) offer the latest fashion, beauty and homeware. [The Range](#) and [Home Store](#) offer home, garden and leisure products, including furniture and kitchen equipment.

5 International Student Supports

5.1 Irish Residence Permit

The [Irish Residence Permit](#) (IRP) is your registration certificate, not an identity card. You will be given an IRP when you register with immigration in Ireland, and the certificate's only function is to certify that you are registered. Your IRP is a very important document, and you must carry it with you at all times.

5.2 Irish Bank Account

You can set up an Irish bank account after you have registered at UL. Bank of Ireland is located on campus, and there are a number of other banks in Castletroy. Banking for students is free.

International students need a letter from Graduate & Professional Studies to open a student bank account – you can request the letter [here](#). Required documents that you must take to the bank when opening the account are your passport, the letter from the university and proof of your address in Ireland.

5.3 Student Health Insurance

You must have health insurance before you can obtain a Stamp 2 GNIB (Garda National Immigration Bureau) card. UL Global recommends the insurance provider [Arachas](#). Other providers in the market include [Swisscare](#), [Halligan Insurances](#) and [VHI Healthcare](#).

You will find more information on insurance on UL Global's website [here](#) – scroll down to **Where can I get medical insurance?** In addition, Enterprise Ireland's [Education in Ireland](#) website is quite informative.

5.4 About Limerick

There is a lot to do and explore in Limerick city. Follow the link below to introduce yourself to the city's charms:

<https://www.limerick.ie/discover/visiting/make-break-it/48-hours-limerick-city-and-county>