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Designing Together: Effective Strategies for Creating a Collaborative Curriculum to Support Academic Development

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Designing Together: Effective Strategies for Creating a Collaborative Curriculum to Support Academic Professional Development

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Publication overview

This publication has arisen out of collaborative work completed as part of the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) project funded under Strand 2 of the Irish Higher Education Authority (HEA) Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) sectoral project Improving Services to Students and Capacity-building (2006–10), involving all 13 Irish institutes of technology and the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). One of the three objectives of this strand was to scope the parameters of an agreed academic development programme. Since September 2008, the LIN accredited professional development (APD) working group has been striving towards the establishment of a sustainable shared academic development programme that might be offered by the sector and across the sector. As part of this process, several course designs were considered, a 10-ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credit LIN APD Special Purpose Award design template was developed, seven of the partner institutions were commissioned to develop, pilot and evaluate these awards, and a model was subsequently developed in order that successful completion of various combinations of these awards could lead to a Level 9 postgraduate LIN award in its own right. This publication provides an overview of the innovative collaborative work conducted during the timescale of this project.

The way in which members of the APD working group have worked together to create a collaborative curriculum to support academic professional development has been one of the main strengths of this three-year project. This collaborative process was initially celebrated as part of a one-day event held in January 2010 in the DIT Grangegorman Campus after the project funding had technically ceased. This publication builds on this work, by pulling together the working group project outcomes and presentations from the event, combined with institutional case studies and recommendations

from project partners. We are also delighted that David Baume, who gave very generously of his time to support our project, has given permission for us to use two sections outlining his contributions to curriculum development and the identification of core values within curriculum design. We are also appreciative of support from the HEA for this project and would like to thank Muiris O'Connor, who has also kindly contributed a project overview for the publication.

Ultimately, the success of the work of the APD working group has been evident not only through the very positive evaluation of the project as part of the HEA evaluation conducted by Gordon Davies, but also – and more importantly – through the high regard in which the project is held across the sector and through the ongoing continued activities of the working group past the end of the project. This has meant that the outcomes scoped in the early stages of the project have been not only achieved but surpassed: a shared cross-institutional APD postgraduate programme has become a reality.

We hope that other projects might benefit from the work outlined in this publication.

Noel Fitzpatrick and Jen Harvey

Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview of the LIN project

Dr Frank McMahon (DIT and LIN project co-chair)

In September 2006, one of the projects submitted to the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) was The Institutes of Technology Sector Learning Network: Delivering Systemic Change. This project was submitted jointly by the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) and the Council of Directors of Institutes of Technology (since renamed Institutes of Technology Ireland, IoTI). It involved all of the institutes of technology (Athlone, Cork, Dundalk, Galway-Mayo, Dun Laoghaire, Carlow, Sligo, Tallaght, Tralee, Limerick, Letterkenny and Waterford) in partnership with DIT.

There were five strands to the project:

- sectoral capacity assessment (2006–7);
- learning innovation network (2006–10);
- sectoral leadership and management development;
- staff empowerment; and
- development of the strategic management capacity of Management Information Systems (MIS).

The project sought over €8m from SIF, to which it pledged to commit €12m in matching funds from the institutes. This funding was granted in 2006.

Learning Innovation Network

The Learning Innovation Network (LIN) set itself three project objectives:

- to provide a centrally co-ordinated repository service and portal;
- to scope the parameters of an agreed academic development programme; and
- to develop a model for a national excellence in learning and teaching awards system.

Initially, the LIN strand had a small steering group chaired jointly by Marian Coy (Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, GMIT) and Frank McMahon (DIT), but it quickly became evident that there was great interest in the activities of the strand and that all higher education institutions (HEIs) wished to have a member on the steering group. In this respect, LIN was different from all other strands of the project.

LIN went well beyond the relatively modest objectives set for it. Thus, while it was envisaged that it would scope the parameters of an agreed academic development programme, it was evident that there were already some existing models of such programmes. DIT had established a learning and teaching centre in 1999, and this centre had provided development programmes for academic staff at Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma and MA level. While the LIN project could have contented itself by analysing the merits of the DIT programme and comparing that project with others in Ireland and abroad, this would not have satisfied the thirst for action that existed. Requests were made to DIT to make its programme available to participants from other HEIs in the LIN network. It was agreed that the programme could be modified in its delivery mode so that it could be offered in Athlone IT and IT Carlow.

The DIT programme attracted over 50 off-campus participants from Athlone IT and IT Carlow. This had the effect of boosting the number of staff with a qualification in pedagogy.

LIN annual conference and workshops

One of the activities chosen by LIN to promote its programme was an annual conference of learning and teaching innovation. The first such conference was held in October 2008 in Athlone, attracting a full-capacity attendance of 180. The second annual conference took place in October 2009, and again it was filled to capacity. Representatives of all universities were invited to the conferences.

The experiences of these two conferences illustrated the interest there was in learning about new, innovative ways to teach or assess students. A second interesting trend was the large jump in the number of academics who indicated their willingness to present a paper or poster at the second of the conferences. I have no doubt that the annual conferences will long continue beyond the end of the SIF project.

A second initiative of the LIN network was the offering of seminars or workshops on topics in the area of learning and teaching at institutes of technology (IoTs) around the country. Topics covered in these sessions included:

- integrating formative assessment in course design;
- assessment and the first-year curriculum;
- project-based assessment; and
- assessment techniques.

Every IoT participated in this series, and the sessions were well attended. A total of 32 half-day workshops and three full workshops took place. This is another indicator of the level of interest in the development of new approaches to learning and teaching.

LIN academic development project

The LIN network devoted considerable effort to scoping an appropriate development programme for academic staff. As well as surveying the programmes on offer in Ireland, research was undertaken into models in other countries. Noel Fitzpatrick, Jen Harvey and Nuala Harding have described the approach to the development of a model programme elsewhere in this publication. I would like to emphasise just one aspect of the approach undertaken: the requirement that there should be an emphasis on collaboration between HEIs. In many respects, it is easier to develop a programme in just a few centres and agree to offer it in other centres. But a programme that is designed to be collaborative ensures the active participation of the maximum number of HEIs. This was the approach undertaken by LIN, and you can see the fruits of their success here.

Review of LIN

All projects funded by SIF were the subject of a review by an external consultant, Dr Gordon Davies, in February 2010. In his report (Davies 2010), Dr Davies assigned a number (rating) to each project, where a rating of 1 was defined thus:

> These are excellent projects contributing key outcomes of benefit to all of higher education or to one of the sectors. They should be mainstreamed and the outcomes should be disseminated sector- or system-wide.

The LIN project was graded as a 1, with the comment that 'this well-regarded project has been important in stimulating collaboration among IoTs. It contributed to the SIF 2 Flexible Learning Project and its contributions are being mainstreamed. The academic development programme is impressive, with candid assessments by

participants'. This very impressive rating should facilitate ongoing funding to continue the work started by the LIN project.

OECD review of quality teaching

The importance of developing academic staff in terms of their knowledge of teaching and assessment has been somewhat neglected in higher education compared with primary- and secondary-level education. It is clearly and widely accepted that every teacher at primary and secondary level should have a formal qualification in education, but no such requirement is made of teachers in higher education. A recent review of quality teaching in higher education conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2009) analysed various initiatives undertaken by HEIs to improve the quality of teaching, and emphasised the need for commitment from senior management to capturing all the dimensions that affect quality teaching. It distinguished between top-down initiatives and bottom-up initiatives from faculty members, and it grouped the teaching and learning support initiatives to include continuing education for faculty and pedagogy enhancement.

While the achievement of quality in teaching requires a multifaceted approach, one of these facets is the development of academic staff.

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Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2009). *Learning Our Lesson: Review of Quality Teaching in Higher Education*. OECD, Paris.

1.2 The LIN project within the context of the Strategic Innovation Fund

Muiris O'Connor (HEA) and Abigail Chantler (HEA)

Introduction

The Irish Higher Education Authority (HEA) is honoured to have the opportunity to contribute to the 'Designing Together' symposium and to this publication. Notwithstanding the high calibre of the projects supported by the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) – and their very positive impact upon the development of the Irish higher education sector – raising the profile of the wide range of innovative activities that the SIF has stimulated remains 'work in progress', to which this publication makes an important contribution. It numbers among a host of recent SIF reports, conferences, seminars and launches of web-based resources that are materialising with increasing frequency as SIF-funded projects come to fruition. These outputs are of critical importance: not only as vehicles for the dissemination of project findings and for the sharing of good practice, but as testimony to the benefits of the inter-institutional collaboration that has characterised the SIF. Recent external evaluations of the programme have urged greater promotion of its achievements and of the lessons learned from the implementation of this innovative funding mechanism. The LIN conferences have played a significant role both in highlighting the success of collaborative SIF ventures and in the dissemination of project outputs with sectoral impact.

The Strategic Innovation Fund

The SIF was first announced in April 2005 by the Minister for Education and Science in a major policy statement on higher

education.[1] This statement outlined the Irish government's response to the OECD's *Review of Higher Education in Ireland* (2004), which called for a 'quantum leap' in investment in higher education and recommended that there should be 'a Strategic Investment Fund for national priorities along the lines of the PRTLI [Programme for Research in Third-level Institutions]' (OECD 2004, p. 66). The implementation of this recommendation through the creation of the SIF provided the government with a mechanism for the support of innovation and strategic change across the higher education sector. As a multi-annual fund of €510 million to be allocated on a competitive basis throughout the course of the National Development Plan (NDP) (2007–13), the SIF was conceived as a means by which institutions could develop their capabilities in a range of areas of critical importance to their core missions (see Government of Ireland 2006, pp. 205–6). Specifically, the programme had the following main objectives:

- to enhance the delivery of education and research;
- to prepare for the expansion and development of postgraduate education;
- to support innovation and quality improvement in teaching and learning; and
- to support access, retention and progression (see Government of Ireland 2006, p. 205).

The broad range of objectives of the fund has to be understood within the context of the stage of development of the Irish higher education system in 2006 (the year in which the programme

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[1]   See Mary Hanafin TD, Minister for Education and Science, 'Implementing the OECD Report'. Address on the occasion of the launch of the European University Association's *Review of Quality Assurance in Irish Universities* sectoral report, 25 April 2005.

commenced). Underpinned by a broad interpretation of innovation, the SIF projects were new within the Irish higher education landscape, with its diversity of institutions each with their own missions and developmental histories. The programme played a crucially important role by enabling the Irish higher education system to address structural and developmental deficits in order to promote modernisation and reform. The SIF was designed to increase institutions' capacity and their responsiveness to the needs of the wider economy and society, and to enable them to rise collectively to the challenges posed by an increasingly competitive global marketplace for higher education. The SIF was also devised as a source of targeted investment in teaching and learning, addressing a perceived imbalance in this area vis-à-vis research investment. Indeed, this was the first significant competitive funding available to the institutes of technology to support innovation in teaching and learning and the promotion of equity of access to higher education.[2]

One of the most distinctive features of the SIF, which we hope will be its key legacy, is the emphasis on inter-institutional collaboration and on the alignment of institutional strategies with national priorities. The emphasis on inter-institutional collaboration in the SIF heralded a sea change in institutions' *modus operandi*. Building on a trend first supported by the PRTLI, the SIF has contributed to a broadening and deepening of collaboration within the higher education sector, transforming it from a loose assemblage of disparate entities competing for shrinking resources into a more

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[2] Prior to the launch of the SIF, the HEA's strategic initiatives programme had provided the universities with a decade of modest but very effective investment in centres of excellence for teaching and learning and academic professional development, and in the promotion of equity of access to higher education. The funding for the strategic initiatives was top-sliced from the core budget for higher education.

consolidated organic entity comprising teams of institutions facing common challenges together.

In terms of programme outcomes, projects funded through the SIF have contributed to very significant advances in Irish higher education across a wide range of areas and have helped to ensure that Ireland continues to lead in the implementation of international initiatives such as the Bologna Process and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Flexible course provision, the recognition of work-based learning and prior learning, the enhancement of engagement with enterprise and the development of regionally coherent approaches to improve access to higher education are among the many achievements of SIF projects. The development and expansion of graduate schools has been advanced significantly through the SIF, and the fund has also has made an important contribution to restructuring and change management within and between higher education institutions in recent years. The SIF has facilitated the consolidation of partnerships at regional level and has led to the emergence of a number of truly national resources, funded through the SIF, that enhance the collective identity and quality of the system as a whole.[3]

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[3]   The National Academy for Integration of Research's teaching and learning (www.nairtl.ie), LIN's academic professional development programmes (www.linireland.com) and IUA's national online repository for Irish research (www.rian.ie) provide a rich sense of the collaborations achieved under Cycle 1 of the SIF. Similarly, the Shannon Consortium (www.ul.ie/shannonconsortium) and, more recently, the Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance (www.drhea.ie) illustrate the deepening of co-operation on a regional basis that has emerged through the SIF – co-operation further exemplified by the BlueBrick online portal. This is an initiative of the Institutes of Technology Ireland (IoTI) that enables prospective students to search and apply for a range of courses offered on a flexible basis in the institutes of technology; it also epitomises the system-wide enhancement and modernisation that the SIF has facilitated (see www.bluebrick.ie).

Given the innovative nature of the SIF as a funding mechanism and the clear strategic advantages that have accrued to the sector as a result of SIF investment, it is particularly unfortunate that, since late 2008, the global economic downturn and the severe deterioration in Irish public finances have precipitated significant reductions in the allocation of SIF funds.[4] Not only have these reductions curtailed the scope of some SIF projects, but the accompanying unpredictability regarding the level of funding available and the flow of funds has forced SIF consortia to operate in a difficult climate of uncertainty.[5] Ironically, the deterioration in available resources has been accompanied by a significant increase in the bureaucratic burden associated with the SIF; the necessity for increased accountability has resulted in an escalation in institutions' reporting obligations. In addition, the recent impact assessment of the programme, required as part of the mid-term evaluation of the NDP, has added further to the administrative load of SIF consortia.

However, despite the adverse economic circumstances in which much SIF activity has been undertaken, institutions have demonstrated a high level of commitment to the objectives of their SIF proposals and have managed to leverage permanent change in key areas of activity. As the *Report of the SIF Evaluation* acknowledges, the achievements of the SIF projects to date have been impressive and the economy has reaped a wide range of direct

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[4]   Of the €510 million initially anticipated for the SIF, €58 million was allocated to higher education institutions up to December 2009 with a further €18 million confirmed for 2010. While the effect of these reductions on projects funded under SIF Cycle 2 (which commenced in late 2008) has been severe, the effect on Cycle 1 projects has been mitigated by their earlier start date in 2006.

[5]   The progress of SIF projects has also been impeded by the implementation of the Employment Control Framework as the mechanism by which the moratorium on recruitment in the public sector, which commenced in spring of 2009, has been applied to higher education institutions.

and indirect benefits from the programme (see Davies 2010). Paradoxically, the deterioration in the public resources available to the SIF has been accompanied by the growing importance of some of the core objectives for which it was developed. This is particularly the case in relation to the upskilling, flexible learning and access objectives of the programme, which are becoming an increasingly vital part of the higher education sector's contribution to national economic renewal. Innovation in teaching and learning is vital to underpin progress on all of these fronts.

The collaborative spirit that has been a hallmark of the SIF is key to the emergence of the more efficient higher education sector that the current economic exigency necessitates. In particular, SIF collaborations provide a valuable blueprint for the development of regional clusters that are likely to become an important feature of the future structure of Irish education as envisaged in the National Strategy for Higher Education. Such collaboration will also ensure that the system-level efficiencies, the rationalisation of course provision and the joint development and delivery of new programmes are optimised.[6] Pooling resources, sharing ideas, establishing networks and preventing wasteful duplication are all critical to ensuring that Ireland's higher education institutions thrive in the competitive, global environment of the 21st century.

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[6] As the first financial shared services model to be utilised within Irish higher education, the Shannon Consortium's Procurement Network exemplifies the system-level efficiencies achieved through the SIF. The Procurement Network has employed 'best practice' procurement tools to assist partners in maximising environmentally sustainable expenditure on goods and services, and is also illustrative of the value of the wider institutional restructuring processes that the SIF has facilitated. As Davies acknowledges, 'SIF has enabled higher education institutions to restructure academic and administrative processes, streamline management and governance structures, clarify roles, and delegate responsibility to appropriate levels' (Davies 2010, p. 9).

The external evaluation of the SIF undertaken by Gordon Davies is an objective and candid review of the programme that has provided a focus for the management of the declining resources available. Davies's *Report of the SIF Evaluation* acknowledged the substantial achievements of the programme to date across the range of core objectives of the fund. It also called for the consolidation and mainstreaming of SIF activity and recommended the aggregation of projects and initiatives on a cross-thematic basis. While complimenting the improvement in institutions' strategic planning and steering that has been achieved through the SIF, Davies suggested that the definition of SIF project objectives and performance indicators warranted improvement, indicating that clearer articulation of expected outputs and outcomes at a project's commencement facilitates the assessment of its success on its conclusion.

While the achievements of the SIF extend across many aspects of Irish higher education, for the purposes of this section we wish to concentrate on the role of the fund in supporting innovation in teaching and learning.

SIF support for innovation in teaching and learning

The fundamental challenges are teaching and learning challenges as we seek to engage and to support citizens, young and old, Irish and international, in their pursuit of advanced levels of achievement in the disciplines of their choice. We must continue to learn about learning and to do it better than most other countries with whom we compete. Operating in a global environment, a key objective is to ensure that, as a country, we secure an international reputation for excellence in teaching and

learning and in research and innovation. (HEA 2009, p. 1)[7]

The enhancement of teaching and learning in Irish higher education has been a core objective and function of the SIF. As such, it has supported a wide range of collaborative projects aimed at developing and disseminating innovation in teaching and learning, and has contributed to greatly enhanced teaching quality and capability across the sector.

The crucial importance of teaching and learning to the work of the higher education sector cannot be overestimated: the nurturing of highly skilled graduates is of vital importance to the modern global economy and to the emergent multicultural society that is its counterpart. Irish higher education is undergoing a renewal of undergraduate provision with increased emphasis on generic skills such as quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, communication skills and team-working skills. The growing diversity within the student population necessitates continual innovation and refinement of our teaching methods and pedagogical approaches as well as a diversification in the delivery of higher learning and upskilling opportunities. Arguably one of the greatest achievements of the SIF has been to raise the profile of teaching and learning.

The internationally renowned National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL), funded under Cycle 1 of the SIF, promotes innovation, supports development and sustains

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[7] The HEA submission calls for 'parity of esteem between the teaching mission and the research mission of higher education', which 'should be reflected in resource allocations, promotion criteria and in the full range of metrics that are adopted to assess performance at individual level, institution level and system level' (HEA 2009, p. 3).

the good practice that links research with teaching and learning.[8] The NAIRTL consortium promotes research-informed teaching to students from all backgrounds through the training and professional development of postgraduate students and academic staff, through the development of institutional strategies and policies, and through the creation of tools, technologies, pedagogies and curricula that support the integration of research, teaching and learning. The consortium has overseen an explosion in activity in research-led teaching in recent years, including the establishment of the National Awards for Excellence in Teaching, the creation of a national framework for the professional development of supervisors of postgraduate students and the promotion of a 'learning outcomes approach to teaching and learning' through a series of national and international workshops.[9] Other advances in teaching and learning supported through the SIF include the CONTINUE project (led by IT Tallaght), the Civic Engagement, Student Volunteering and Active Citizenship project (led by National University of Ireland, Galway), the National Centre for Excellence in Mathematics and Science (led by the University of Limerick) and the Dublin Centre for Academic Development (established by the Dublin Regional Higher Education Alliance).[10]

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[8] NAIRTL is a UCC-led collaborative initiative involving Cork Institute of Technology, National University of Ireland Galway, Trinity College Dublin and Waterford Institute of Technology.

