

# Insights into delivering a structured professional learning programme for academic staff: the DCU-IUA Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning Project

Suzanne Stone and Rob Lowney, Dublin City University



**QQI**

Quality and Qualifications Ireland  
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

# Insights into Delivering a Structured Professional Learning Programme for Academic Staff

The DCU-IUA Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning Project

Suzanne Stone & Rob Lowney  
Teaching Enhancement Unit

suzanne.stone@dcu.ie ; rob.lowney@dcu.ie  
@suzielearning ; @lowneyrob

Slides at: [bit.ly/dcu13feb](https://bit.ly/dcu13feb)

# Overview

1. Background to the EDTL project
2. Structure of project
3. DCU pilot development
4. Technology-enhanced assessment professional learning programme
5. Post-pilot implementation



Ollscoil Chathair  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City University

# Background to project: Europe

**New Skills Agenda for Europe 2016** - Digital technologies are driving change in the global economy and we need to ensure our students are suitably prepared

**EU Digital Education Action Plan 2018** - 11 actions to support technology use and the development of digital competences in education:

1. Making better use of digital technology for teaching and learning
2. Developing digital competences and skills

# Background to project: National

**National Skills Strategy 2025** - technology is one of the key drivers of change and improved digital skills will be vital for Ireland's future

**National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030** - teaching methods should increasingly be accompanied by e-learning and blended learning opportunities

# Background to project: National

**Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020** - provide rationale and action plan for embedding digital technologies in teaching, learning and assessment

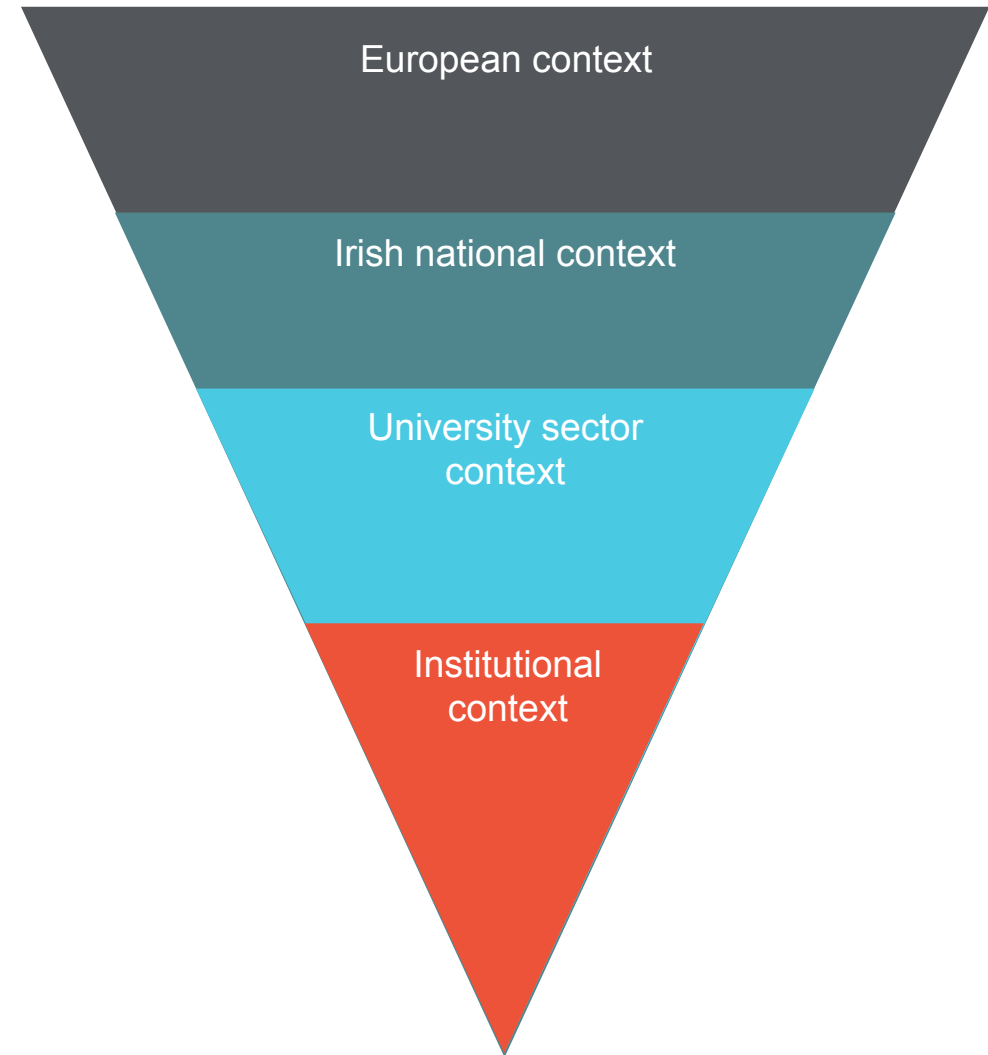
# Background to project: Sectoral / Local

