

IFUT welcomes enhanced measures to ensure safe reopening of higher education

Friday Sept 25th, 2020

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has welcomed enhanced measures announced for re-opening of colleges at the request of Minister for Higher Education, Simon Harris.

Joan Donegan, General Secretary of IFUT, said that the health and safety of tens of thousands of staff and students, their families and the broader community, must be central to the reopening of third level colleges around the country.

“Measures such as remote delivery of teaching where possible, strict distancing protocols in libraries, and enhanced measures such as more extensive wearing of masks will all contribute to a safer learning environment.

At the same time it is important for induction, mental health and general wellbeing of students, and for first years in particular, that every effort be made to enable orientation, essential research and practical work to continue.

Key to the ongoing control of Covid-19 in our colleges will be continued collaboration and consultation involving staff, students and university managements. This approach has worked well to date but will be even more important in the context of a potential second wave of the pandemic.

Sustainable third-level funding, to allow retention of sufficient lecturing staff and to deliver necessary social distancing measures by the universities, as promised in the new Programme for Government, should form a priority focus in next month’s Budget. The education of tens of thousands of our young people must not be jeopardised by funding deficiencies,” Joan Donegan said.

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