[9] NAIRTL promotes a vision of a higher education sector in which 'research and teaching go hand in hand', in which 'students and academics work in inclusive research, teaching and learning partnerships', in which 'opportunities are created for all students to engage in and be challenged by appropriate scholarly activity from their first year of undergraduate studies' and in which 'all teachers and learners are scholars, life-long learners, and life-long enquirers'. See www.nairtl.ie.

[10] See www.campusengage.ie, www.nce-mstl.ie and www.drhea.ie.

The collective engagement with common challenges facilitated by the SIF has enriched the spirit of enquiry and research that is the source of this ongoing renewal and quality improvement in teaching and learning. Research plays a decisive role in teaching and learning in a higher education setting, and the benefits of fostering a close relationship between research, teaching and learning are manifold. For the academic, presenting new research to an audience of engaged, critical and responsive students is one of the most stimulating and rewarding ways of developing new ideas, theories and solutions. For the student, engaging with such innovative teaching provides privileged exposure to cutting-edge research and a learning experience of the highest quality. Such an experience is not based merely on the transmission of knowledge, imbided passively, but rather on achieving a degree of empathy with the lecturer's thought processes. It is by interacting with academic staff who are themselves research-active that students develop the skills of questioning, problem-solving and communication that are essential for fostering entrepreneurship and for encouraging students' continual engagement with learning. A high-quality learning experience such as this inspires students to pursue their studies further, thus helping to create a thriving 'fourth-level Ireland' and to encourage the pursuit of lifelong learning.

While research has many objectives, notably the development and refinement of solutions to complex social, economic and technological challenges, the most immediate purpose of the research mission in higher education is to underpin continuous advancement in teaching and learning. The type of graduate demanded by today's society means that students must learn to be active and independent explorers of knowledge. The spirit of learning and of reaching beyond the conventional that underpins research and innovation should be the driving spirit across all disciplines and in all Irish higher education institutions. Rather than viewing the teaching and research missions as opposing dimensions

of higher education, the priority for the future will be to strengthen the connection between research and teaching to the mutual enhancement of both.

The Learning Innovation Network

LIN is the flagship teaching and learning initiative of the institute of technology (IoT) sector. Funded under Cycle 1 of the SIF as a strand of IoTI's Delivering Systemic Change project, LIN aims to disseminate and promote best practice and innovation in teaching and learning at sectoral level. The impact of the network has been tremendous, and its work in the area of continuing professional development is especially noteworthy.

The most important achievements of LIN include a comprehensive survey of teaching and learning activities in the IoT sector, the agreement of a set of good practice benchmarks for these activities, and the development of a model for sectoral awards in teaching and learning. The creation of the LIN Portal – a co-ordinated, online repository of teaching and learning resources that complements the National Digital Learning Resources (NDLR) website – has greatly facilitated individual academics' engagement with the work of the LIN, providing users with a host of resources as well as private space and a discussion forum.[11] The LIN website and newsletters have also raised the profile of the project.[12] The dissemination of 'best practice' in teaching and learning has been achieved through the numerous national workshops hosted by the LIN on a wide range of topics – for instance, Assistive Technologies for Students with Dyslexia, Introduction to Podcasting, Linking Assessments to

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[11] See the LIN Portal (www.iot-portal.ie) and the NDLR website (www.ndlr.ie).

[12] See the LIN website (www.linireland.com). Fourteen editions of the LIN newsletter have been published.

Learning Outcomes and Mind Mapping, Accelerated Learning and Thinking – and through the LIN annual conferences.

It is in the area of academic professional development (APD) that LIN has made its most distinctive contribution. Broadly speaking, continuing professional development remains a relatively undeveloped area within the context of Irish higher education, despite its vital importance for supporting and sustaining quality in teaching and learning.[13] Thus, without prejudice to the few pre-existing examples of good practice in the area on which the LIN has built, the network's advancement of inter-institutional collaboration in APD has been groundbreaking.

The first postgraduate APD programme in the Republic of Ireland was Dublin Institute of Technology's Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching, which is mandatory for all DIT staff and comprises two modules: Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, and Designing Curricula and Assessment Strategies.[14] The LIN piloted a modified version of this course in Athlone Institute of Technology and IT Carlow. In addition, LIN has established a modular framework for APD within the sector; by engaging with this framework, staff can develop a range of agreed core competencies. Following HETAC accreditation guidelines, the framework facilitates the acquisition of Special Purpose Awards at Level 9 of the National Framework of

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[13] The fact that in the UK the Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCHE), accredited by the Higher Education Academy, is mandatory for all new lecturers is a reflection of the more advanced quality assurance mechanisms that have been implemented in the UK since the early 1990s. (See the website of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), www.qaa.ac.uk.)

[14] Participants who successfully complete the Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching are eligible to progress to the MA in Higher Education or to the MSc in Applied E-learning, both of which are also offered by DIT.

Qualifications (NFQ) (each worth 10 ECTS credits) and their combination into a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education (worth 30 ECTS credits).[15] Building on local expertise in a number of IoTs, seven of these awards are currently being developed: Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, Assessment and Evaluation, Mentoring, Enquiry-based Learning, Formative Assessment and Feedback, Technology-enhanced Learning, and Engaging in Educational Research Practice.[16]

Therefore, while the discrete programme outputs of LIN have themselves been of great merit and importance, their enumeration nonetheless belies the scale of the achievement of the project in terms of its broader strategic impact on the IoT sector. LIN epitomises the high level of engagement of the sector with the SIF in terms of strategic reflection, honest assessment of capabilities and challenges, and determination to define for IoTs a vital and distinctive role within the Irish higher education landscape of the 21st century. The forum provided by LIN has contributed greatly to the sense of common purpose and to the scale of ambition demonstrated by the institutes of technology in their response to the SIF. The sector's very impressive instinctive support for collaborative action has resonated strongly with the objectives of the fund. This common purpose and ambition is clearly evident in the leadership and vision demonstrated by the sector in their development of the Bluebrick portal for flexible learning opportunities in higher education.

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[15]   On Ireland's National Framework of Qualifications, see www.nfq.ie.

[16]   These modules are being developed by: Waterford Institute of Technology; Athlone Institute of Technology; IT Sligo; IT Carlow; Limerick Institute of Technology; and IT Blanchardstown. In addition, DIT has validated two modules (each worth 5 ECTS credits) in Personal Development Planning and Reflection, and Action and Evidence.

At the upper end of the qualifications framework, students are learning at the frontiers of human understanding and all academic staff in Irish higher education institutions have a professional obligation to be up to date in their disciplines as well as in teaching and learning methodologies. The levels of participation in higher education that we now require, and to which we now aspire, are unprecedented. New and innovative approaches are needed to bring increasing numbers of citizens up to the skill and competence levels associated with high educational achievement and successful engagement with the knowledge economy. This will require continual renewal and refinement of our approaches to teaching and learning.

While academics and institutions may differ in their areas of specialisation, all pursue excellence in teaching and learning – an aspiration best addressed collectively and collaboratively. Significant advances are being made in teaching and learning in the Irish higher education system. The last decade has seen the establishment of centres for educational development and academic practice, the increased availability of professional programmes in teaching and learning, developments in technology-supported learning, the adoption of new forms of pedagogy for enhanced student engagement, and an increasing emphasis on teaching in the tenure and promotion processes for academic staff.

Therefore, we salute the achievements of LIN to date: it has been highly collaborative and innovative, and has created a sustainable, cost-effective legacy in teaching and learning capability on which the IoT sector will now build. LIN and other SIF-supported teaching and learning initiatives have provided many excellent examples of practice. A key challenge now is to convert best practice into standard practice across the Irish higher education system.

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1.3 APD working group and LIN learning development officer work to support the development of the LIN APDs overview

Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT and LIN learning development officer) and Dr Jen Harvey (DIT and chair of APD working group)

APD working group members

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Introduction

The Learning Innovation Network (LIN) was funded under Strand 2 of the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF)-funded project Improving Services to Students and Capacity Building (2006–10). Between April 2007 and December 2010, the third project goal (scoping the parameters of an agreed academic development programme) was attained through an iterative collaborative design process involving a number of partners in the institutes of technology (IoTs). To help achieve this goal, an academic professional development (APD) working group was established in 2007 'to inform the LIN steering committee upon the establishment and roll-out of a new sustainable model for an agreed academic development programme by consulting with key stakeholder groups, where relevant, in order to:

- guide the design, development and delivery of a structured CPD programme that can be developed collaboratively and delivered cross-institutionally within the project timescale;

- establish and embed an infrastructure that will support the roll-out of the ADP across and within the IoT sector; and

- oversee the piloting and evaluation of an agreed ADP in at least three different IoTs.'

This working group met on numerous occasions throughout the project and continued to meet in 2010 as an independently supported sub-committee of the Institutes of Technology Ireland (IoTI) Flexible Learning Project. The full terms of reference and outline of the work of this group during this period are included in Appendix 1.2. The LIN APD working group acted as a true 'community of practice' outside the formal structure of a sub-committee, primarily through the sharing of experience that continues to define the group's activity.

Phase 1: building capacity and planning the shared APD courses

In September 2007, the initial phase (Phase I) of the development of a shared academic programme concentrated on capacity-building within the sector, as a way of both training potential tutors and supporting the collaborative curriculum design process in the development of the APD programme. Capacity-building commenced with the roll-out of an existing award (DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching) in two IoTs: Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) and IT Carlow. An off-campus version of the DIT programme (see Section 2.2) was offered twice over two consecutive years and also attracted staff from IT Tralee, IT Sligo and, in the final year, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). In addition to the DIT Certificate course (30 ECTS), a short 5-ECTS course (already validated through DIT) was tailored, piloted and

evaluated in AIT. These initial studies were essential in determining what might be considered best practice in the design, structure and implementation of the new APD awards.

The LIN learning development officer was instrumental in co-ordinating activities between the various institutions and establishing the programme participants as a virtual community during this early phase of the project. A number of online initiatives were introduced to bring together staff from different institutions who were enrolled on the various programmes but had a shared interest. Initially, these activities were effective in bringing together a cross-institutional participant community of practice: issues were identified and discussed, and knowledge was created and shared within a safe collaborative online space. An evaluation report was written in August 2008 to capture the lessons learned throughout this initial roll-out.

During the early development stages, the LIN APD collaborative curriculum design process also drew on expertise in curriculum design from within the sector, nationally and internationally. The group also took advantage of visiting curriculum design experts who were attending local institutional and/or national conferences such as the annual LIN conference as a way to organise associated expert group workshops. John Biggs and David Baume were very generous with their time and advice to the LIN project: David Baume facilitated a one-day workshop to develop a set of LIN core values that would underpin the design of all the APD programmes (see Section 2.4). He also provided a range of inputs during the subsequent APD award development and consolidation phases.

At that time, an extensive programme of academic development workshops was already being offered across the sector as part of the LIN project. Workshops organised collaboratively and funded by different projects, such as National Digital Learning Resources (NDLR) and Education in Employment EiE, were also being

supported. For example, one-day seminars on The First-year Experience and on Assessment for Learning, with a keynote presentation by Prof. Graham Gibbs and inputs from student representatives, were particularly successful in attracting external delegates and raising awareness of the project. Videocasts and handouts from these workshops were uploaded onto the LIN website and acted as a useful resource to LIN APD developers, as well as to programme participants. The APD working group also facilitated a number of specialist workshops, which strived for a shared understanding of what was meant by curriculum and what LIN best practice in curriculum design could be in terms of design and implementation of the future APD award programmes. The following schematic diagram gives an overview of this development process of Phase 1:
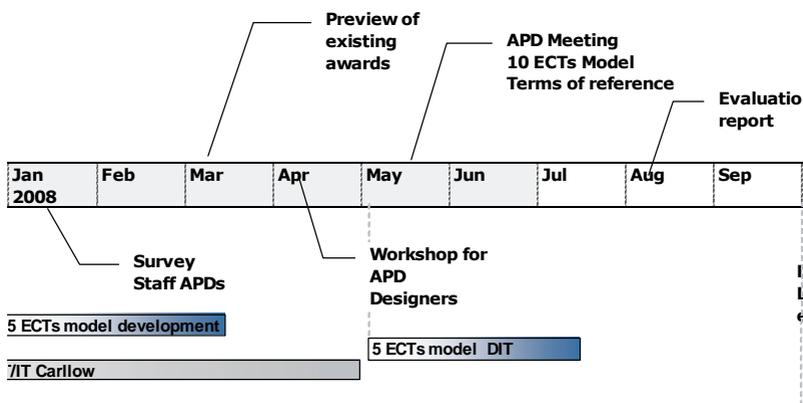
Figure 1.3.1: Overview of Phase 1 of the APD award development process

Phase 2: development of the individual APD awards

Phase 2 (year 2) concentrated on the development of the shared/agreed programme across the IoTs in Ireland. As a way to involve all stakeholder groups in this process, the working group membership was extended to include representatives from all 14 IoTs; this group met three or four times a year in 2008 and 2009. It should be noted that, through these regular meetings, the group became established as a means of a wider dialogue and exchange in regard to academic professional development across the IoT sector that might not otherwise have existed. New ideas and advice were exchanged as members were at different stages of establishing institutional support centres and providing support for academic staff. In addition, the LIN learning development officer spent considerable time in each of the partner institutions not only as a way to maintain their involvement in the project but as a way to explore issues, gauge different academic development needs and identify areas of specialist expertise. Feedback from these consultations was used to inform the final design of the LIN APD framework.

An online 'Wiki' space was established in 2008 to support the work of the working group and the collaborative design of individual awards. With partners based in IoTs spread across Ireland, it was not possible to increase the number of face-to-face meetings. Although partners were generous with their time when additional workshops were being organised to support the design process, a regular additional commitment in terms of travel and time could not be sustained throughout the project duration. As a result, the LIN APD Wiki space was used to enable partners to collaborate in defining their own philosophy of education and to consolidate their core values (see Section 2.8) within their work.

In 2009, seven Level 9 Special Purpose Awards were commissioned: these were intended to reflect both the subject-matter expertise

and the staff professional development needs within the 14 IoTs. Through discussions with Roisin Donnelly, who has published widely in the area of online collaboration, it was agreed at that stage to adopt a backward curriculum design process to design the APD award framework. While the final design of the module content was to be determined by the institutional authors, all awards were required to adhere to the agreed LIN core values and to use a blended learning approach, incorporating technology where appropriate. Award designers also had to take into account the content of other LIN APD awards as well as programmes offered in other institutions in order to ensure flexibility in future access and progression opportunities.

A review of postgraduate academic development programmes was conducted during the first phase of the project, and different possible learner pathway options were explored. It had always been intended that in the future the awards would either combine into a new (shared academic development) award in its own right or be recognised as awards for exemptions from existing programmes. Consequently, it was decided to develop two short 5-ECTS capstone awards that could provide participants with guidance in personal development planning to prepare them for undertaking APD awards and/or to prepare them for the submission of evidence of learning as part of a programme. During this second phase, the APD working group also explored institutional support infrastructures that might support these awards through the establishment of, for example, local mentors and LIN learning advisors. Ciara O'Farrell worked with the group to help define and outline possible LIN mentoring roles and responsibilities. For the most part, these roles have subsequently been adopted informally by local LIN ADP designers and developers.

The Wiki proved to be a valuable tool in the development of all the APD awards, as a way to critique and create award descriptors, and

then to evaluate the awards. Each award under development was given its own webspace. The lead institute, which was being funded for the development and design, placed the award descriptor that they were presenting for validation in this space for comment and discussion before going through the standard quality assurance process. Because each of the awards was at a different stage of development, this online space was a useful way to capture both the design process and the collaborative enterprise. Again, it should also be noted that the LIN learning development officer had an important role in encouraging participation within and moderating online activities within the Wiki space. Many of the partners had not used a Wiki before, and there was some initial reluctance to both editing the work of others and developing documents collaboratively online.

As part of the commissioning agreement, resource materials produced during the development and piloting of the awards were to be made available to the wider LIN community. An APD pack would contain the resources to enable a LIN partner to run the award in their own institution. The packs would have the benefit of modifications that were made on the basis of an APD pilot evaluation and so, for example, they would list areas with which participants had experienced difficulties or suggested amendments to the order in which sessions were facilitated. There was extensive discussion in the steering group around the APD resource pack format and content. Eventually, a format was agreed that would facilitate author flexibility in development but at the same time ensure a consistency of approach across all the awards. As a result, a variety of different pack formats were produced by the APD designers and were then made available to the LIN community. These packs ranged from traditional collections of multimedia to content packaged in the form of award Wikis and a LIN APD blog. Each APD pack was required to include the following resources:

1. *Validation information*: name of module, level, number of ECTS credits, validating body and date of validation.

2. *Copyright information*: LIN ccLearn licensing agreement signed by all authors.

3. *APD module information*:

   - APD descriptor: this provides a clear outline of the module.

   - Tutor guide: this provides both a holistic approach to the module as well as a breakdown of the component learning, teaching and assessment activities.

   - Learning activity support: this provides the prerequisite information and materials for a tutor to be able to deliver and assess the module within their own institution.

   - Session outline: this specifies the title, introduction/context, aims, learning outcomes, breakdown of methods to be used within the session, list of assessments and assessment criteria, etc.

   - Session learning activities: these include a breakdown of activities or tasks, how ideas/concepts might be developed within these activities, any follow-on and/or preparatory online activities to help develop core concepts. Where possible, any educational resources used to support these activities should be accessible by participants at minimal cost.

   - Assessment methods: these include, where possible, a range of strategies to provide formative feedback to participants during the module learning activities as well as summative feedback on evidence of attainment of module learning outcomes.

- <u>Additional resources and support materials</u>: these include reference materials and recommended associated reading.

Progress in the second phase of the development continued up to December 2009. A number of issues emerged during the implementation and piloting of the awards regarding programme validation processes, levels of expertise in specific areas of development and levels of staff support available for learning and teaching within the IoT sector. These challenges had implications for the work of the APD group during Phase 3. Below is schematic representation of Phase 2:
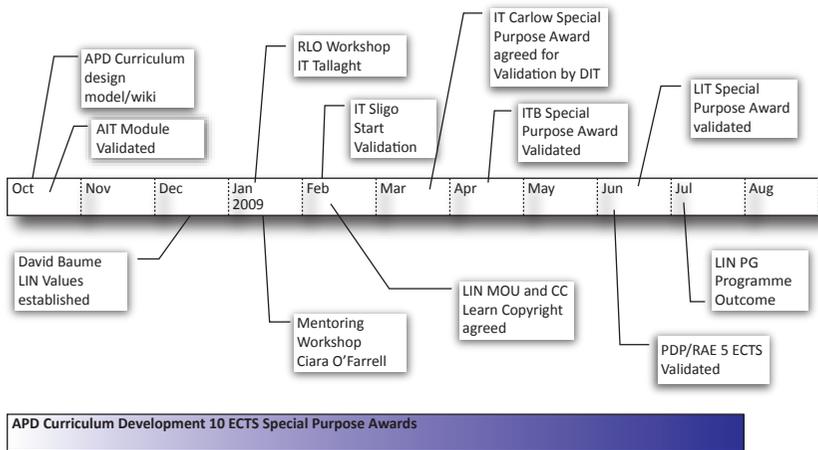
Figure 1.3.2: Overview of Phase 2 of the APD award development process

Phase 3: roll-out and evaluation of the APD awards

While the validation process continued for certain modules, Phase 3 focused on the delivery and evaluation of the commissioned modules. In September and October 2009, the first two commissioned LIN APD awards commenced with cohorts of staff from four IoTs. One was run in AIT in combination with Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT); the other was run in IT Blanchardstown with staff from Cork IT attending. In the next semester, DIT ran two short personal development process (PDP) modules in parallel with staff from a number of IoTs. These were followed in the second semester by IT Carlow and Limerick IT, then Sligo IT and Waterford IT.