**IUA Universities Charter 2018** - need to build on the quality of the student experience in a digital age, commit to developing a coherent national programme in digital learning

**DCU Strategic Plan 2017-2022** - University-wide curriculum review and an increase in digital learning initiatives and blended learning modules

# Opportunity

- IUA devised the project
- Applied for funding under HEA Innovation and Transformation Call 2018
- Digital learning programme



# Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning (EDTL)

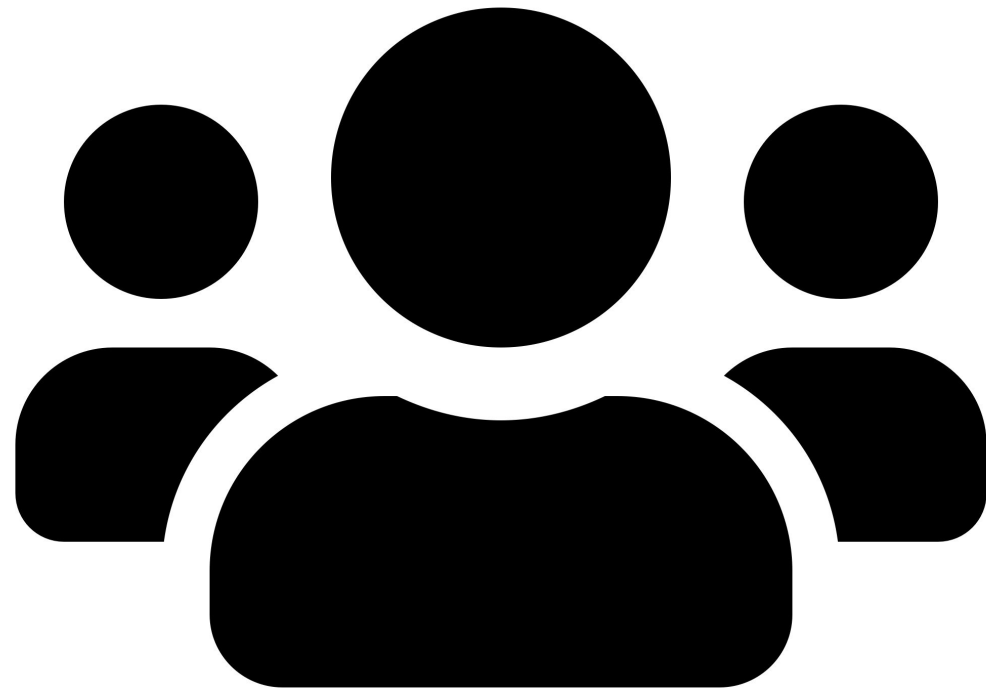
- Three-year nationally-funded project
- Project aim:
  - enhance the digital attributes and educational experiences of Irish university students
  - develop, pilot, review and roll out an ambitious staff development programme to enhance the digital confidence, skills and competences of those who teach in Irish universities



**Enhancing  
Digital Teaching  
and Learning**  
Irish Universities Association

# Approach

This project aims to mainstream digital in teaching and learning activities in Irish Universities, by addressing the professional development of all who teach or support teaching and learning.



