

Forum Insights

LEARNING INNOVATION NETWORK



LIN fosters and promotes innovation and professionalism in teaching and learning for academic staff through CPD and accredited programmes.

The Learning Innovation Network (LIN) is the network of professionals from higher education that support academic professional development (APD) for staff in the Irish higher education sector, in particular the Institutes of Technology and DIT. Our mission is to network, develop, collaborate and share teaching and learning modules and resources in addition to acting as an interface between institutions, teaching and learning and the National Forum.

The LIN Core Values are central to the work of LIN. They are

- Commitment to learning and development of each learner to achieve their potential
- Fairness, Justice, Equity, Respect, Ethical practice
- Valid/authentic, fair and consistent assessment
- Collaborative Learning, Community of Practice
- Evidenced research based teaching informed by scholarship
- Courage, Openness to new approaches, innovations, continuing reflection on professional practice

LIN is managed by the Coordination Group with members nominated from each IoT and DIT. All are directly involved in and leading academic development in addition to the enhancement of teaching learning and assessment practices and policies in their respective institutes. In effect, LIN is a responsive and proactive community of leaders supporting communities of practitioners. It brings together extensive expertise and experience. LIN has received funding from the National Forum.

LIN was established initially through Strategic Innovation Funding (SIF) to support teaching, learning and innovation in the IoT sector and has evolved into a representative group of teaching and learning. LIN received the highest ranking in the 2010 HEA commissioned SIF review and the HEA formally acknowledged the positive impact that LIN has had across higher education.

LIN developed a unique flexible pathway for professional development in key areas of the academic role and validated the Postgraduate Diploma in Learning, Teaching and Assessment.

This programme offers a flexible pathway specifically for educational practitioners through the completion of a selection of themed special purpose awards. The 2010 SIF review considered the Academic Development Programme (APD) 'impressive'. LIN members have developed masters' programmes in individual institutes.

Current LIN Initiatives

The network supports ongoing accredited professional development, through the LIN flexible pathway and through the recognition and promotion of offerings by individual member institutions. In addition, the network has developed a procedure for mapping level nine modules offered by other HE providers providing greater flexibility in professional development.

The LIN Coordination Group work continues to collaboratively advise and reflect on the ongoing changes and developments in higher education and to support each other in implementing change and enhancing the teaching and learning experiences of students.

LIN is currently engaged in a National Forum supported project entitled: Foundations in learning and teaching: developing a structured introduction for academic staff. This project will draw on the existing resources and expertise which have been developed by LIN partners. The project will promote and develop good teaching practice in Higher Education through developing a customised CPD course and resources for new academic staff. The course and resources will introduce new lecturers to teaching, learning, assessment and professional development in higher education. The project will conclude with a national event to disseminate resources and share best practice.

In addition, LIN has approved the establishment of a Special Interest Group - Student Led Learning under its remit. SLL is a national special interest group that supports retention, engagement and transition initiatives which foster student success. The special interest group is inclusive and includes members from HE, FE, HECA, USI, the Irish Council for International Students (ICOS), the Association for Higher Education Access and Disabilities (AHEAD) and the Institute of Irish Guidance Counsellors, who are committed to using their expertise and abilities to develop the association and communicate outputs locally and nationally. SLL hosted a national symposium on June 11th 2015 which provided an opportunity to disseminate the outputs of the project and to engage with current thinking and research in retention, engagement and transition.

LIN Future Initiatives

LIN has been a leader in implementing the recommendations of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030, particularly in relation to the ongoing development of academic staff and improvement of teaching skills and flexible learning structures. In particular, the following areas have been identified and prioritised for focus and engagement:

- the development of a framework for developing quality teaching and learning (including qualifications to teach).
- student satisfaction with quality of their teaching and learning.
- quality assurance, including the use of learning outcomes and the development of subject guidelines.

LIN will continue to inform teaching and learning in HE. For example, LIN partners will continue to play an important role in the development and realisation of the requirements of HEA

Compacts. With the changing landscape in HE and in particular the proposed establishment of Technological Universities and the changes to the mechanism for Quality Assurance, LIN can provide an evidenced based expertise in area such as:

- CPD for academics at all career stages
- flexible learning
- technology enhanced learning
- recognition of prior learning.

In addition, LIN will continue to collaborate with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and engage with future initiatives and opportunities to further its mission as appropriate.

LIN is as well positioned as ever to drive developments in teaching and learning practice and scholarship in higher education aligned with national policy.

LIN Coordination Group 2014-2015

Institute	Name	National Forum	Other Networks
AIT	Nuala Harding	Designated Contact	SLL, EDIN ILTA, AISHE
IT Blanchardstown	Daniel McSweeney		ILTA
IT Carlow	Anne Carpenter	Designated Contact	EDIN, AISHE
CIT	Marese Bermingham	Designated Contact	SLL
DIT	Jen Harvey	Board Member	EDIN, ILTA, AISHE, ELSS
Dundalk IT	Gerry Gallagher	Designated Contact	AISHE, ILTA
GMIT	Carina Ginty	Designated Contact	SLL, EDIN
IADT	Marion Palmer	Board Member	EDIN, AISHE, ILTA
LIT	Martin Fitzgerald Michael Ryan	Designated Contact	EDIN, AISHE
LYIT	Lynne Ramsey	Designated Contact	
ITT Dublin	Rosemary Cooper	Designated Contact	EDIN, ASIHE
IT Sligo	Stephanie Donegan	Designated Contact	EDIN
IT Tralee	Noel Mulligan	Designated Contact	
WIT	Carol O'Byrne John Wall		
IOTI	Jim Murray	Designated Contact	

Further information about LIN:

Address: LIN, c/o IOTI, c/o IOTI, First Floor, Fumbally Lane, New Street, Dublin 8

Twitter: @LIN_LTN Web: www.lin.ie