As was previously agreed, all APD awards were to be delivered utilising a blended learning approach. A workshop facilitated by the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Reusable Learning Objects (RLO-CETL) in IT Tallaght developed a structured approach to design, develop and evaluate online resources that might be used to support the awards. The use of technology within all the awards posed interesting challenges in terms of support of expertise and knowledge development because partner institutions supported different learning management systems. For example, IT Blanchardstown use Drupal and AIT use a version of Moodle, while DIT and IT Carlow use Blackboard. Again, this emphasised the importance of the role of the LIN learning development officer, who worked with the LIN partners to pull together the various technology elements to ensure a consistent approach between awards. The LIN project also collaborated successfully with other HEA SIF 1 funded projects such as the NDLR, IoTI and CONTINUE to organise and deliver workshops that could continue to support the APD awards and the higher education sector more generally into the future.

Another focus of Phase 3 activities was to find a means of sustaining commissioned institutional awards across the sector once the LIN project finished and funding ceased. Establishing infrastructures to support the awards within institutions and across the LIN community had been discussed from an early stage of the project. Many of the LIN partners had been successful in working strategically to ensure buy-in from their institutional senior managers. The roll-out of new LIN APD offerings to, for example, early-career academics were incorporated into learning, teaching and assessment strategies and had resulted in some cases in changes in institutional staff development policies. This work would prove fundamental in the continuation of the awards. Additional support mechanisms for awards, such as staff buy-out of time to develop and tutor on awards as well as promotional events (such as showcases), were not only important in the embedding of awards within institutional practice but were effective in raising awareness about the project and disseminating the work of award participants. However, towards the end of the project, for some institutions delays in the validation and running of some awards, combined with the likelihood of a discontinuation of HEA funding, caused great concern that some of the key benefits accrued through the project would be lost.

Latterly, the working group was very active in organising a means of continuation through the IoTI Flexible Learning Project, a SIF 2 sectoral project. The APD group met with Dr Mark Glynn to finalise the overlaps between the two SIF projects and to agree to mechanisms whereby the LIN's agreed shared programme for academic development could continue into the future several months prior to the end of the project. A summary of this work is included in the final section of this publication. The following schematic diagram represents the activity in this final phase of the project.
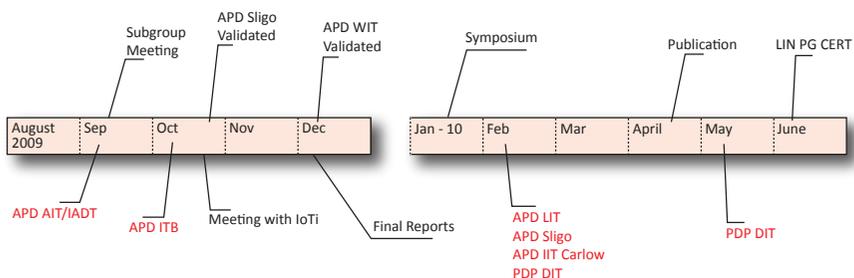
Figure 1.3.3: Overview of Phase 3 of the APD award development process

In January 2010, the APD group organised a one-day symposium to share and highlight the lessons learnt from this collaborative inter-institutional curriculum design process. This publication is one output from this event. Reduced LIN funding has now been made available to the project through the IoTI Flexible Learning Project. By way of retaining the LIN identity, a sub-committee of this project has been established to progress some aspects of the LIN project. Some of this money has been used to appoint a part-time LIN APD co-ordinator. At the time of publication, it is planned to progress a combination of APD awards to a major award through one of the LIN partner IoTs.

Section 2: Collaborative curriculum design: thinking nationally, working locally

2.1 What is the curriculum? Curriculum (revisited)

Dr David Baume (education consultant)

Overview

The design of modules is explored well in Donnelly & Fitzmaurice (2005) and sources quoted therein. This short chapter is compatible with Donnelly & Fitzmaurice. But here I start a bit further back, seeking a useful account of what we mean by curriculum, and suggesting where the curriculum might come from, what it might comprise and how we might produce it. I get to a place that still surprises me. Come along for the journey.

You are invited to look at Baume (2009b) for more on curriculum and course design.

Some views of curriculum

What do you think curriculum is? In conversations, and in the literature, I've found some accounts (implicit or explicit) of curriculum as:

- content (syllabus);
- teaching methods;
- content plus teaching methods;
- learning outcomes;
- values;
- what the students learn;
- what the students do; and
- most of the above.

In Latin, 'curriculum' signifies a race, running around a track. This turns out to be partly appropriate, as we'll see.

Questions to ask when designing a curriculum

Let's assume for now that the idea of curriculum, whatever we actually mean by curriculum, is closely bound up with the idea of a programme or course of study or module. We may find out something about the idea of curriculum by suggesting some questions that are useful to ask when a curriculum is being designed. The questions fall into three groups of three, respectively about: the work of graduates of the curriculum; what, in all important senses, students will learn; and how they will learn.

What will graduates do subsequently?

1. What particular *roles* will graduates take?

2. What are the main *contexts* – professions, sectors, organisations – in which the graduates will work?

3. What are or should be the *goals* and *purposes* of their work?

Originally, I thought that these questions were relevant only to curricula preparing students for the professions. Certainly, they can be answered with more precision for vocational programmes. But I now think they are useful for the design of any curriculum.

They become even more useful if they are used with each cohort of students, indeed with each individual student, to help teacher and student find a version of the curriculum that will work best for each student. This needn't be as time-consuming as it sounds, and it will certainly lead to each student being engaged more closely with their curriculum.

A good curriculum, then, should include answers to questions 1, 2 and 3, and/or should include a process whereby answers can be negotiated and explored, with cohorts and with individual students.

What will students learn?

4. What *competencies* do they need to in order to work effectively and appropriately?

5. What *values, virtues and principles* should demonstrably underpin their work?

6. What *knowledge* should inform their work?

Curriculum is often linked closely with, or even equated to, syllabus; that is, to knowledge. But knowledge alone is never enough to define adequately a curriculum. Propositional knowledge (knowledge of facts) is certainly totally inadequate to form a whole curriculum, now that it is available so widely and easily and becomes redundant so rapidly. Even procedural knowledge (know-how, competence) is no longer enough to form a complete curriculum. Our aspirations for our graduates, for higher education, surely also include higher qualities; I've labelled them as values, virtues and principles. These, I suggest, are not simply qualities towards which graduates should aspire, or that graduates should espouse; they are ways in which graduates demonstrably work.

A good curriculum, then, should also include answers to questions 4, 5 and 6 above, in as much detail as is appropriate to the discipline or profession being studied; be informed by any relevant academic and professional standards; again, with opportunities for the students to explore and interpret these.

Three models of learning

This note on models of learning provides a link between considerations of what students will learn (described earlier) and how they will learn it (described later).

1. Learning comes from first being taught, then applying what has been taught

Whether or not is it is espoused, this model underpins the design and operation of many programmes of study. The model is suspect. It ignores the hugely important roles of motivation and of active engagement in learning.

2. Learning comes from asking, and striving to answer, questions

We may learn much more rapidly and effectively when we are seeking answers to questions about which we currently care. Teachers still have important roles: in suggesting to students powerful questions, approaches to solution, criteria for good answers...

3. Learning comes from purposeful action, informed by teaching and feedback

Many people learn better through planning, action and reflection rather than through being taught, and then possibly applying what is taught. (This approach also necessarily involves asking and answering large numbers of questions.) Schön (1982, 1987) is persuasive on learning from experience. Cowan (1998) is excellent on uses of reflection in teaching and learning. Bruner (1960, 1966), although predating Schön and Cowan, adds a valuable third dimension – movement upwards, advance and also wider, larger cycles of learning – to what may otherwise sometimes seem a two-dimensional, cyclical, rather depressing 'going around in circles' account of learning.

How will students learn?

7.   What and how will students be *taught*?

8.   What will students *do and produce*?

9.   How will students *receive and use feedback* on what they do and produce?

Many students come to higher education with deeply and strongly held, but usually tacit rather than explicit, views about the nature of teaching and learning and also about the respective roles of teacher and learner. We academics may have embraced, and built into our curricula, ideas about active, guided and (at least partially) independent learning. The collision between our ideas and the views of our students about how they want to be taught (told) and how we should teach (tell) them can be bruising for both parties.

We need to be explicit about our curricula and about our approaches to teaching and learning. We need to say why the curriculum and the teaching and learning take the form that they do. We also need to accept that our approaches may be unfamiliar, and that students may need time, support, practice, small steps, feedback, honest encouragement and then successively larger changes as their capability and confidence in this new approach to curriculum, teaching and learning grow.

So the curriculum needs to explain what and how students will be taught, and why; and also what they will *not* be taught, and, again, why (7)! The steady shift of responsibility for learning from teacher to student, and the growing role and importance of student activity and student production of work, need to be described, justified and clearly visible in the curriculum and in the student work tasks described in the curriculum (8). Feedback – from tutors, from peers and from each student on his or her own work – needs to be

described and enacted as a fundamental part of the curriculum process (9).

A curriculum design and review process, in six questions

Let's come at this from another angle. Here is a process that, taken seriously, will lead to good programme, a good course, a good module, a good curriculum. It is described here for curriculum design; with small modifications, it works for the much more frequent experience of curriculum revision.

The process comprises a sequence of six questions. (These questions need to be informed by the answers to questions 1 to 3 in the previous section.)

Curriculum design should be a collaborative process. The curriculum will be the better for having several brains applied to its construction, and the programme will run better if those who will teach it have had a hand in its construction.

1. What are the aims, intended learning outcomes, values and knowledge – collectively, the goals – of the course?

These questions are fundamental. How fundamental? Consider this:

> Mager & Clark (1963) ran an experiment. They taught a course to one group using lectures and tutorials. They told the other group of students the learning outcomes of the course, but provided no teaching, simply told the students to work together and use the resources to achieve the outcomes. The second group performed significantly better than the first. They were also better motivated. (Baume 2009a)

Learning outcomes and learning resources – no teaching. The students learned well.

2. How will their attainment be assessed?

Why consider assessment at this early stage of the curriculum design process? For two principal related reasons.

First, trying to set an assessment task is an excellent way of checking whether or not a learning outcome is actually assessable. Un-assessable or problematic learning outcomes need to be changed until they are assessable. Un-assessable learning outcomes may be useful statements of aspiration, but they're not a sound basis for planning the curriculum.

Second, writing assessment tasks can in turn suggest appropriate learning outcomes.

3. What work will students do in order to become able to attain the programme goals?

This follows from the third model of learning described in the box on page 47. This is the unexpected place that I mentioned at the start of this chapter. Student learning results in major part from purposeful activity, undertaken with enthusiasm, subject to constructive feedback. The central part of curriculum design is designing the work students will do – in considerable detail at the start of the programme, then in progressively less detail as students proceed through the programme and take greater responsibility, not just for doing the work, but for defining the work they will do to enable them to achieve the goals of the programme.

4. What will teachers do to help students to do the work and attain the course goals?

Our role of the teacher shifts: from fount of knowledge and sole arbiter of standards to supporter, prompt, challenger of student work and hence of student learning. Our knowledge of expertise in the content of the programme is still important. But we gain

additional, and in truth enormously rewarding, roles as supporters of learning.

5.   What resources will be used, by students and by lecturers?

No longer gatekeepers to resources for learning – the online library and Google have together disposed of that role – lecturers nonetheless remains a valuable guide and commentator on resources and on the criteria for a good resource. Developing a growing (and rigorously weeded) list of appropriate resources can become a productive, shared responsibility among lecturers and students.

6.   How will you know the programme is working?

Students will know that the programme is working when, through undertaking the specified work, they achieve the intended outcomes of the course (and any modifications or additions to these that they have negotiated), and if their enthusiasm for the subject is at least as great at the end of the programme as it was when they decided to join it.

Presumably you will know that the programme is working if, at a minimum, students have achieved the state described above. There will also be university, and perhaps professional body, criteria for programme success; but student success and enthusiasm are hopefully among the most important programme success criteria.

Conclusion

This brief revisiting of the idea of curriculum has emphasised, above all, two things: clear and appropriate learning outcomes and the design of learning activities; and support for learning and feedback on learning. Together, they will support students who truly join in with the course to achieve the outcomes of the course and hence to succeed. The original Latin word 'curriculum' describes an active,

indeed running, learner. Hopefully not going round and round a track, but rather moving ever upwards like a visitor to the Guggenheim in New York.

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2.2 Development of the LIN APD model

**Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT), Nuala Harding (AIT)
and Dr Jen Harvey (DIT)**

Overview

The 2009 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) review of initiatives that might enhance the quality of teaching within higher education emphasises the importance of institutions investing in the provision of continuous professional training in pedagogy for all staff involved in teaching. In the UK, as far back as 1997 Dearing (1997) recommended that all higher education institutions (HEIs) should provide access to teacher training for their staff. Gosling (2010) reports that, 13 years on, all UK HEIs 'either provide an introductory programme or their staff have access to such a programme elsewhere'. However, he comments that this recognition of a need for professionalism in teaching is perhaps more a reflection of the increasing regulatory environment that has become more commonplace in Britain in recent years, than a desire by institutions for their academics to develop skills that they might teach more effectively.

While many institutions have made successful completion of a Postgraduate Certificate mandatory, perhaps as a prerequisite for promotion and/or successful completion of a probationary period, Gosling notes in the same article that some institutions only encourage their staff to attend or to successfully complete sections of a course rather than obtaining a full qualification in learning and teaching. What are the basic skills required to be a competent lecturer in higher education? How might the development of these skills best be supported and further developed at different stages of an academic's career?

Currently there is no professional body to define the essential skills for higher education lecturers in the UK, but there have been moves towards recognising and valuing different professional development opportunities for academic staff as well as different kinds of teaching-related activities. In 2003, the UK Higher Education Academy (HEA)[17] was commissioned to develop a UK National Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education in response to the whitepaper *The Future of Higher Education* (2003). This aimed to provide a way by which individuals and institutions could identify whether their programmes or teaching-related activities met recognised quality standards in areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values. Staff Educational Development Association (SEDA), the UK-based professional body for staff and educational developers, has also developed a professional development framework that provides 'recognition for higher education institutions, their professional development programmes and the individuals who complete those programmes'. Named awards are used to recognise different types of professional development, for example in embedding learning technologies and supervising students, and there is a requirement that all such awards are underpinned by a set of SEDA-defined professional values.

Similarly to the UK, no professional body for higher education lecturers exists in Ireland and a recognition that academic staff 'should have a qualification before they are established in their positions'[18] has only recently been acknowledged. One of the three

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[17] The HEA (www.heacademy.ac.uk) is an independent organisation funded by the four UK higher education funding bodies.

[18] Quote from the Hunt Report, taken from Sean Flynn's article in the *Irish Times,* 24 August 2010 (www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2010/0824/1224277444858.html, accessed 13 September 2010).

objectives of the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) strand of the Improving Services to Students and Capacity-building project (2006–10) was to scope the parameters of an agreed academic development programme for academic staff teaching in Irish institutes of technology (IoTs). Because it was intended that such a programme or elements of such a programme could be offered in several if not all IoTs, the overall structure and content needed to be flexible enough to cater for early-career academics, academics with extensive teaching experience and academics seeking to combine subject-discipline teaching with research interests. It was also important that the programme could be offered by the sector for the sector and that the roll-out of the model could be sustained by individual institutions into the future. The programme was intended to be unique in that it was to be developed collaboratively and then to be offered cross-institutionally.

The LIN academic professional development (APD) programme framework, developed as part of the project, underwent several iterations during the project timeframe on the basis of evaluative feedback from a series of pilot studies and a number of externally supported capacity-building initiatives. By 2010, an innovative flexible framework had been produced that offered different learning pathways within a new LIN APD award structure and that provided structured personal development support for new academics as well as recognition of the knowledge and expertise of more experienced staff. This section of the publication outlines the development of the LIN APD model as a collaborative enterprise undertaken by the APD working group between 2007 and 2010.

Establishing the LIN APD awards

In 2007, at the initiation of the LIN project, there was limited, if any, academic development available for academics within Irish IoTs. Few institutions had staff with responsibility for providing pedagogical

support for academics interested in reviewing, changing and reflecting upon their professional practice. In the absence of an ongoing institutional funding commitment, for many other institutes APD in learning, teaching and assessment comprised workshops, often co-ordinated through staff development units or HR and facilitated by external staff, frequently by consultants from non-Irish institutions. For institutes without dedicated learning and teaching staff, this approach was institutionally unsustainable and was having minimal impact in changing practice for more than a few early enthusiasts. As well as being dependent on the availability of external experts, these workshop sessions could have limited application within an IoT context because of their generic nature and could only be offered at introductory level rather than catering for staff wishing to advance their skills. More importantly, these sessions were non-accredited. The desire by IoT staff to be able to undertake structured accredited sessions that might lead to an award was evident in an early online survey conducted by LIN as part of a sector-wide study (see Appendix 1.1). At that time, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) and Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) were offering postgraduate awards in learning and teaching, as were some universities. But for most IoT staff, completion of an accredited award in learning and teaching required that staff travelled to another location. In 2005, DIT became the first and remains the only institution in Ireland to make it a requirement that all new academic staff without an equivalent qualification complete their Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching. (Although it is likely that this might change in the future as a result of the recommendations of the Hunt report.[19])

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[19] The HE strategy report, commissioned by the HEA from an expert group chaired by the economist Dr Colin Hunt, and published at the end of September 2010.

Money made available through HEA SIF 1 funding to support the change agenda in higher education through this project and many others (as listed in Section 2.1) was the catalyst for many IoTs to make a commitment to establish learning and teaching centres. Some institutes recruited new staff to these new centre posts, while others seconded staff who had been the early learning and teaching champions within their schools and departments.[20] A number of staff from these institutions had already either completed or were in the middle of completing postgraduate awards in learning and teaching from other institutions. However, few of the institutions had either the awarding powers or the capacity to be able to offer their own accredited award at that time.

DIT off-campus Postgraduate Certificate pilot study

Initially, we explored the possibility of offering a tailored existing award as the LIN shared academic development programme in order to achieve the proposed project outcomes within the specified timeframe. To this end, the DIT (30 ECTS credits) Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching was rolled out in two other partner institutions as part of a structured pilot study commencing in September 2007. As well as appearing to be a cost-efficient way to provide a postgraduate award within partner IoTs and to obtain feedback on a new off-campus version of the programme, the intention behind the pilot was also to try and build up a critical mass of expertise across the IoT sector. In addition, it was felt that utilisation of a 'train the trainer' model, by increasing the involvement of local staff in teaching on the programme, could

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[20] It could be speculated that the long-term sustainability of and institutional commitment to these positions is likely to be dependent on successful project outcomes.

provide an opportunity to develop local specialisations within tailored institutional programme offerings.