Courtesy of Dr  
Sharon Flynn, IUA

# Approach



Not  
starting  
from zero



Pedagogy  
first



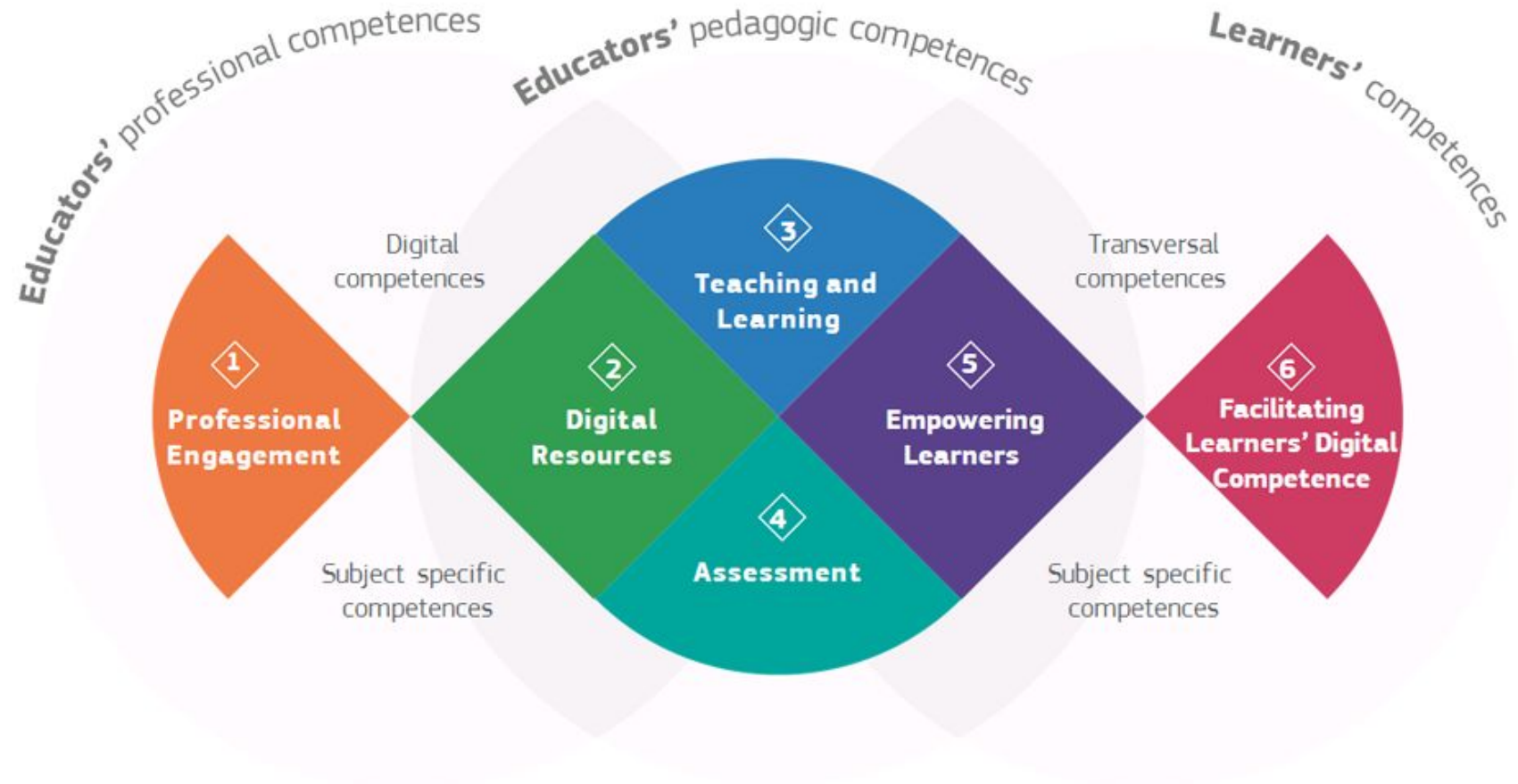
Discipline  
focus



Students  
as Partners



# Pedagogy first - DigCompEdu



European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators ([DigCompEdu](https://ec.europa.eu/digital-skills/en/framework-digital-competence-educators))

