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
Insights into Delivering a Structured Professional Learning Programme for Academic Staff

The DCU-IUA Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning Project

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Slides at: 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
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.

Courtesy of Dr Sharon Flynn, IUA
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
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.
Approach

- Not starting from zero
- Pedagogy first
- Discipline focus
- Students as Partners
Pedagogy first - DigCompEdu

European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu)
Project structure

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

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

Sign up for our #IUADigEd webinars
## One pilot, seven flavours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dublin City University</td>
<td>Focus on assessment through structured workshops and development activities, involving 3 pilot groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinity College Dublin</td>
<td>Redesigning an accredited module in Technology Enhanced Learning to focus on the Flipped Classroom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>University College Dublin</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maynooth University</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>University College Cork</td>
<td>Leveraging the move to the new VLE to focus on staff digital skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Limerick</td>
<td>Conducting a needs assessment with 2 pilot groups, enhancing staff and student digital skills to support peer and self-assessment/</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUI Galway</td>
<td>Focus on curriculum (re)design and development of digital resources through a structured approach. Alignment with existing accredited CPD.</td>
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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

- Not starting from zero
- Pedagogy first
- Discipline focus
- Students as Partners

- Starting point: workshops already offered by TEU
- Focus on ‘Why’ of TEA, ‘How to’ later
- Refine workshops for discipline specific needs
- Input to come later
Project structure

- Development of suite of Digital assessment workshops
- Discipline specific needs analysis: Education & Psychology
- Custom workshop development
- Planning a TEA assessment
- Individual/group consultancies
- Workshop x3 engagement
- Pre-workshop learning
- Ongoing support
- Implement TEA assessment
- Review and refine
- Iterate and sustain

Icons courtesy of Fontawesome.com
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

DCU Pilot phase Evaluation

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

Reference
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”
“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

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