It was agreed to employ a 'blocked' off-campus model of the existing DIT Postgraduate Certificate in the first run of the programme in Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) and IT Carlow, with staff from IT Tralee and IT Sligo also attending the Postgraduate Certificate in AIT during 2007–8. Normally offered in DIT in weekly half-day sessions over an academic year, this new off-campus model offered two three-day blocks of sessions to participants twice each semester. The timing of these blocks was negotiated with the respective institutions. Support for the programme learner communities was facilitated online by the DIT-based LIN learning development officer. In the first year, effort was made to try and create a community of practice between all participants enrolled on the Postgraduate Certificate, on- and off-campus. The success of the community of practice was mirrored by the formation of informal discussion groups, where participants met to discuss issues relating to their practice that arose out of the formal programme. A structured evaluation utilising a short questionnaire and focus groups was used to provide feedback to the project on the roll-out of the programme both in IT Carlow and AIT.

While the roll-out of the DIT Postgraduate Certificate was initially considered to be an effective way of building sectoral capacity, it became apparent early in the project that this was not a sustainable option for the future because many of the IoTs were unlikely to be in a position to offer a 30-ECTS award in their own right. In addition, use of an existing award, albeit one tailored to meet local staff needs, might not be perceived in the same way as one offered and designed in-house. Offering the programme off-campus in other

centres[21] was also resource-intensive for DIT, and practical issues regarding the involvement of non-DIT staff in teaching on the programme had started to emerge.

Moving towards a 5-ECTS LIN APD award

Feedback from the 30-ECTS Postgraduate Certificate pilot study prompted the LIN APD working group to explore the possibility of using a 5-ECTS modular structure as the foundation of a new LIN shared academic development programme, where potentially different combinations of modules offered in different institutions could be combined into a full postgraduate award available across the sector. It was felt that a modular structure had several advantages:

- Most IoTs would have the capacity to offer a 5-ECTS module.

- By tapping into local expertise, a variety of different modules could be offered cross-institutionally.

- Staff could build up credits towards a full award over a period of time, with recognition for prior learning and negotiated, planned, structured work-based activities.

- Flexibility could be built into the way in which modules were both offered and combined into an award, thereby creating a range of different learner pathways.

By offering appropriate exemptions onto other existing programmes, it would be possible to offer staff a pathway from these Level 9 APD programmes onto other postgraduate courses such as a

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[21] As a result of feedback from the evaluation study, the blocked sessions offered in the final run of the Postgraduate Certificate in IT Carlow were changed to become weekly sessions; in AIT, each of the two Postgraduate Certificate modules was offered over one year rather than over one semester.

Postgraduate Certificate / Diploma in Higher Education (DIT, WIT, National University of Ireland (NUI) and University of Ulster). This flexible approach could result in participants progressing onto a Masters programme and then going on to obtain a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) at Level 10.

An initial project pilot study of such a model was undertaken in AIT in 2008, utilising an existing 5-ECTS short course in learning and teaching already validated through DIT (see Appendix 1.5). This short course comprised a combination of face-to-face workshops, online activities, personal development planning and reflection combined with a microteaching session, and support from both local IoT staff and the LIN learning development officer. This pilot enabled the local head of learning and teaching to involve local staff and to raise awareness of the LIN project activities. Details regarding the participants registered on this course are provided as part of the AIT case study in Section 3.1.

An evaluation of the course was designed to provide feedback regarding content, mode of delivery and module design, and a LIN report was completed on this work for the APD working group. Interestingly, feedback obtained in a focus group with a selection of the cohort indicated that the course was too short to develop meaningful and supportive professional relationships with fellow participants. In addition, participants thought the programme lacked an opportunity for in-depth engagement because of the way in which it was structured. This was in contrast to feedback from the participants on the 30-ECTS programme (offered in 2007–8), who considered it too time-consuming on top of their teaching workload and suggested that a maximum of 15 ECTS credits or one module per year would be the ideal commitment over an academic year. (This was in keeping with the earlier LIN survey findings (Appendix 1.1).)

Development of the LIN APD 10-ECTS award

As a result of pilot study feedback and consultation with the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC),[22] the next stage of the LIN APD award development moved to working with a 10-ECTS modular structure. Institutions could, therefore, offer their modules as Level 9 HETAC Special Purpose Awards that might lead into Postgraduate Certificate / Diploma programmes. Work on this design initially focused on offering two 5-ECTS blocks (see Appendix 1.5) but then moved to consideration of a more flexible 10-ECTS model. This change also prompted an additional review of the APD award design and delivery and how best to create a new and innovative shared academic development programme that would both attract and cater for a diverse academic staff population in terms of both working experience and areas of interest. As a way to sustain the programmes within institutions, it was felt that a combination of senior management buy-in, local support and cross-institution support was necessary. This involvement of all the key stakeholders would be necessary to ensure that the programmes were embedded at a local level. A number of one-day workshops were organised by the APD working group to support this APD design process.

The first facilitated workshop agreed key elements of our new LIN APD awards:

- *Renaming awards as APD Special Purpose Awards*: Whereas such activities might have been categorised as continuous professional development previously, it was felt that the LIN modules should be identified as academic professional development.

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[22] Qualifications-awarding body for third-level education and training institutions outside the university sector (see www.hetac.ie).

- *More independent learning and recognition of non-classroom-based activities*: For example, developing learning objects; organising a conference; publishing a paper; contributing to community practice; literature review; research supervision; programme development; leadership, etc.

- *More flexibility in range of learning opportunities*: Each award to comprise a range of face-to-face workshops / portfolio / reflection / online activities to provide participants with a diverse student experience.

- *Accumulation of ECTS credits through a variety of different routes*: Recognition of prior learning and/or negotiated options to accumulate credits through, for instance, workshop attendance or structured activities agreed with APD mentor.[23] In the early stages, a personal development planning element that might be linked into the institutional Performance Management and Development System PMDS process was considered as part of the course.

- *Content to reflect general learning needs* as well as punctual needs, e.g. podcasting.

- *Awards suitable for mixed groups*: Academics and student support.

- *Clear progression routes*: It was envisaged that short courses (5 or 10 ECTS credits) would lead to exemptions from Postgraduate Certificate courses that staff in the sector are attending (the three main courses that staff attended being at DIT, WIT and University of Ulster).

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[23] At that time, LIN was supporting an extensive programme of institutional workshops across the sector.

The curriculum design model that was eventually used for the development of the LIN shared academic development model was based on a backward design model developed by Dee Fink (2003) and amended by Roisin Donnelly (see Appendix 1.4). Peer review activities through the LIN APD Wiki built upon feedback from this work and resulted in the creation of a shared template for a LIN 10-ECTS award. A final version of the APD award structure is included in Appendix 2.1.

As part of the curriculum design process, the APD working group established a common philosophical framework for the development of a common programme. The development of this shared epistemological and ethical framework would enable individual authoring institutes creating the modules to have a shared backdrop to the individual modules. David Baume, one of the founders of SEDA in the UK, assisted the group in establishing this value system for the common modules (see also Section 2.4). The value system became a means of creating a value statement about learning and teaching in IoTs in Ireland. The graduates of the different modules would ideally have attained learning outcomes that contained the following specific professional value system, which was embedded in the programmes:

- 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; and

- courage, openness to new approaches, innovations, continuing reflection on professional practice.

The development of an agreed format for the design and delivery of academic development programmes for the IoT sector was a major milestone for LIN. The innovative programme design and format has ensured buy-in from the relevant stakeholders in the sector. The innovation exists not only in terms of the use of technology but also in the incorporation of reflective practice into the heart of each module. The use of best practice models of action, implementation and reflection is at the core of the principles used for the design of each of the modules. The development of a common format of programme implementation and a shared belief in the implementation of reflective practice has been a major highlight for those involved in the design and development of the APD programmes.

In 2008, LIN commissioned the production of seven new APD awards. These were to be designed and piloted by seven LIN partner institutions. The development of the modules and the design of their content were carried out in a collaborative design process using Web 2.0 technologies, i.e. Wikis. Case studies outlining the development and piloting of these APD awards are outlined in the next section. Structured peer-review processes facilitated across each of the partner institutions by the LIN learning development officer ensured a consistency of approach between awards.

One important feature of this model was the LIN support infrastructure at local and national level. This support would extend to providing participants embarking on a LIN programme of awards with an APD advisor and a local mentor. The APD advisor role was designed to provide advice and support regarding personal professional planning and selecting APD awards within their tailored learning pathway. The advisor would be familiar with all the APD awards that were on offer, both within their institution and cross-sectorally. At a national level, the LIN project would provide the advisors with relevant information and training support, as well as tutor and participant support as part of a LIN online learning

community. It was also intended that the WIT Certificate in Mentoring would be used to provide appropriate training for those staff interested in providing mentoring support at a local level. By providing these modules and associated learning support, the proposed model also aimed to facilitate the creation of tailored combinations of Special Purpose Awards or different learning opportunities that were appropriate for staff involved in teaching in higher education at different stages of their career and within different subject disciplines.

Development of the LIN postgraduate award

While the commissioning by LIN of seven new modules to share across the sector was fundamental to the success of the shared APD programme, it presented a number of associated logistical challenges. The next stage of development focused on the practicalities of sharing programmes and the associated quality-assurance issues thereof. The validation procedures within each institute had to be respected, but at the same time be flexible enough to encompass the shared collaborative nature of the LIN activities. In addition, problems associated with copyright soon began to emerge. Who would own materials developed and commissioned through LIN? Through contacts with National Digital Learning Resources (NDLR) it was possible to learn the lessons from another SIF project and to bring in expertise in the area of shared copyright. As a result, the working group decided to use creative commons as a copyright process for the development of shared modules. The use of creative commons enabled the group to ensure that individual copyright would be protected while sharing module content and design.

As various models were being explored to enable APD awards obtained in different institutions to be combined for one award, other issues – such as a potential overlap of award content, variation

in the level of learning outcomes and assessment methods, and a lack of consistency of approach between different awards – were identified. Should a timescale be placed on successful completion of these awards and presentation of these awards for a LIN postgraduate award? In addition, a pick-and-mix model combining different awards in different combinations could result in a disjointed learning experience for participants. How would it be possible to demonstrate evidence of having achieved Level 9 learning outcomes across such a collection of awards? To help resolve this concern, two additional short personal development modules were designed and validated by DIT. These short modules aimed to act as capstone modules, preparing participants to undertake a negotiated learning pathway (e.g. relevant combinations of APD awards plus appropriate activities, and then preparing them to pull out and reflect upon this work in preparation for submitting towards a full Certificate award (30 ECTS credits at Level 9)). In this way, the validating institution could feel sure that the evidence of learning presented for their award was of an appropriate standard. (See Appendices for details.)

LIN APD postgraduate award: the final phase

The final phase of the scoping of an agreed academic development programme has been the validation, roll-out and evaluation of the commissioned awards developed and designed by the working group members in their institutions. This phase has been an important part of the process but has, at the same time, taken longer than anticipated. A LIN APD evaluation workshop was facilitated in April 2010 by Jen Harvey (DIT) for the APD working group and the senior executive of the Flexible Learning Project (see Appendix 4). From this, an electronic survey was developed using the survey tool Zoomerang; this was used by participants AIT, IADT and ITB. Separate evaluations were conducted by all the institutions

offering a LIN APD award; these are summarised as part of their respective case studies.

At the time of writing, the LIN APD flexible framework appears to be working well, with institutions beginning to share APD awards across the sector:

- Two institutions are about to offer their APD awards for a second time.

- One institution has offered an APD award designed and validated by another institution, but tailored to meet their own staff needs. A second institute is about to do the same.

- Having revalidated the APD award in their own institution, one institution is about to co-tutor an APD award, designed and already validated in another IoT.

- One institution has offered an APD award designed by their staff but validated in another institution.

- Having completed a 10-ECTS award offered in their own institution, staff from one institution completed a 5-ECTS personal development process (PDP) module followed by a 15-ECTS module 2 of a Postgraduate Certificate offered in another institution.

- Staff have now commenced a Masters programme, having obtained exemptions as a result of completing an APD award in another institution.

The work of the LIN APD working group is continuing under the auspices of the IoTI Flexible Learning Project (see Section 4.1 for more details). A part-time APD co-ordinator has been appointed. Currently, further discussions are underway regarding the combination of the LIN APD awards into a new LIN postgraduate award in its own right, rather than as part of an existing award. Feedback from the first roll-out of the APD awards suggests that

rather than a sandwich model of 5 + 10 + 10 + 5 towards a Postgraduate Certificate, a 10 + 5 + 10 + 5 or 15 + 10 + 5 model might be more appropriate. It is hoped that the new LIN model will provide a range of opportunities for staff to progress onto a tailored Masters programme of their own design. In the shorter term, as a result of the project, it is now possible for all staff across the sector to have improved access to accredited professional development in learning, teaching and assessment.

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2.3 Effective collaborative curriculum design: experiences from the LIN APD programme

Rosemary Cooper (ITTD) and Dr Stephen Cassidy (CIT)

This section discusses the experiences gained from the collaborative design process of a number of academic professional development (APD) modules for academic staff in the institute of technology (IoT) sector. The work discussed was undertaken as part of the SIF-sponsored Learning Innovation Network (LIN) project. In total, seven modules have been authored across a range of topics relating to teaching and learning in the higher education sector. A focus-group session was held with a number of the authors of these modules to ascertain their views on the merits of using a collaborative design process for curriculum development. From these discussions, a number of recommendations emerged that may prove useful to educational developers developing curricula collaboratively.

Establishing the benefits of collaboration and managing the collaborative process

Collaborative curriculum design has the potential to deliver high-quality curricula in a timely and cost-effective manner. The collaborative process allows for the pooling of resources and harnessing of collective synergies between the participants. For participants to engage actively in the process, these benefits must clearly outweigh the increased work associated with co-ordinating and managing communication within the team.

For the suite of modules developed under the LIN project, the perceived benefits of collaboration to the partner institutes were:

1. Development of modules to support the mission of the institute to deliver a quality teaching and learning experience to their learners.

2. Establishment of a community of practice in teaching and learning across the sector.

3. Dissemination of good practice in teaching and learning through this community of practice.

4. Availability, from partner institutes, of expertise to develop specialised modules.

5. Peer review of module design and associated resources within development teams, leading to enhanced quality.

6. Sharing of development costs across the partners.

7. Availability of expertise from partner institutes to deliver modules.

8. Reduction in delivery costs because of a shared curriculum, facilitating the pooling of learners from a number of institutes as a single cohort.

9. Development of sector-wide awards that may be perceived by learners as possessing an increased academic standing over offerings developed by a single institute.

10. Establishment of flexible pathways of progression in other higher education institutions (HEIs) for learners.

In this project, the collaborative process was generally initiated through a series of face-to-face meetings between the development teams. Once an overall framework had been developed, ongoing collaboration was facilitated through the use of Wikis, allowing partners to communicate effectively and efficiency.

Developing a shared vision for the curriculum

In general, the process of designing a curriculum involves the multifaceted interaction between the programme and the modules contained within it. Well-defined programme aims and objectives

will indicate the nature of modules to be included in the programme and may influence all aspects of module design, from module content to module assessment strategies to module delivery strategies.

At the institute level, the aims and objectives of a programme should be aligned with the mission and ethos of the institute as well as external factors such as regional and government policy, employer consultations, etc.
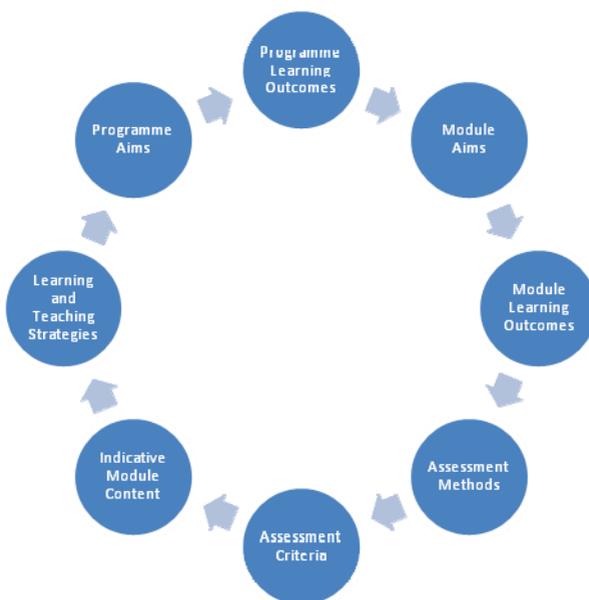
Figure 2.3.1: Curriculum design process

When designing a curriculum to be shared across a number of institutes, a shared vision for the programme is fundamental to effective curriculum design. As the number of institutes increases, a shared vision becomes more difficult to obtain. If, during the initial phase of curriculum design, discrepancies in mission and ethos are not ameliorated then overall programme coherence and subsequent

operation may be affected. Table 2.3.1 outlines how differing institute mission and ethos may influence the design of an academic development programme.

| Mission | Research-intensive vs. research-informed | Modules developing research supervisory and research-proposal-writing skills may be a priority for some institutes but not for others |
| Ethos | Theoretical vs. theory-based practice | Some institutes, as shown in their mission statements, may require curricula to be firmly grounded in practice while others may call for a more theoretical approach |

Table 2.3.1: Influence of institute mission and ethos on curriculum design

Similarly, at the educational developer level, an agreed set of values and beliefs in respect to both the design and delivery of the programme needs to be developed, so that developers can function effectively as a team.

Developing an agreed framework

Once a shared vision of the curriculum has been established, the next stage is to develop an agreed curriculum framework. A major factor influencing the curriculum framework is the policies of the individual institutes, as shown in Table 2.3.2. Developing an overall framework for a programme and modules that complies with the policies and practices of each institute may be difficult.

Policy	Potential compliance issues
Quality assurance	Differing quality assurance processes for modules and programmes within partner institutes
Module design	Volume of credit to be associated with modules, use of constructive alignment, module documentation
Teaching strategies	Distance learning, enquiry-based learning, use of technology
Assessment	Recognition of prior learning, use of terminal exams
Marks and standards	Rules governing access and progression, classification of award
Resourcing	Contact hours

Table 2.3.2: Influence of institute academic policies on curriculum design and delivery

In the case of the LIN APD curriculum, initial curriculum frameworks centred on developing resources that could be packaged and delivered in a variety of ways to meet a range of staff development requirements within the institutes. The staff development needs were identified as:

1. Induction programmes for new staff.

2. Seminars/workshops in specialised topics.

3. Practice-based short courses targeted at staff (academic/researchers, etc.) wishing to undertake CPD training as professional educators. These would typically attract 5 ECTS credits.

4. Special Purpose Awards targeted at academic staff with an interest in a particular aspect of teaching and learning. These would attract 10 ECTS credits.

5. A Postgraduate Certificate and/or Diploma targeted at staff wishing to receive a major award qualification in teaching and learning. These would attract between 30 and 60 ECTS credits.