Courtesy of Dr  
Sharon Flynn, IUA

# Project structure

- Steering group
  - Senior management
- IUA project manager
  - Dr Sharon Flynn
- Project team
  - Project leads in 7 universities
  - Student intern



See [edtl.blog](https://edtl.blog) for more information

Sign up for our #IUADigEd webinars

Courtesy of Dr  
Sharon Flynn, IUA

# One pilot, seven flavours

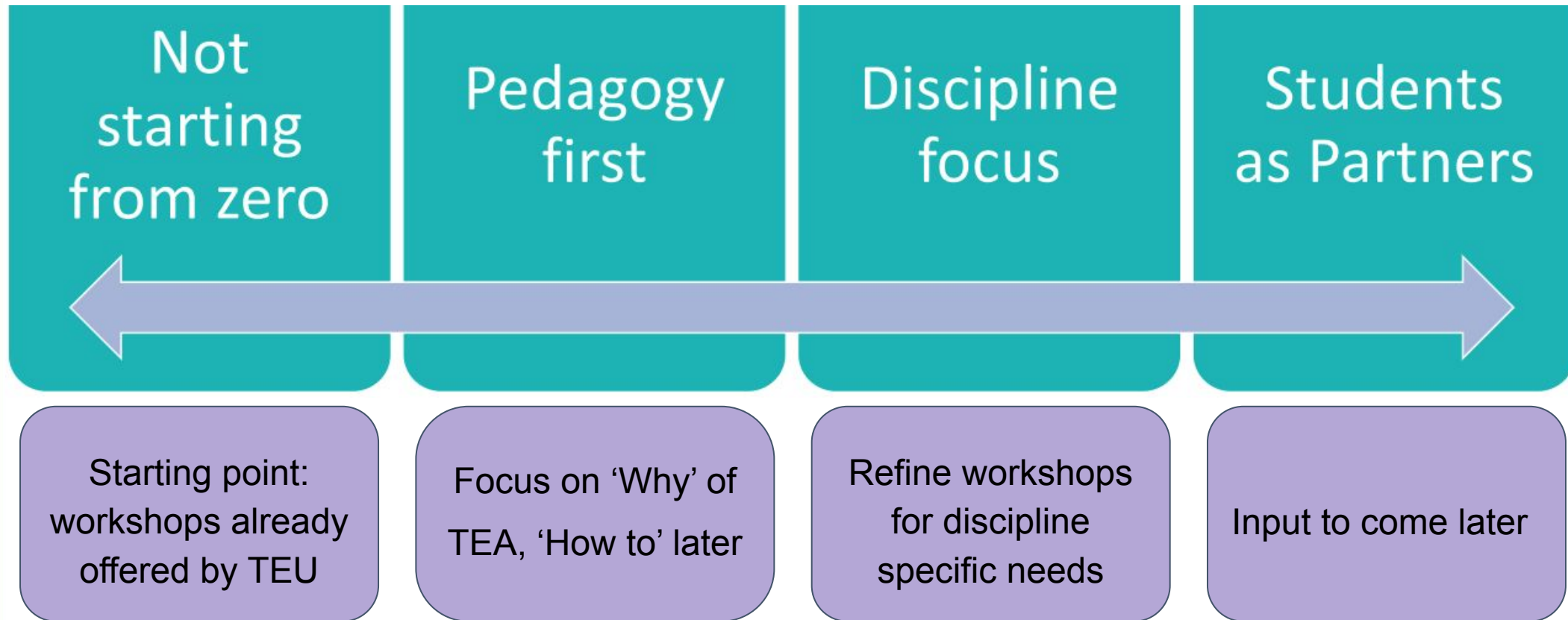
<b>Dublin City University</b>	Focus on assessment through structured workshops and development activities, involving 3 pilot groups.
<b>Trinity College Dublin</b>	Redesigning an accredited module in Technology Enhanced Learning to focus on the Flipped Classroom.
<b>University College Dublin</b>	Leveraging digital for student feedback in the College of Science with the move to the new VLE; initial needs analysis in College of Engineering, focus on creation of interactive animations for engagement.
<b>Maynooth University</b>	Conducted a needs assessment with 3 separate pilot groups, focus on information literacy and student skills, and aligning the learning outcomes of a new accredited module.
<b>University College Cork</b>	Leveraging the move to the new VLE to focus on staff digital skills.
<b>University of Limerick</b>	Conducting a needs assessment with 2 pilot groups, enhancing staff and student digital skills to support peer and self-assessment/
<b>NUI Galway</b>	Focus on curriculum (re)design and development of digital resources through a structured approach. Alignment with existing accredited CPD.