Thus, as shown in Figure 2.3.2, a seminar in plagiarism-detection software may be a standalone seminar or form part of a Special Purpose Award in Technology-enhanced Teaching, which itself may form part of a Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

Postgraduate Award
POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN
TEACHING & LEARNING

Special Purpose Award
TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED
TEACHING

Seminars & Workshops
PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE
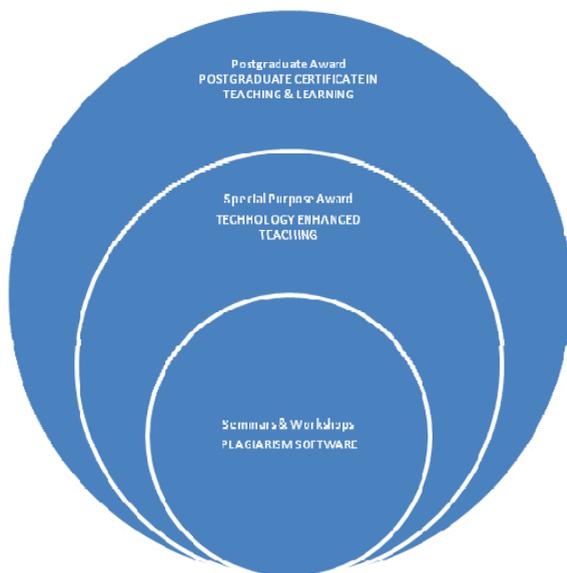
**Figure 2.3.2: Curriculum framework allows differing needs
of learners to be addressed**

However, as the framework evolved, tension arose between delivering flexibility to meet the differing needs of learners and excessive fragmentation of the curriculum, resulting in a negative learning experience. Thus the curriculum, as now developed, has as its fundamental blocks Special Purpose Awards of 10 ECTS credits

that may be subsequently used to partially fulfil the requirements for major awards in teaching and learning.

Summary

In this section, the process of inter-institutional collaboration in curriculum development is discussed. Arising out of consultation with educational developers who are experienced in this collaborative process, a number of recommendations are described. These recommendations include that (1) an analysis is undertaken for the particular curriculum design to ensure that the benefits of collaboration outweigh the additional attendant co-ordination and communication work; (2) a shared vision reflecting the mission and ethos of the institutes is developed; and (3) an agreed programme framework is designed, taking into account the academic policies and practices of the institutes.

2.4 Identifying core values within curriculum design

Dr David Baume (education consultant)

Some questions about experts

What do you expect from your lawyer? Not necessarily in order of importance, you might expect from them:

- a good and current knowledge of the law on whatever issue you are bringing to them (failing which, the ability to find and make sense of the necessary information);

- the ability to use this legal knowledge, apply it to your situation and get you the best possible result under the circumstances;

- empathy with your particular concerns and aspirations; and

- maintenance of strict confidentiality with regard to your affairs.

What do you expect from your doctor? You might expect:

- a good and current knowledge of whatever medical problem you are bringing to them (failing which, the ability to find and make sense of the necessary information);

- the ability to use this medical knowledge, apply it to your situation and get you the best possible result under the circumstances (which might include referring you to a specialist);

- empathy with your particular medical problem; and

- maintenance of strict confidentiality with regard to your affairs.

You'll see a similarity here. You expect a professional to have relevant knowledge; to have the ability to use that knowledge

appropriately; and to have some other qualities that aren't exactly either knowledge or skills.

Let's stretch this a little. What would you expect from an art historian, or a sociologist, or a theoretical physicist, or a specialist in literature? You might expect from them:

- specialist knowledge from their discipline, together with the ability to find and make sense of additional specialist knowledge from their discipline;

- the ability to use this specialist knowledge to address questions, problems, issues and opportunities within the discipline, and possibly some way beyond the discipline; and

- respect for the expertise of others; a critical approach; a sustained interest in and engagement with the discipline; a commitment to the future of the discipline, through means including but not limited to research and teaching.

To summarise, again we expect the following in an expert: knowledge; the ability to use the knowledge; and some other qualities that aren't exactly either knowledge or skills, but that imply, indeed require, knowledge and skill. Any collective noun for these other qualities brings its difficulties. We could describe them as principles, as virtues, as values or no doubt as many other things. In this article I'll simply call them values.

Values, espoused and enacted

Argyris & Schön (1974) usefully distinguish between our espoused theories (what we say we believe, quite possibly what we think we believe) and our theories in action (the theories that underpin, inform, indeed often explain, what we do).

For example, a strongly expressed belief in the importance of active student learning, accompanied by the giving of many long lectures,

might show a difference between a lecturer's espoused theories of learning and their theories of learning in action. (The difference between this lecturer's espoused theory of learning and the theory of learning visible in their actions does not necessarily mean that the lecturer is a bad person. They may only recently have realised the importance of active learning; their teaching timetable may have been decided months ago; they are unlikely to have much input into the design of the teaching room; and so on. At a minimum, however, we may hope that, through their own process of critical reflection on their work, or perhaps through constructive conversations with a staff developer, they are aware of this difference between their espoused theories of learning and their theories of learning in action. Hopefully this dissonance will, over not too long an interval, drive them to change to the maximum extent possible how they teach.)

The same distinction between what is espoused and what is enacted works, alas, also for values. For example, the lecturer may, deep down, feel that they value student collaboration. However, they may provide no opportunity for students to develop the ability to collaborate. Further, through the use of wholly individual final assessment, the lecturer will show the students that the lecturer in fact values only individual work. 'By their deeds ye shall know their values', to significantly misquote Matthew 7:16, is a general truth; accepting that deeds are often constrained or shaped by context and by custom, not to say by regulation.

What do we do when our values collide with custom, practice or regulation? A useful first step is to make our values explicit. A second step is to see where and how we might enact our values – all versions of them – within current regulations. A third step is to discuss our values with colleagues, and see how much agreement there is. A fourth step is to seek to change the regulations, remembering that, at a profound and important level, we are the university.

A short story about values

In the late 1980s, my partner Carole Baume and I were invited by the National Children's Play and Recreation Unit in England to develop an occupational standard for play-workers. At that stage, we both believed that an occupational standard should describe a list of competencies or capabilities; a list of things that, in this case, play-workers should be able to do.

We consulted extensively with play-workers, and drafted lots of lists.

One element on the list said something like 'Ensure equality of opportunity in children's play'. The next element on the list said something like 'Facilitate and support children's play'.

A play-worker with whom we were consulting looked at these two items, and snorted: 'I see. You give the play-worker their tick for "ensuring equality of opportunity", and then they earn another tick for facilitating the boys to play football and the girls to play at making tea.'

The play-worker's point, vividly made, was that 'ensuring equality of opportunity' was a very different kind of thing from 'facilitating play'. Indeed, we realised, 'ensuring equality of opportunity' didn't belong on the same list. Everything the play-worker did was in practice informed, indeed driven, by the need to ensure equality of opportunity among the children.

As soon as we realised this, we saw that other items on the list – health and safety, confidentiality, supporting the rights of the child – were also different kinds of things. They required knowledge, but they weren't knowledge. They required abilities, but they weren't just abilities.

We decided to call them underpinning values.

Where do values come from?

Values are present in, indeed are essential components of, many professions, and in the practice of many disciplines. Including the subjects taught in higher education. And including the business of teaching in higher education. And also including staff and educational development!

Values arise from several sources. Debate among members of any emergent profession, to see what values they espouse. Analysis of professional practice, to see what values lie there in the practice. Conversations with clients and users of a profession, to see what clients and users want, need and expect from members of the profession. Laws and regulations, describing obligations on members of the profession and enacted by the elected government on behalf of the people.

The values of the discipline, rather than a profession, may not carry the full force of regulation or law. But they still affect practice powerfully. Becoming a member of the discipline involves joining a community. And communities are defined partly by the values that they espouse and enact.

How do students learn values?

Values can be taught. Statements of values can be memorised – but clearly that isn't enough. The values need to live in the teaching of the lecturer. The application of values to particular cases, examples, stories needs to be made explicit. Students need to plan in advance how values will inform their real or simulated professional practice, or their academic work. Students need to evaluate their own work with reference to, among all the other requirements, the extent to which their work embodies the values of the discipline or the profession. And students need to critique and test the values, finding their limits and limitations.

How are values assessed?

It will by now be clear that simply repeating the values of the profession in an exam is utterly insufficient. Students should describe how the values would inform their planning and undertaking of some hypothetical task. But that still isn't enough. Students should describe how values informed their planning and undertaking of professional and disciplinary tasks; analyse the sometimes complex and problematic relations between values and practice; identify how the values can more thoroughly inform their future practice; and, going round the learning cycle again and again, develop an increasingly sophisticated ability and commitment to apply the values, to test their practice against the values, and to identify and (where possible) resolve difficulties in the use of the values. Assessment needs to be as authentic as is possible, however difficult this may be.

This is heavy stuff. But without it, values may remain only espoused.

Conclusion

Values are not wishy-washy, feel-good, optional attributes for a graduate. Values, alongside knowledge and competencies or capabilities, are fundamental to being a member of the professional discipline. The syllabus describes what graduates know. The competencies or capabilities describe what they can do. The values describe how graduates act. You might even feel that the values describe who the graduates are – people who act in particular ways.

Reference

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2.5 Developing LIN APD core values

Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT) and Nuala Harding (AIT)

As a way to work towards an overall consistency of approach and integration of a set of agreed Learning Innovation Network (LIN) core values to underpin all the accredited professional development (APD) awards, David Baume facilitated a workshop for the APD working group on 17 December 2008. The curriculum design process for the LIN APD awards needed, therefore, to be underpinned by a value system shared by all members of the working group. The value system would enable an agreement on what competencies were needed, and then how these competencies could be reached and how these competencies would be assessed during the process. The value system would hence be essential to the competencies that the LIN APD programmes would attempt to scope. Nonetheless, it is implicit that competencies, while important, are not sufficient. Knowledge, skills and competencies are encapsulated by an overall holistic ethic – ethics taken here to mean a shared agreement on commonly understood action to the benefit of society in general. By initiating a conversation or dialogue about values, the hope was that the agreed programmes would therefore not be reduced to competencies without a core.

While no national professional body exists to define the professional skills required to be a competent lecturer within higher education, most lecturers would describe a set of professional values, beliefs and principles underpinning and informing their practice. David Baume describes lecturers espousing their values, and those of their course participants, to be:

- what you believe;
- what you say;

- what you teach;
- your values in action are:
  - what you do (whatever you believe or say!); and
  - what you assess.

During the workshop, the working group explored what was meant by good teaching and how we define the specific competencies that we associate with good teaching. Good teaching covered all aspects of academic activity, from research to teaching, from assessment to feedback, from modelling to tutoring. How, then, to measure improvements in learning and teaching? Achieving the learning outcomes of the APD programmes would demonstrate implicitly and explicitly that the participants of the programmes had met the standards being aimed for. Measuring improvements in teaching, while a moot point, could be done by looking to the visible and the measurable: student learning.

Defining the role of the academic

By defining the role of the academic in relation to student learning, there is a shift in emphasis toward the student as the main focus of academic activity; the academic is seen through the lens of interaction with student learning. The group came to the conclusion that the only means of measuring improvements in learning and teaching would be to focus on the work produced by the students. Indeed, there should be an attempt to capture the work of a period of time by looking into the feedback mechanisms that were in place. Feedback would, therefore, be an important aspect to the accumulation of learning on the student's behalf. The concentration on work produced by students would also enable the evaluation of the student engagement with the learning process; the lack of engagement could, therefore, be isolated as a means of capturing

improvements in the learning and teaching methods. The group came to the agreement that by looking at students' work the academic's role could be seen as that of improving students' work or helping the students produce good work.

The academic's role should be defined by the quality of student learning:

- work produced over time (to capture accumulation and improvements);
- real engagement on the student's behalf; and
- helping the students do good work (product and process).

Capturing improvement in student learning was the focus that the group chose to concentrate on; it would be a tangible, visible result of changes in learning and teaching. By focusing on the quality of students' work, the following list of competencies was agreed by the group:

	Competencies (model teacher)	Learning outcome	Module
1	Research, reading, investigation		
2	Planning		
3	Doing it, teaching, teaching strategies		
4	Feedback and evaluation (student to student, student to tutor)		
5	Assessment		
6	Reviewing and developing your practice		

Table 2.5.1: LIN list of lecturer competencies

The group agreed to develop the modules in line with the grid. The learning outcomes of the different APD modules would be matched to the different competencies, bearing in mind that some modules may emphasise different competencies (assessment, for example). The overall combination of the modules attempted to match all learning outcomes to the different competencies.

In Ireland, there is currently no benchmarking statement for learning and teaching. From the conversations to define a value system that would underpin the competencies, the following standard statement was distilled. One would hope that the discussion of this statement could be developed further by attempting to reach a standard statement for learning and teaching in the Irish higher education sector.

Standard statement

By stepping back and looking at the overall philosophy of the programme, the group came up with a list of the values underpinning practice and the competencies that a lecturer in institutes of technology should have.

Our work as teachers and developers should be underpinned by these values:

- commitment to the 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; and

- courage, openness to new approaches, innovations, continuing reflection on professional practice.

In addition, it was agreed that each module will build in an adaptation of Kolb's/David Baume's experiential model and Bruner. The module structures would incorporate an experiential loop; this model would not only be present in the structure of the individual APD modules but would also play a part in the overall programme structure. Each module would therefore try to achieve a distinct planning and negotiation phase; planning what is to be learned, how the learning will happen and what resources will be needed to support the students. Secondly, the module would also include 'doing', or teaching, or running the course. Thirdly, review: reviewing what the students are learning, helping the students to review and reviewing how well the participant has supported the students in the learning activities. Fourthly, explaining: helping the students come to an understanding of what they are learning, how they are learning and making sense of how your support of learning is working. Then looking at what could be done better next time around. The structure of the APD modules attempts to incorporate this cyclical model of running and planning a course. Each of the APD modules would, therefore, be focused around this structure. Each module would have as its core some planning, some practice, some reviewing, some explanation. The form that this would take would depend on the development of the modules. The role of learning development officer at the time was to ensure that there was coherence and consistency in the adoption of the model. The assessment of the modules became a centre of debate and discussion: while with the explanation it was felt that their assessment could take a traditional academic form, the practice would also have to be incorporated in the assessment in one form or another. The following schema outlines how the model could function.

Research — identify the needs and wishes and opportunities and constraints and policies and expectations and resourcing and anything else that may be relevant to the course you are going to plan and run		
Use what you and your students have learned; about the subject and about learning and teaching the subject; to plan to do it all better next time around	1 Plan or negotiate (a) what is to be learned —that is the intended learning outcomes; (b) how the learning will happen —the student learning activities; and (c) how and with what resources you will support students to undertake these learning activities	
4 Explain — (a) help students to make sense of what they are learning; (b) help students to make sense of how they are learning it; and (c) make your own sense of how and why your teaching and support of learning are working		2 Teach — in other words, run the course. (a) Do whatever you have planned to do, and (b) thereby help and support and challenge … the students to undertake the learning activities
	3 Review — (a) review what the students are learning; (b) help the students to review what they are learning; and also (c) review how well your support for their learning is working	

**Figure 2.5.1: LIN cyclical approach to curriculum planning
(Baume, adapted from Kolb)**

This raised fundamental questions about the combination of various APD models leading to an overall award. For example, to meet the learning outcomes of an overall award the planning process would need to be centralised through an APD advisor who could orientate the participants to different APD modules and ensure that the process was taking place within a coherent personal development process (PDP). In addition, there would also be a need to ensure that the overarching learning outcomes of an overall award were being met distinctly by the individual modules.

Once the cyclical approach to planning and running a course had been implemented, the cycle would lead to a continuous process of improvement through monitoring and evaluating. The initial plan would be replaced by a revised plan. This should lead to Jerome Bruner's spiral curriculum, which could look something like this:
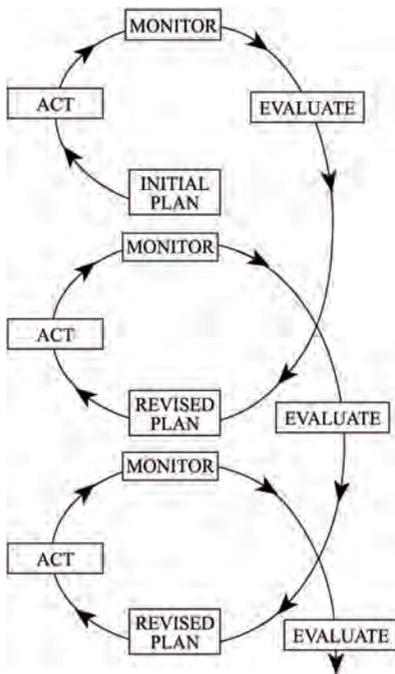
Figure 2.5.2: LIN spiral curriculum (Baume, adapted from Bruner)

These innovations in the development of the shared APD modules – the agreed value system, coupled with a model of reflective practice (shown above) – are fundamentally important to the success of the APD modules. Each of the 10-credit modules has attempted to

structure itself around planning, acting, monitoring and evaluating. Each module would, therefore, have at its core a powerful model of reflective practice. Reflective practice is at the centre of each of the modules and at the centre of how the APD group envisage teacher development: a development of the person based on reflection and grounded in a firm set of values.

2.6 Embedding core values in practice: the AIT / IADT experience

Nuala Harding (AIT) and Dr Marion Palmer (IADT)

Introduction

Communities of practice are defined by Wenger (2006) as 'groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly'.[24]

The Learning Innovation Network (LIN) accredited professional development (APD) pilot Certificate in Learning and Teaching was developed by Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT), as outlined in Section 3.1. It was approved in 2009 and piloted in 2009–10 by both AIT and the Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT). This section analyses how the programme embedded the core values developed under the LIN project into programme design and implementation. In particular, it focuses on the development of overlapping communities of practice through the process.

As noted earlier, a suite of LIN APD programmes was developed across the institutes of technology (IoTs) and Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) between 2007 and 2010. The members of the LIN APD group worked, as individuals and as a group, to develop a range of APD programmes that could be offered for academic professional development in any of the partner institutions. As part of this work there were a number of workshops to develop a shared understanding and a shared set of values (see Section 2.4).

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[24] Wenger, E. (2006) *Communities of Practice: a Brief Introduction*. Available at www.ewenger.com/theory/ (accessed 10 January 2010).

Process of embedding the core value into the Certificate in Learning and Teaching

This process commenced at design phase, when writing learning outcomes. Figure 2.6.1 indicates the overlap between the LIN values and the learning outcomes of the Certificate in Learning and Teaching programme.
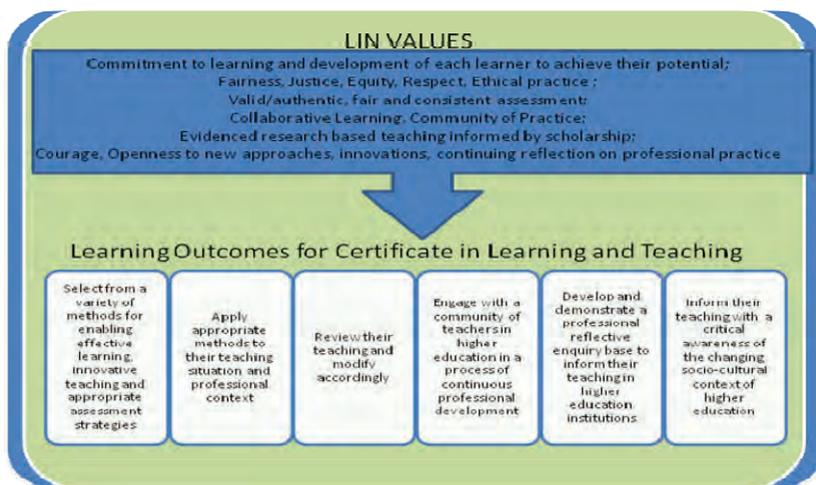
Figure 2.6.1: Overlap between LIN values and programme learning outcomes

This section emanates from a contribution to the LIN Symposium in early 2010, when the authors were invited to focus on collaborative learning and community of practice. We will focus briefly on this specific shared value; however, throughout this section reference is made to how other values were evidenced during the design, implementation and evaluation phases.

Teachers in higher education can often feel isolated in their role. Although commenting on the second-level system, the argument of Cochran-Smith (1994) resonates with higher education in the

assertion that 'there are powerful norms … against collegiality' and that the favoured norm that is one whereby 'one learns to teach through trial and error' as opposed to learning through 'observations and analysis' (p. 150). Furthermore, Little (1990) argues that there are 'fundamental conditions of privacy in teaching' (p. 511). This means that lecturers in higher education have few opportunities to participate in group processes or to work alongside others, apart from students, and thus opportunities for learning from colleagues are reduced (Eraut 2007, p. 132). Central to the design and implementation of the AIT Certificate in Learning and Teaching was offering opportunities to encourage 'individuals to work with colleagues to change aspects of their day-to-day activities (their practices) with the aspiration to improve working processes, relationships and outcomes' (Somekh 2006, p. 7). Southworth (1998) contended that working with colleagues is productive and powerful because 'the sharing of ideas is so stimulating and challenging' (p. 20). A key focus when planning the implementation phase was to provide learning situations that allowed participants to pool interests, insights and method, and in particular to come to new understandings that may not have been arrived at by working alone – an example of joint work (Little 1990, p. 512). The word collaboration has its origins in the word co-labouring, which can lead to discomfort and difficulties when working together rather than in isolation – particularly when having to accept criticism and opposing points of view. Sumara & Luce-Kapler (1993) argue that these apparent problems are seen as 'healthy and productive, for it is during these moments of disagreement, of negotiation of labouring over that which is difficult that we gain insights into ourselves, each other and whatever enterprise binds us together' (p. 394).

How the core value is evidenced

The pilot programme was a clear example of how the values were embedded in the implementation of the AIT Certificate. The

inclusion of IADT added to the collaboration: the two programme leaders worked with each other, as did the local programme teams. Collaborative learning and community of practice were evidenced through a variety of layers of engagement and were supported through the use of a variety of tools.

Figure 2.6.2 represents the tools used to support collaboration from:

- programme teams to programme co-ordinators;
- programme co-ordinator to programme co-ordinator;
- programme teams to participants; and
- participant to participant.
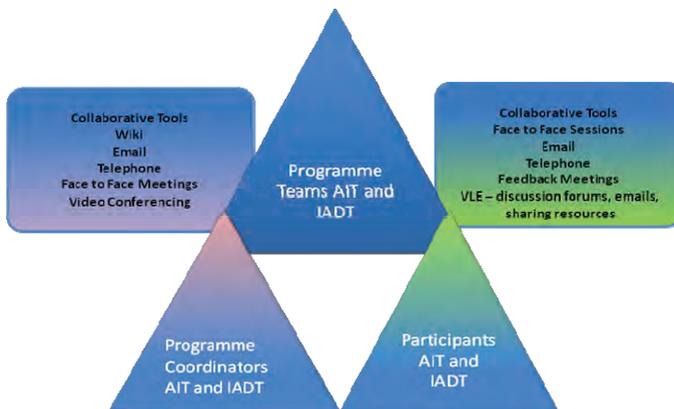
Figure 2.6.2: Supporting collaboration between AIT and IADT

Planning the implementation of the programme

Programme planning began in AIT with a focus on the learner. The sessions were devised to enable each participant to achieve the

learning outcomes of the programme – evidence of a commitment to learning and the development of each learner to achieve their potential. Each session was planned by the programme team or a subset of the programme team – evidence of *collaborative learning.* The learning environment for each session was planned to encourage engagement and active learning. It was agreed that each session would be planned alternately by AIT and IADT based on their respective strengths. Furthermore, sessions were shared by the two sites.

Parallel to the planning of the sessions, the programme handbook and tutor handbook were developed. IADT had run local 10-credit Special Purpose Awards and the programme handbooks provided a useful template for the Certificate. Programme handbooks provide the learner with information about the programme and are a statement of the programme team's intent. They are evidence of fairness, justice, equity, respect and ethical practice by the programme teams for the learners. It could be argued that programme handbooks form a learning contract between the programme teams and the learners.

The assessment of the programme was reviewed. Two decisions were made: firstly, that the assessment would be planned in parallel with the programme so that it was integrated clearly into the running of the programme; secondly, that assessment information would be incorporated into the programme handbooks. The assessment was matched to the learning outcomes of the programme, as shown in Table 2.6.1. This enabled both programme teams to argue that the assessment is valid and authentic.

	LO 1	LO 2	LO 3	LO 4	LO 5	LO 6
On successful completion of the module, the student will be able to :	Select from variety of methods for enabling effective learning, innovative teaching and appropriate assessment strategies	Apply appropriate methods to their teaching and professional context	Review their teaching and modify accordingly	Engage with a community of teachers in higher education in a process of continuous professional development	Develop and demonstrate a professional reflective enquiry base to inform their teaching in higher education institutions	Inform their teaching with a critical awareness of the changing socio-cultural context of higher education
Seminar paper	✓					✓
Peer observation		✓	✓		✓	
Screencast	✓	✓				
Final assessment				✓	✓	✓

Table 2.6.1: Programme learning outcomes (LOs) matched to assessment portfolio

Issues in planning

Communication and sharing of documents

Marion Palmer suggested the use of an APD Wiki, which enabled the seamless sharing of documents during preparation and programme implementation. This collaborative tool was made accessible to the programme teams in both institutes. Although the management of the Wiki was undertaken essentially by the programme co-ordinators in both institutes, its use gave both teams an opportunity to learn how to use the tool and meant sharing of resources in a timely manner.
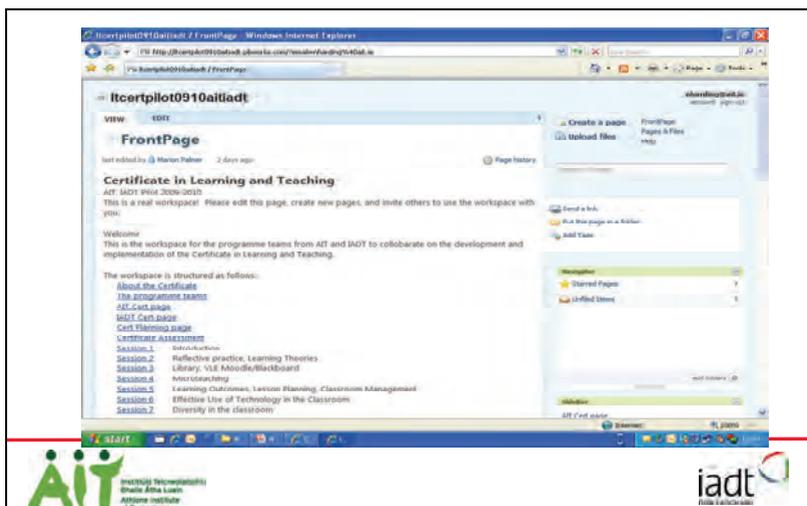
Figure 2.6.3: Supporting collaboration between programme teams using a Wiki

Developing a shared understanding of terminology, expectations of students, student workload

The first two aspects did not present issues because programme teams were at varying stages in developing their expertise and met regularly to discuss and debate approaches. Engagement with the participants during the introductory session and afterwards provided opportunities to become familiar with expectations and outline the scope of this introductory programme. Developing a shared understanding of student workload proved more problematic because this was the first iteration. It became apparent that the programme demanded a high level of engagement because of the structure of formative and summative work, in addition to the required level of scholarly enquiry. Therefore, the recommendation of the external assessor will be followed and the programme will be adapted and increased to a volume of 15 ECTS credits.

Programme implementation

The core values were evident in the implementation of the programme across the two sites. During the year the programme teams worked well, collaborating on the preparation of the sessions and particularly on the assessment. The programme co-ordinators reviewed the sessions by phone call, meetings and through the Wiki. This enabled a shared understanding to develop between the programme co-ordinators and the two programme teams.
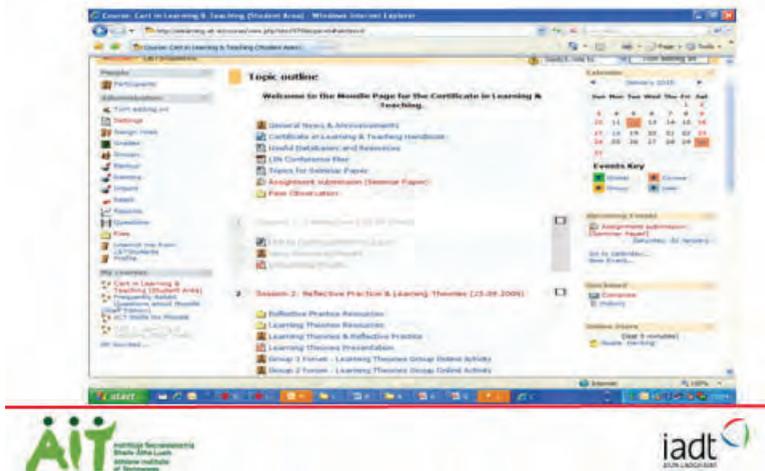
Figure 2.6.4: Supporting collaboration between participants using a VLE (AIT participant, Moodle course)

What was evident in both sites was the development of a community of practice by the participants.

The use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) was critical to the development of collaborative learning in each of the programmes. One survey respondent noted 'It was very valuable to have the course materials up on Blackboard, as class was more devoted to exercises and discussion than ploughing through content' (IADT Respondent 1) while another noted that 'Blackboard was an excellent communication tool' (IADT Respondent 3). It enabled the programme teams to work with the learners to achieve their potential rather than focusing on covering content. It also modelled reflection on professional practice.

There are similarities with the VLE feedback from the AIT participants. Respondents commented on the availability of resources and the impact of discussion forums; interestingly, it was

noted that the VLE provided extremely useful support for external participants or those who worked in AIT outreach centres.

Learning tasks, such as the microteaching, also developed trust and respect, and provided an example of ethical practice. This was developed further by the approach to peer observation. Participants observed each other teaching, and the review of the process was assessed by the programme team.

Comparison between the two institutions

There were similarities. The sessions were planned and run by members of the programme teams in association with the programme co-ordinators. Assessment of the different elements was shared by members of the programme teams. The session themes and content were similar; the active learning, assessment, and diversity and inclusion sessions were developed and run by the same person in both institutes, indicating the level of sharing of expertise that had developed.

There were considerable differences between the two institutions. The VLE served as an excellent tool for collaboration in AIT. This was evidenced in particular by the screen cast assessment, which was due in early January. Face-to-face interaction among participants was hampered by extremely poor weather conditions. Threaded discussions in advance of the submission date exemplify social constructivism: learners supported each other and shared experiences and resources to enable colleagues to complete the task. The forums continued to be used thereafter, although this was not a requirement of the programme.

The discussion forums on the VLE did not work well in IADT: it is a small campus, and the learners could meet as part of their daily work in most cases. Secondly, the modelling of use of the VLE discussion forums by the programme team fell off during the year.

Collaboration across and within programme teams

Collaborative approach to designing sessions

Each programme team gave a commitment to designing the lesson plan, as well as providing the notes and support resources required for each session. Sessions 1, 4 and 10 were planned together at scheduled meetings. Table 2.6.1 outlines the organisation of the sessions.

AIT		IADT	
Session 1	Introduction	Session 1	Introduction
Session 3	Library, VLE	Session 2	Learning theories, reflection
Session 4	Microteaching	Session 4	Microteaching
Session 5	Learning outcomes, lesson planning, classroom management	Session 5	Learning outcomes, lesson planning, classroom management
Session 6	Effective use of technology	Session 7	Diversity in the classroom
Session 9	Active learning strategies	Session 8	Assessment and group work
Session 10	Final session, reflection	Session 10	Final session, reflection

Table 2.6.2: Organisation of cross-institutional sessions
as part of the AIT/IADT award collaboration

Lessons learned from the process

From an AIT perspective, working in partnership with IADT enhanced the quality of programme design and implementation. The debates regarding assessment, in particular on receipt of feedback at the shared exam board, led to the design of explicit guidelines and criteria to scaffold the learner and also ensure fair and consistent marking. Agreeing templates for lesson/session plans and the design of tutor and programme handbooks aided both learners and programme teams.

The partnership enabled IADT to take a role in the implementation of an exciting new programme, to contribute to that implementation and to develop a strong local sense on the programme. It removed the isolation that is sometimes experienced with a new programme.

The collaborative approach provided an opportunity to benchmark standards between both institutes. For example, engaging in cross-moderation of assessments and sharing experiences after each session by posting to the Wiki allowed for comparison of standards and approaches.

The working relationship that developed between both programme co-ordinators was a symbiotic one, with both sharing expertise, contributing and critiquing in a constructive manner.

Team-teaching each session was extremely effective and rewarding: in both AIT and IADT participants identified this as a key learning, emphasising the impact of having the team model best practice throughout the programme.

The screen cast created issues for IADT, and additional supports will be provided by the AIT learning technologist in order to ensure consistency of approach.

The aim is to continue the collaboration when the programmes are run in AIT and IADT next year. It is envisaged that the next iteration of the programme will include another layer of support, with the provision of a Wiki to encourage collaboration between participants and allow them access to a wider community of practice in learning and teaching across the sector (Brennan & Fitzpatrick, cited in NAIRTL (2009) *Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, p. 93). In addition, we intend to offer a structured reflective blog in the VLE for participants to capture reflections on the programme, and in particular its impact on their practice.

According to Land (2004), 'the very idea of community of practice includes within it, paradoxically, the notion of exclusion' (p. 193)*,* which is an important consideration for LIN in particular in relation to sharing the academic professional development model sectorally. AIT and IADT are willing to collaborate with other institutes who wish to offer this programme in future.
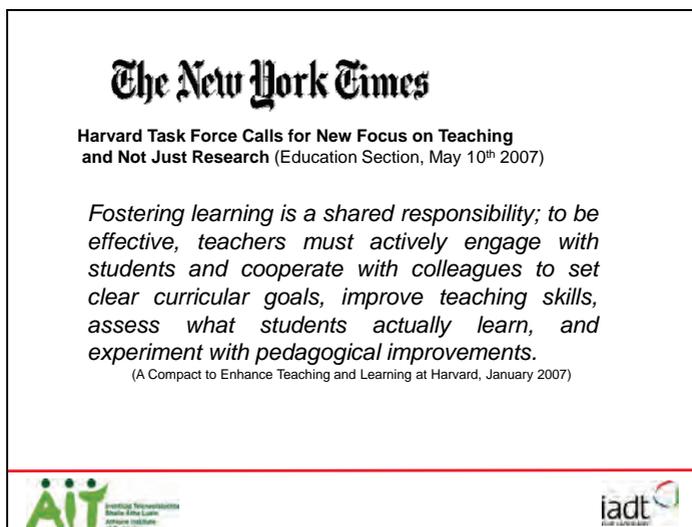
Figure 2.6.5: Concluding slide, LIN Symposium, January 2010

Our presentation at the LIN Symposium concluded with Figure 2.6.5, which describes a radical departure at both learned institutions. It is our assertion that the LIN model joint work (Little 1990, p. 511), underpinned by an agreed set of academic professional values, has the potential to be the catalyst for a transformative approach to practice.

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2.7 Sharing innovative practice / managing diversity

Larry McNutt (ITB) and Dennis Murphy (GMIT)

Introduction

I had the opportunity recently to participate in the launch of the Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) 'Moodle MOOT: Launching the Moodle Community in AIT'. The theme for the day's event was 'If we build it they will come', a quote from the book *Shoeless Joe* by W. P. Kinsella (1982) and later turned into the movie *Field of Dreams* with Kevin Costner. Interestingly, the book review in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* noted that it was 'not so much about baseball as it is about dreams, magic, life, and what is quintessentially American'.

The words 'dreams, magic, life' struck a chord with me: in many respects, the challenge for those involved in education could also be described by these terms. As has been captured recently in Pádraig Hogan's recent book *The New Significance of Learning: Imagination's Heartwork*, where he states that 'In my early years as a teacher, it struck me that the heart of my work was a kind of wooing of the students – not so much of their affections, as their best imaginative efforts' (Hogan 2010, p. 56). He goes further and argues that 'This integrity, I would argue, is associated with discovering and realising each person's own potentialities for learning, but not just any kind of learning'.

This provides an interesting metaphor with which to discuss the topic of this section. One approach has been to build the repositories of innovative practice, to centralise resources and wait for the motivated and enthused educators to line up. There are many examples from all walks of life where this strategy has not yielded the desired result. We could point to the construction bubble, where we now have many empty houses and housing

estates, to political movements that have come and gone, to academic disciplines that have waned in popularity. Similarly, there are converse examples that have worked: the bicycle scheme in Dublin is one project that comes to mind.

The field of technology is also littered with stories of success and failure scattered through many domains, from hardware solutions (e-voting) to eBay, an e-business phenomenon.

It might be more accurate to suggest that if we build it they will come – but not necessarily in the way we think they will!

This was illustrated to me recently at the International Symposium for Engineering Education ISEE conference, where I was reflecting on the muted voice of Irish engineers and scientists in the public sphere. The example I posited was of Charles O'Connor, who designed and built a 600km pipeline uphill through the West Australian desert to the Kalgoorlie minefields in the late 19th century.

His vision and tenacity transformed a continent – but his detractors persevered until his tragic and untimely death a few days short of water flowing into a growing Kalgoorlie mining community. Water is the lifeblood of any remote community; in some respects, I would argue that education can be seen in a similar vein. It has the capacity to transform lives and ultimately society. And similar to the demands for water in the Western Australian goldfields, the demand for education nationally and internationally has never been greater.

There is an estimated shortage worldwide of over 100 million places in higher education for qualified applicants alone.[25] In Ireland, we

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[25]   Henry Rosovsky (USA,) former Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and Geyser University Professor Emeritus, Harvard University (co-chair and steering committee).

are also witnessing a steady growth in participation rates in higher education. However, the statistics show that participation rates from students in lower socio-economic categories is still low. In spite of the ability of technology to transform many aspects of the world of business and leisure, its impact on education remains unremarkable. The challenge facing all educators is to harness technology to transform the lives of millions who have no possibility of accessing the transformative opportunity that education can bring to their lives.

This section will argue that encouraging the sharing of innovative practice, which as a core value accepts the reality of coping with diversity, is one fundamental lynchpin in building an 'education pipeline' through a desert of educational opportunity.

Sharing innovative practice

There are a number of key elements to unwrap in relation to this objective: (1) the challenges of sharing; (2) what we mean by innovation; and (3) what defines our practice. The notion of sharing is well recognised within society – an act between the giver and the receiver. Godin (2010) contends that the tradition of tribal economies was based around the idea of mutual support and generosity (p. 150). However, modern society has fostered and encouraged a very different set of values based on the key questions of 'how much should I charge, and how much can I make?'. This is further re-enforced within the education domain by the encroachment of the new managerial agenda favouring performativity and the commodification of education. The citizen is defined as a rational economic actor, essentially a worker and a consumer, as education has been redefined as a market commodity and universities as enterprises servicing the market (Grummell et al. 2009). It could be argued that sharing is not valued within the wider discourse of higher education at an institutional level unless there

are tangible economic benefits. The challenge we face is rediscovering the inherent value of sharing and ultimately the powerful culture of gifts. Godin (2010) captures this by describing how 'In the lynchpin economy, the winners are once again the artists who give gifts. Giving a gift makes you indispensable. Inventing a gift, creating art – that is what the market seeks out, and the givers are the ones who earn our respect and attention' (p. 151).