# DCU Pilot phase (Sep-Dec 2019)

- DCU's focus: technology-enhanced assessment (TEA)
- 4 work packages:
  - **Staff Development Programme**
  - Development and Maintenance of Online Resources
  - Ongoing Technical Enhancements for the VLE (Moodle)
  - Communications and Dissemination
- Staff development programme based around suite of 10 workshops drawing on **established professional learning opportunities** and **staff expertise**
- National Forum Professional Development Framework typology: Structured non-accredited

# DCU Pilot phase (Sep-Dec 2019)

## Staff development Programme: Underlying principles



# Project structure



# DCU Pilot phase (Sep-Dec 2019)

## Staff Development Programme: Lessons/**Adaptations**

- Timing is crucial! **Early engagement with schools required**
- Flexibility needed for delivery **Webinars now an option**
- Discussion more important than practical work - **Removed**
- Pedagogy focused workshop needs to be followed by technology 'how to' workshop - **now built into programme**
- Pre-workshop tasks too time consuming - **removed**
- DigCompEdu: Participants need scaffolding to engage.  
**Gamification Digital Pursuit adapted from JISC Digital Pursuit\***
- Development of **additional online resources** (non- tech focused\_ required - **work ongoing**



Ollscoil Chathair  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City University

\*Hibberson, S. (2020). *Digital Pursuits - playing the digital capability game!* - Inspiring learning. [online] Inspiring learning. Available at: <https://inspiringlearning.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2019/03/digital-pursuits-playing-the-digital-capability-game/> [Accessed 13 Feb. 2020].

# DCU Pilot phase Evaluation

- Evaluation underway
- Bamber's framework - beyond quantitative data towards evidence of impact on practice
- National Forum badge in development

## Reference

Bamber, V. (Ed.). (2013). *Evidencing the value of educational development. SEDA Special No 34*. London: SEDA. ISBN 978-1-902435-56-5.

# In summary

- Driven by identified needs at various levels
- Discipline-specific
- Tailored to participants' needs
- Scaffolded and ongoing support
- Mixture of type of engagement

# DCU Pilot phase (Sep-Dec 2019)

## Participants: Testimonials

“I was delighted to have the opportunity to partake in the EDTL Project. The team were fantastic and provided a great platform for learning. It was very practical. There was a great system of support provided when we were trying the new techniques which gave me confidence in using these. I enjoyed embedding these new strategies in my teaching as I could feel the level of engagement [from students] rising. The students were definitely engaged and enjoyed asking questions (e.g. mentimeter) and receiving feedback on their learning (E.g. in Kahoot)! Feedback from the students on these techniques was very positive. these were definitely informing teaching and learning”

# DCU Pilot phase (Sep-Dec 2019)

## Participants: Testimonials

“Participating in the EDTL workshops benefitted me because while there was an overall framework for the CPD, the detail was built around the identified needs of the group in question and this was really useful and one of the key reasons (I think) that staff engaged well with the initiative.”

# Purposefully different, consistently excellent

## Insights into Delivering a Structured Professional Learning Programme for Academic Staff

The DCU-IUA Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning Project

Suzanne Stone & Rob Lowney  
Teaching Enhancement Unit  
suzanne.stone@dcu.ie ; rob.lowney@dcu.ie  
@suzielearning ; @lowneyrob

Slides at: [bit.ly/dcu13feb](https://bit.ly/dcu13feb)