This question is only one side of the proverbial coin; the other side is our practice, which has evolved to address changing societal demands, a practice that is rooted in a system that has adopted an overarching neo-liberal agenda. Hogan (2010, p. 1) refers to the possibility that teaching and learning has a purpose of its own and is not subordinated to other, more powerful interests.

Public arenas are invariably replete with influential groups who have designs of their own on the minds and hearts of the young, and who see public education as a vehicle for legitimately advancing such designs. In such circumstances, the fact that educational practices might have inherent purposes of its own – purposes that are educational before they are religious, or political, or anything else – all too frequently becomes obscured.

To allow our practice to embrace the values adopted by the LIN APD curriculum design (see Exhibit 2.7.1), we also need to encourage practitioners to share not only their practice but, just as importantly, their own personal values, beliefs and assumptions. This is not to understate the challenges involved: we need to understand (1) what motivates an individual to share and (2) what intrinsic or extrinsic rewards foster their generosity. A practice that is based on a foundation of self-reflection encourages individuals to 'tell their story' as part of their craft, and values their contributions by providing the space to capture those parts of their stories of innovative practice that are often omitted.

Our work as teachers and developers should be underpinned by these values:

- 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.

Exhibit 2.7.1: The LIN APD values

This also assumes that we can identify the elusive innovative practice – that aspect of our endeavours that is deemed worthy of an additional badge of recognition. The danger is that we adopt too narrow a view of the characteristics of innovation and inadvertently exclude other activities that could be just as worthwhile. The tweaking of a process can be just as innovative as the development of a new learning object. This is the strength of the domain of teaching and learning; very often, the innovation begins with recognition that 'how we are doing what we do' is the subject of investigation. The adoption of problem-based learning, or an alternative assessment technique, or providing drop-in clinics, or giving learners an insight into their learning style are all deservedly innovative. To add even greater value to these activities would be to encourage a discourse that welcomes personal commentaries and descriptions, to share not just a description of the practice but also a personal reflection on the motivations, values and beliefs that allowed this endeavour to bear fruit. Fields & Diaz (2008), commenting on the value of storytelling for libraries, state that:

> Understanding the educational and social values of stories provides both a context and rationale for storytelling, but there are additional reasons why libraries should value a program of digital storytelling, the most important being the potential of digital stories to foster community within the library and across the campus. (Fields & Diaz 2008, p. 98)

The many hurdles that hamper the concept of sharing in an academic environment also need to be addressed. The question of ownership is a complex challenge that permeates much of the debate in relation to e-learning initiatives. If I digitise my course / module / lecture, will I lose ownership or control and eventually undermine my own position? Conversely, encouraging academics to adopt the work of others is often met with little approval. Sharing in this context is somehow viewed as undermining, or even polluting, an individual's home-grown product. However, it is ironic that using many resources provided by the open-source community does not seem to infringe these sensibilities; for instance, Moodle is an example of a widely used virtual learning environment. Perhaps there are lessons to be learned from the success earned by the Moodle community and other user-content-driven environments such as YouTube. This brings us full circle to once again ponder the characteristics of our practice.

What are the characteristics of our practice?

David Baume reminded us in Section 2.4 that you cannot fully describe a profession in terms of competencies alone. This is echoed by Brookfield (1995), who contends that:

> Critically reflective teaching happens when we identify and scrutinise the assumptions that undergird how we work. The most effective way to become aware of these

assumptions is to view our practices from different perspectives. Seeing how we think and work through different lenses is the core process of reflective practice. (Brookfield 1995, p. xiii)

One lens that is presented in sharp focus on many campuses today is how we value and nurture diversity among our student cohort. A lexicon has emerged describing various policies and priorities designed to promote a more inclusive learner community. Such terms as access students, non-standard students, non-traditional students, students with disabilities, mature students and non-national students adorn our literature and feed statistical returns and league tables to prove that we are an inclusive campus. Has our practice really adapted to address the changing profile of higher education students? In discussing the early efforts of distance education pioneers in the USA, Donald Ely (2007) makes an interesting observation that resonates with this topic:

Then the internet entered the education scene. New and creative approaches were possible. At last 'the most important number is one' became a possibility. When the potential of teaching and learning online became a way to reach the long-held dream of independent learning at a distance, new vistas were developed that brought teacher and learner into direct contact. (Ely 2007)

I was struck by the desire to reach out to the isolated, remote learner who, through the 'tyranny of distance', could not avail of the conventional educational experience. The motivation for the teachers was clear, the obstacles obvious and the solution inadequate but workable. It now appears that Ely's early work in 1970 entitled *The Potential of Individualised Instruction in Higher*

Education now has an even greater remit and audience. In fact, the concept of universal design[26] offers an opportunity for educators to embrace a set of principles and values that would benefit all learners.

Applying the concept of universal design to schools and classroom curricula, Meyer & Rose (2000) define it as 'where all students' needs are taken into account during the curriculum planning stages, to design an egalitarian and accessible content delivery system for all learners'. However Welch (1995) cautions us that universal design is not a euphemism for accessibility, because access features such as ramps and lifts are 'potent symbols of separateness' (p. 2). Rather, universal design is a 'process of exploring how a politically mandated and socially desirable value can be embodied by the design disciplines' (Welch 1995, p. 262).

Universal design presents a comprehensive blueprint for our profession as educators, for our practice as teachers and as a framework that encompasses all the values and beliefs that have been the hallmark of great educators over the decades. But we must embody these core values and principles in our teaching and learning curriculum.

Conclusions and recommendations

We could argue that sharing innovative practice represents the hallmark of a critically reflective practitioner. One who recognises the value and worth of seeking feedback from peers and students on how they perform their craft. It would be an omission not to recognise that there are a myriad of issues wrapped around this seemingly innocent request to share the output or product of your practice. The motivational factors are significant: why would I, in a

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[26] The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, www.universaldesign.ie/.

society that undervalues the civic spirit while exalting the for-profit entrepreneurial culture? What are my rewards, and can I trust the community that benefits from my giving? Conversely, there are examples of freely available course content – the MIT OpenCourseWare[27] project comes to mind – that probably signify that the availability of content alone is no longer a major requirement. The ability to give mutual recognition to the value of content not developed locally and, more significantly, to add value by adopting and adapting this material could shift the emphasis from content creation to curriculum design.

The sharing of innovative practice could assume that the content exists and enhance this material with practitioner guidelines, experiences and additional resources. To review these experiences through the lens of universal design would ensure that we also prioritise and elevate those resources that address the needs of a diverse learner cohort.

I am conscious that this contribution has raised more questions than it has attempted to answer; an accurate portrayal, perhaps, of the current state of play in relation to the topic. I would like to conclude with a quote from Brookfield (1995), who reminds us that the critically reflective process happens when teachers view their practice through four distinct lenses. The third lens is described as follows:

> We can ask colleagues to be mirrors, mentors, or critical friends with whom we engage in critical conversations about our practice. (Brookfield 1995, p. xiii)

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[27] http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/web/home/home/index.htm.

This can only happen if we are prepared to share our experiences and co-create educational experiences for our community of learners.

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2.8 Embedding core values within the curriculum

Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT) and Dr Jen Harvey (DIT)

The LIN accredited professional development (APD) working group evolved and then operated with a sense of shared purpose and common goals: members had similar academic backgrounds, worked in similar roles within their institutions and had a good familiarity with the academic professional needs of their staff. A strong commitment to teaching and to developing initiatives that would support *every student to reach their full potential* was also evident throughout the APD design process. In addition, this readiness by partners to share practice, personal beliefs and values became fundamental to the success of the project. With some institutional cultures supporting innovative practice more than others, it was also important that LIN APD working group partners encouraged each other to be 'courageous and open to innovation' within all aspects of the shared programme development.

A strong desire was evident from an early stage to design a new shared APD programme that would be innovative, creative and flexible enough to cater for a range of different academic development needs (see Section 2.2). Larry McNutt and Dennis Murphy (Section 2.7) encourage us, as academics, to be broad in our interpretation of innovation, because often the focus is upon major change when perhaps small-scale interventions in practice could be fostered and ultimately have a more substantial impact on student learning. For many partners initially involved in LIN, the kind of impact that the project would have on learning and teaching across the sector could not have been predicted.

One of the challenges of designing, developing and offering awards in different institutions as part of a shared programme was to ensure an overall consistency of approach between modules. In

order to partially meet this challenge, the APD working group agreed a set of LIN core values that would function to both underpin and benchmark all APD awards commissioned through the project. These values would be evident in the way in which all awards were designed, taught and assessed – thereby demonstrating learning theories in action rather than espoused theories (see David Baume, Section 2.4). As a result, it was felt that the LIN values would impact upon the learning experience of all participants, irrespective of the APD award or the college with which they had decided to enrol.

The main challenges of this approach were:

- Agreeing core values across a cross-institutional shared academic development programme.

- Embedding core values within an award, across a programme and within an institution.

- Agreeing core values across a cross-institutional shared academic development programme.

A starting point in developing an agreed set of LIN core values was to consider the intended overall philosophy behind the programme (or set of combined awards). The underpinning philosophy would subsequently guide all aspects of the design, development and delivery of the awards. As part of this process, consideration was also given to the definition of the role of the academic as a professional within the institute of technology (IoT) sector, within their subject discipline and at different stages of their career. From this, a set of LIN APD core competencies was developed.

Discussions regarding the role of the academic (see Section 2.8) also related to the adoption of student-centred approaches and the attainment of quality in student learning, with partners expressing a need to support and encourage student engagement and participation in order to 'help all students to achieve good work and

to reach their full potential' within both product and process. Faced with an increasingly diverse student population across the sector, these student-centred approaches needed to be equitable for all. All our work aimed to be research-informed, building upon local as well as national and international educational research evidence and promoting the scholarship of teaching (see Section 3.6 for an overview).

Embedding core values within a module and across a programme

Seven LIN APD awards were commissioned as part of the LIN project and an additional two capstone modules were developed by Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). For some institutions, this was the first time that an accredited academic professional development programme had been offered within their institution, so from the outset the development of an APD award would be both innovative and courageous. For others, these new awards/modules would function as part of a suite of programme options, such as the Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) Masters programme (see Section 3.7) or at IT Sligo (see Section 3.6), or would provide a pathway into an existing programme, such as the DIT Diploma in Third-level Learning and Teaching (see Section 3.3). Many of the institutions were also involved in other SIF projects, and outputs from these projects would provide additional useful collaborative links and materials.

Collaborative learning, community of practice

Collaboration and community were integral to the work of the APD working group. This was encouraged through the way the group worked and how the group work was supported, for example through the LIN Wiki and virtual learning environments (VLEs). All APD awards were designed and developed collaboratively within local programme teams or with LIN partners as well as being peer-

reviewed by LIN critical friends. The AIT/IADT case study (in Section 2.6) is one good example of collaborative design. This approach 'provided an opportunity to benchmark standards between both institutes'. 'The debates regarding assessment, in particular on receipt of feedback at the shared exam board, led to the design of explicit guidelines and criteria to scaffold the learner and also ensure fair and consistent marking.' Many APD awards relied upon *quid pro quo* arrangements between staff as a way to support the running of the programmes. For example, had the enquiry-based learning (EBL) award offered by IT Blanchardstown (ITB) (see Section 3.4) not had facilitators from several LIN partners, it would not have been possible to offer the programme.

Valid/authentic, fair and consistent assessment

A range of assessment methods was constructively aligned to APD award learning outcomes in order that participants might experience these different methods from a student perspective. This also increased the authenticity of the assessments. Because the intention was to make a final programme award through portfolio-based assessment, many institutions utilised a similar approach to their APD assessments and provided a number of different assessment elements. The introduction of negotiated assessment, as exemplified in the DIT personal development process (PDP) module (see Section 3.3), also helped to make assessment methods both valid and fair for all learners. Several institutions reviewed the traditional use of written dissertations as the way to evidence learning at postgraduate level. More effective strategies to support the recognition of prior learning were established, as a way to acknowledge the breadth of experience and knowledge of later-career academics.

In addition to peer review of APD module designs, several institutions have integrated peer assessment processes within

awards. IT Sligo (Section 3.6) include a group project peer review as part of participants' preparation of a scholarly paper, as way to introduce 'authentic assessments with real-world relevance'. WIT have reported that their group presentations to peers at early stages within programmes have 'provided learners with an opportunity to improve on the basis of informal feedback', reduced plagiarism and avoided the solo run of more traditional methods. They have also moved to the use of grades rather than marks in some programmes, in an effort to reduce grade inflation and deflation as well as making assessment processes easier to understand for students.

Openness to new approaches, innovations

New assessment methods incorporated within LIN APD awards include the preparation of peer-reviewed journal papers for publication, the production of an artefact or learning object and discursive reports on internships. In combination with evidence produced as part of the professional development modules offered through DIT, these also served to demonstrate appropriate evidence of the development of higher-level cognitive skills within awards classified as Level 9 within the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) framework of qualifications. A range of student-centred approaches were utilised to support learning within APD awards. An EBL approach was used within several awards. This approach aligned closely with other institutional strategies. For example, ITB had already established links between the IoT and industry, as well as having a strong involvement with EBL methods for a number of years through other SIF 1 projects such as the Continue project. Therefore, it was appropriate that they should lead in the development of an EBL APD award to address the professional needs of their staff.

Blended learning has been utilised in the design of most APD awards, and a range of different technologies are now piloted as a

way to support learning. The use of these new technologies has increased the flexibility of course offerings for a range of different staff needs as well as facilitating the possibility of cross-institutional and cross-award collaboration. There were mixed outcomes from these experiences within APD pilot studies. These findings can now be used to make modifications in practice as APD awards are rolled our across the sector. Some partners reported limited use of technology (e.g. discussion boards), while others felt that online activities were employed very successfully. The technology-enhanced learning module (Section 3.5) specifically utilised relatively low-cost technologies or free software that was readily available, thereby ensuring that any of the methods used within the module could be subsequently employed easily by all.

Evidenced, research-based teaching informed by scholarship

All APD awards draw upon local, national and international research as well as aiming to contribute to the scholarship of teaching. Recommendations regarding APD course books, research papers and potential online resources for APD awards were posted to the LIN APD community through the APD Wiki. Evaluative feedback from pilot studies was also shared.

Alongside the IoTI Research Alliance, an international project aiming to design a postgraduate programme through a structured, measurable research learning system, IT Sligo worked to design and develop an award in researching educational practice (see Section 3.6). This award was also designed to provide a researcher/lecturer pathway within the LIN APD framework for those staff 'engaged in research but with a need to upskill for a teaching/research environment' (see Section 3.6). The award focuses on educational research rather than disciplinary research, and links to various strategies related to integrating research into teaching.

Continuing reflection on professional practice

In almost all APD awards, learning outcomes mention explicitly participants' development of reflection skills and in particular those that relate to their own professional practice within their working context. For example, by successful completion of the IT Sligo award participants should be able to engage in and reflect on educational enquiry; IT Carlow participants should be able to reflect critically on their own experience of formative assessment. Reflection is then assessed in a number of ways, including keeping a reflective journal, maintaining a blog or writing a reflective paper. While reflection is integral to individual awards, one of the aims of the DIT capstone modules (Section 3.3) was for participants to reflect at a programme level: to plan their learning pathway towards a LIN postgraduate qualification and then to reflect upon and revisit the evidence of their learning as they prepare their award submission. The two PDP modules emphasise the developing of generic competencies underpinned by professional values within the context of subject disciplinary practice. These competencies include strategies for reviewing and evaluating their own teaching and professional development. The short, intensive nature of the modules was also designed to cater for staff who perhaps had a heavy workload and would benefit from guidance and support of their existing teaching practice.

Final evaluations of values in practice

All pilot APD awards offered during session 2009–10 were evaluated. Again, the evaluation strategy was designed collaboratively. From the feedback, a number of recommendations have been implemented. These include the revalidation of awards for higher credits, further reviews of assessments in terms of quantity and timing of assessments, and changes to the way technology was used to support learning and collaboration.

Section 3: Collaborative designs in practice: seven IoT case studies

3.1 Athlone Institute of Technology: APD curriculum design

Nuala Harding (AIT)

Introduction

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) is a higher education institution located in the midland region of Ireland. More than 6,000 students are currently undertaking undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in business, humanities, engineering and science, with over 40 nationalities represented on campus. The institute commenced involvement on the LIN sectoral project in January 2007 and was represented on both the steering group and the academic professional development (APD) working group. AIT was commissioned by LIN in 2008–9 to design an accredited APD programme. The Certificate in Learning and Teaching, which is a Special Purpose Award, is at Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NQAI 2003). The aim of this programme is 'to provide participants the opportunity to develop in key areas of learning, teaching and assessment, taking cognisance of the potential and challenges of blended and distance learning'. The programme is aimed at new and emergent academic staff of the institute and external participants who wish to engage with current thinking in higher education and gain accreditation.

The inclusion of this programme onto the institute's portfolio supports the strategic objectives of the AIT Learning and Teaching Unit and the institute itself. In addition, the programme was designed to meet the requirements of those engaging in academic professional development across the institute of technology (IoT) sector: it encourages participants to develop the pedagogical skills needed to design, support, assess and evaluate appropriate learning

opportunities for students, through exploring appropriate strategies to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population of learners. This process is informed by relevant psychological and educational theory. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of learning approaches within the teaching context, and reflecting upon the participant's own professional practice is an integral part of the learning experience. The programme is supported by a range of online activities and resources.

Setting the context locally and nationally

The programme is wholly in keeping with the aims of the strategic plan of the institute that was current during the design phase; in particular, it states that 'achievement of excellence in all teaching and learning activities is of paramount importance' (AIT Strategic Plan 2003, p. 19). The following explicit objectives, which link directly to the aims of the APD programme, were described in the plan:

- to develop and implement best-practice standards in teaching and learning;

- to adopt flexible, dynamic pedagogical approaches;

- to be responsive to the learning needs of a diverse student population; and

- to engage fully with new methods of teaching and learning. (AIT Strategic Plan 2003, p. 20)

Learning and teaching has been identified as a strategic priority across the IoT sector, as evidenced in the recently published plans of each institute that will inform development across the sector into the next decade.

To set the context at a local level, at the time of the programme design phase the total number of academic staff employed in AIT in the academic year 2008–9 was 321. In addition, a further 70 lecturers were involved in delivering programmes for the Department of Adult and Continuing Education on a part-time basis. In a survey of academic staff conducted in June 2008, AIT's human resources (HR) department confirmed that 62 members of staff indicated that they held a qualification pertaining to the teaching and learning area. These qualifications encompassed Teaching Certificates, Higher Diplomas, Postgraduate Certificates / Diplomas and Masters in Education.

Evidence from the training needs analysis (TNA) conducted at the institute in 2004 also informed the rationale for module learning outcomes and module content. The survey, which was completed by 130 members of the academic staff, highlighted key areas of focus when providing professional development for staff in learning and teaching. In particular, these included:

- planning lectures;
- teaching strategies to improve motivation/active learning and a student-centred approach;
- encouraging independent learning;
- innovative assessments;
- reflective practice;
- course design (design of learning outcomes); and
- incorporating new technologies.

These findings were in keeping with the sectoral teaching and learning survey, conducted by LIN in 2008. In addition, this survey provided evidence of the type of accredited programmes that staff would like to engage in, with 84.6% ($n = 55$) of all AIT respondents expressing an interest in further academic professional

development. In addition, 65.5% (n = 36) of all AIT respondents were interested in following an accredited route. The most popular programme format was a series of accredited one-day workshops leading to a qualification, for example a Continuous Professional Development Certificate (CPD): 59.1% (n = 13) of lecturers and 50% (n = 8) of assistant lecturers indicated a preference for this approach.[28]

In general, the majority of respondents to the survey were 'interested in obtaining further professional development. Time commitment was the most common reason for not participating in professional programmes'.[29] Interestingly, it was noted that respondents on the whole preferred face-to-face delivery. The following themes were identified from the data:

- assessment strategies;

- learning and teaching in higher education;

- e-learning/blended learning;

- working in a modular environment;

- curriculum design; and

- reflective practice.[30]

AIT elected to engage in the design and validation of a Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education because this theme suited the needs of the institute and sector. In addition, the institute had members of staff willing and interested in being involved in this curriculum design initiative.

[28]   LIN learning, teaching and training needs survey, pp. 140–5.

[29]   Minutes of the APD working group, 21 May 2007.

[30]   Minutes of the APD working group, 21 May 2007.

APD award development process: design using a phased approach

The development process involved working with key stakeholders from within the institute in addition to members of the LIN project team and external experts. A graphic representation of those involved at pre-design and design phase is included in Appendix 3.

Pre-design phase: using an evidence-based approach

AIT had engaged in the piloting of two postgraduate offerings in learning and teaching as part of the LIN project between 2007 and 2008, and the evidence from both was used to inform the development of the LIN flexible pathway. The initial LIN model went through a series of changes over the course of the project, leading eventually to the development of a flexible pathways model (see Section 2.2). The LIN learning development officer played a significant role throughout this process, initially through the co-ordination and evaluation of the off-campus DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching (30 ECTS credits) (2007–8) on-campus in AIT and the co-ordination and evaluation of the CPD in learning and teaching programme (5 ECTS credits) in 2008.

A series of stages outlined in the quality assurance documentation for the design of programmes had to be followed in order to validate the programme. These were outlined to the LIN APD working group on 26 October 2008, in order to inform the design of further themed modules identified for development as part of the LIN project. Feedback from these pilot studies was fundamental to the final design of the LIN APD award.

Awards based on Teaching Portfolio

Continuous Professional Development 5Ect CPD Induction

Successful completion leading to exemption from existing awards e.g. PGCert in L&T

Developing Stand Alone (5 Ects at Level 9 Modules) Specific to L&T

Learning and Teaching Initiatives Model

Postgraduate Certificate in Third Level Learning and Teaching

Monthly Workshops/ Seminars based on feedback from Staff Survey and PMDS

Possible routes for progression Level 9 M.A. in Learning and Teaching MSc in eLearning Level 10 Ed D

Figure 3.1.1: Adapted initial LIN model for academic development[31]

The AIT programme had to be supported by an academic department throughout the validation process. The Department of Adult and Continuing Education was the natural home for this programme, with its philosophy of continuous development and lifelong learning. The head of the department welcomed the initiative and in particular offered assistance in the preparation of a costing model for the programme. All phases required regular

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[31] Model for academic development developed for presentation to the AIT academic council, 19 June 2007, and to the LIN steering group, May 2007.

contact with the academic registrar and the quality assurance (QA) office, which provided continued support for this innovative programme design. Initially, the proposal had to win approval with the executive management team. This involved preparing a proposal document that included pertinent details relating to the programme team, the rationale for the programme and an outline of programme costing. Briefing meetings were held with heads of school and department. In particular the staff development committee, which is chaired by the human resources manager, was informed of the developments of the LIN model through the representations made by the learning and teaching co-ordinator.

APD award design phase

The setting up of a programme design team (PDT) to write the programme had to be considered. This was informed by the evidence from the TNA, which recommended the institute use 'in-house expertise' for the delivery of training. The decision to facilitate the delivery of an off-campus version of the DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching in AIT in 2007–8 had added significantly to the expertise within the institute, with five participants of the programme continuing their professional development by progressing to a range of programmes such as the National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM) Postgraduate Diploma in Education and a Doctorate in Education (EdD) programme from the University of Sheffield. Enlisting the support of colleagues strengthened the design process.

The PDT, which was led by the learning and teaching co-ordinator, included participants from each school in the institute: humanities, science, engineering and business. Each had previously undertaken postgraduate programmes in learning and teaching and all were convinced of the transformative effect on practice that this type of programme could offer. The team was supplemented with the

support and guidance of the LIN learning development officer. At this stage, the PDT was extremely effective in offering an informed justification for the programme. Citing personal reflections and commentary on its potential impact on practice in addition to the scholarly approach to teaching that the programme would encourage, this testimony was the required justification. The committee approved the proposal unanimously after recommending that the title was adapted to Certificate in Learning and Teaching – removing 'in Higher Education' in order to attract a wider range of participants to include educators in further education and at secondary level. The document was then reviewed by an expert panel including one external expert from the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching at National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG). The programme was approved unanimously by the academic council on 9 February 2009, and recruitment for the first cohort of participants commenced.

Recruitment onto the programme was carried out internally, with places offered initially through the academic schools. In addition, the head of learning and teaching at Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) was informed of the commencement of the programme, as members of the academic staff had been participants on the postgraduate programmes on offer in AIT prior to this. The minimum entry requirement for the programme was an honours degree or equivalent, and participants had to be currently employed in further or higher education, or equivalent, in a full-time or part-time capacity. This stipulation is required in order to complete the peer observation component, in addition to having opportunities for engaged reflection. As is in keeping with the institute policy regarding recognition for prior learning, applicants who do not meet these criteria may be reviewed for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) on a case-by-case basis. In total, 20 places were offered.

Figure 3.1.2: Breakdown of AIT participants in the Certificate in Learning and Teaching (2009–10) according to school

In May 2009, the academic registrar agreed to a formal request from the Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT) to carry out a pilot concurrently with AIT. This is described in detail in Section 2.6, which outlines the impact of this collaboration.

Pilot study of the award

The programme commenced in AIT and IADT in September 2009. In AIT, ten three-hour sessions took place on Friday afternoons at scheduled intervals until mid-March 2010. Sixteen people took part in the programme: six assistant lecturers, six part-time lecturers and four full-time lecturers. The average age of students was 39; 58% were female and 42% male. Of the sixteen people who took part in the programme in AIT, six students were from the School of Science, three from Adult Education, three from the School of Business, two from the School of Humanities, one from the School of Engineering and one from the School of Catering at GMIT. Eight students held

Masters degrees, four held PhDs, three held degrees and one had a Higher Diploma.
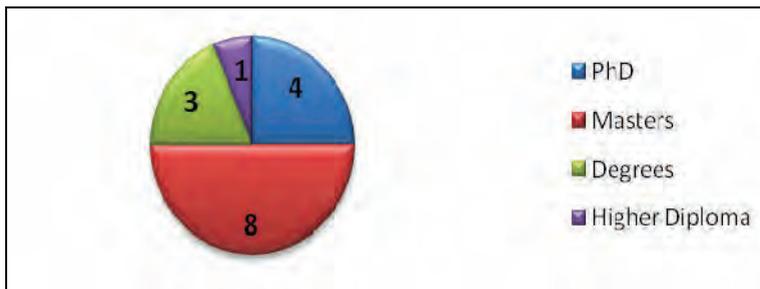
**Figure 3.2.3: Highest qualifications held
by participants in the Certificate in Learning and Teaching
(2009–10) at AIT**

Evaluation of the APD award

An APD evaluation questionnaire was developed as a result of a LIN evaluation workshop with members of the APD working group and the senior executive of the IoTI Flexible Learning Project (See Appendix 4). An electronic survey was developed, and using the survey tool Zoomerang this was deployed to the participants in AIT and IADT. Responses were cross-tabulated to the question relating to the name of institute where the programme was undertaken. The survey was completed by seven of the 16 AIT participants, resulting in a 44% response rate. The majority of respondents had heard of the programme through the institute website ($n = 3$) and/or email ($n = 2$) and/or from a colleague ($n = 4$). Only one respondent had previously applied for a teaching award or funding to support learning and teaching activities. Respondents were asked to rate how relevant the programme was to their needs on a scale of one to six, with one being 'not relevant' and six being 'very relevant to my needs'; 57% ($n = 4$) indicated that it was very relevant, with the remainder ($n = 3$) choosing the point below this on the scale.

When queried regarding why they chose this programme, the responses were as indicated in Figure 3.1.4 (multiple responses were allowed). In addition, one respondent added that they hoped the programme would provide extra security in their role.
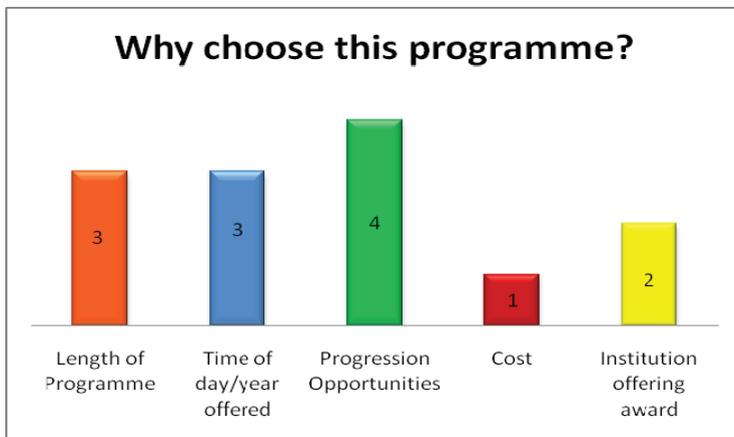
Figure 3.1.4: Reasons for choosing the Certificate in Learning and Teaching

All respondents considered the level of support provided during the programme adequate and would recommend the programme to a colleague.

Respondents offered some interesting qualitative data to support or clarify earlier responses. I will outline those that supplement the quantitative data. When asked if the programme was different to what they had expected, three of the seven respondents answered in the affirmative and made the following additional comments:

> AIT Respondent 3: It was more interactive – learning from others in the group.

> AIT Respondent 6: More beneficial. Much more work than I anticipated. Rewarding and addictive.

> AIT Respondent 7: More work and learning theory
> involved than I anticipated.

The order of the programme was considered to be good, in a logical sequence, and well presented and explained. The content and topics covered were considered to be excellent; very relevant to the course and provided a good grounding in learning and teaching. In addition, one respondent commented that the assessments were particularly relevant.

In relation to the level of online support through Moodle, one respondent commented that the 'use of Moodle was encouraged for both tutor and peer' support. In addition, respondents considered the forums 'very effective for discussing topics with colleagues'. One commented:

> I made extensive use of Moodle for discussion and also it was fantastic to have as a repository for all the notes, course handbook, etc. As a result I used Moodle much more with my own students.

When questioned if the assessments worked well, all agreed that they had: one respondent stated 'they were excellent and challenging'; another suggested that 'the assessments suited all types of learners'. However, although all respondents suggested that the level of support on the programme in relation to assessments was effective, one respondent commented 'initially I found feedback unclear and focused too much on presentation as opposed to content'.

When asked what might have been more appropriate to them, one suggested 'one hour of course could be devoted to assessments and feedback at an early stage. The style of writing could be outlined for clarity.' Another stated that on 'some occasions our working groups dispersed without set tasks. I struggled with the IT element and I felt if we were allocated 5 mins at the end to clarify briefs, guidelines it

could have offset some of the queries on the work expectations.' Interestingly, this type of comment was also made at the joint course board and had become apparent to both programme teams after the first assessment – the seminar paper – was received for draft feedback. The programme co-ordinators, in conjunction with the programme teams, thereafter designed and distributed clear assessment rubrics and guidelines for each assessment component.

The seminar paper proved problematic for some participants, particularly in relation to the choice of topic and the rigour of academic writing. In addition, writing reflectively was a new departure for some and led to a period of discomfort with this style of writing. All participants passed the programme; however, the external examiner, who was extremely complimentary of the standard of assessed work under examination, considered the seminar paper a very difficult first assignment and recommended it to be redesigned with the title selected by the programme team and a critical reader review approach taken to selected items of scholarly literature.

The other key comment that emanated from one respondent was in relation to the volume of assessment: 'There is a lot of assessment for just 10 credits. Either more credits should be awarded or the content and assessment reduced. I learned a huge amount from all assessments but it was just too much for 10 credits.' This is in keeping with the recommendations of the external examiner, who suggested that the programme: be increased to 15 ECTS credits; incorporate an additional session on supporting academic writing; and develop the portfolio design as a single bound document to incorporate an introduction with key reflections on the impact of formative experiences provided throughout the programme, including in particular online activities and the impact of the microteaching session.

Key lessons learned in developing and implementing the APD award

A number of key lessons have been learned. In particular, the value of collaboration both internally and externally has been noted. The impact at implementation phase is discussed further in the joint AIT/IADT section of this publication (Section 2.6). In addition, the importance of communicating with stakeholders and keeping them updated on developments was extremely beneficial, particularly when requesting the resourcing of the programme delivery team from heads of school and department. The team was crucial to the success of the pilot, as evidenced in the commentary from the participants on conclusion of the programme and in the responses provided in the survey. The decisions to team-teach each session and to distribute the correction of each assessment component to two members of the team meant that peer review and support was embedded throughout the programme implementation. This assisted the transition to the role of teaching colleagues considerably. Team members identified the positive impact that involvement in the programme has had on their own professional development.

Plans for sustainability

In 2010, the HR department developed a policy whereby all newly appointed academic staff attain a minimum of 30 ECTS credits in learning and teaching in the first two years after their initial appointment. In the current economic climate, being able to provide such programmes within the institute will be of significant benefit in terms of cost savings to both the provider and participant while having the added benefit of cross-institute interaction. The AIT Learning and Teaching Unit intends to offer two additional LIN programmes in the academic year 2010–11. In addition, the

Department of Adult and Continuing Education has added the Certificate in Learning and Teaching programme to its prospectus.

The programme is having an impact sectorally. IADT will continue to offer the programme in 2010–11, and other institutes of technology have expressed interest in implementing the programme. Ensuring that quality of provision remains consistent across all providers is paramount; this can be achieved through the continued development of the programme teams. This could potentially be sustained through LIN and other networks such as the Educational Developers of Ireland Network (EDIN).

Conclusion

The Certificate in Learning and Teaching programme has impacted positively since its implementation in 2009–10, in such areas as course design, programmatic review and educational research. External experts engaging on programmatic review panel visits have repeatedly acknowledged the benefit of this programme. In addition, members of academic staff have endorsed these comments. Anecdotal evidence would also suggest that the discourse in relation to curriculum design has become more informed, with learning and teaching champions emerging across each discipline as a result of this programme and other support initiatives provided through the Learning and Teaching Unit.

Participants and members of the programme team have been research award recipients at local and national level, indicating the positive effect of linking research to practice.

In addition, many of the AIT participants have subsequently undertaken a 5-ECTS professional development module, thereby attaining 15 ECTS credits in one academic year. All participants have expressed an interest in completing additional modules in AIT, which

indicates that the flexible pathway model is proving to be an attractive approach to academic professional development.

The LIN awards will introduce academics to pedagogy and scholarly activity in relation to their practice, thereby creating and nurturing a community of advocates for the importance of underpinning practice with professional values, and in turn influencing the learning experience of current and future generations of students in higher education.

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3.2 Academic professional development in IADT: the pilot Certificate in Learning and Teaching with Athlone Institute of Technology

Dr Marion Palmer (IADT)

Introduction

The Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT) developed from the Dun Laoghaire College of Art and Design and has three schools: Creative Arts (the original College of Art and Design), Business and Humanities, and Creative Technologies. The institute seeks to be at the interface of creativity, technology and enterprise with programmes in fine art, film and media, enterprise, arts management, multimedia programming and psychology, among others. IADT is one of the partners in the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) 1 sectoral project of which Learning Innovation Network (LIN) is an element.

The institute has built up a tradition of staff training and development, and a staff training room was set up in 2008. In addition to courses and workshops provided on-campus, the staff development fund is used to support staff attending relevant courses elsewhere. Staff can apply for support to complete Masters or Doctoral programmes in their disciplines or to complete accredited courses in teaching and learning. A number of staff have been supported to complete the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) Certificate or Diploma in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

Teaching and learning in IADT

IADT, led by its president, Jim Devine, has had an interest in e-learning for many years. The institute introduced a virtual learning

environment (VLE) (WebCT) in 2002, supported by training from Memorial University Newfoundland. An e-learning interest group was set up in 2003; members were the early adopters of WebCT. The e-learning interest group became the e-learning steering group in 2004, reporting directly to the institute executive – evidence of its commitment to e-learning. Parallel to the use of the VLE, many programmes were developing their digital media profiles and the institute won a number of national awards for digital media.

In 2005, EdTech, the annual conference of the Irish Learning Technology Association, was held at IADT. A staff member was seconded half-time in 2005–7 to support and develop e-learning – particularly the use of the VLE – and this was followed by a quarter-time secondment for 2007–8, again mainly to support use of the VLE. During this time there were regular workshops on WebCT. An educational technologist was appointed to information and communications technologies (ICT) to support work in e-learning; this was additional support for the use of the VLE.

The work in e-learning led to an interest in teaching and learning. A staff member ran seminars on learning, teaching and assessment in early 2003, and an ad hoc teaching and learning group of interested staff ran between 2003 and 2005. The group held meetings and seminars related to teaching and learning.

In 2005, the Department of Science became the Department of Learning Sciences and the head of department was allocated responsibility for developing teaching and learning across the institutes. In 2006, academic council set up a teaching and learning sub-committee with the head of the Department of Learning Sciences as its chair. This placed teaching and learning at the heart of academic work at IADT. The author became chair of the teaching and learning committee upon appointment as head of the Department of Learning Sciences in 2007.

Teaching and learning committee

This group is a sub-committee of academic council and has representatives from across the institute including the registrar, the schools, ICT, the library, the access office and students. Initially, its task was to develop the institute's learning, teaching and assessment strategy; this was adopted in 2008 and was reviewed in 2010. It also reviews relevant institute policies (such as its plagiarism policy), and supports teaching and learning seminars and attendance at conferences such as AISHE and EdTech. In 2008, the staff training, learning and development officer joined the committee and the e-learning steering group became a sub-group of the teaching and learning committee.

The teaching and learning committee provides a cross-institute focus for developments and initiatives in teaching and learning. It also provides a forum to discuss and develop appropriate policy and support. The committee is committed to:

- reviewing existing practice in teaching, learning and assessment and drawing from all the disciplines in the institute;

- the principles of universal design;

- disseminating best practice within specific fields of enquiry by investigating teaching and learning strategies;

- advising on staff training and development, and co-ordinating and leading teaching and learning efforts across the institute;

- linking to wider teaching, learning and assessment initiatives internally and externally; and

- developing the scholarship of teaching at IADT.

There is evidence of considerable innovation in learning, teaching and assessment across the institute. The strong tradition of project

work in the arts influences learning and teaching, as is evident in the School of Creative Arts' annual exhibition and the annual student showcase of the School of Creative Technologies. Innovation in the business programmes was showcased at AISHE in 2008 and at the HETAC conference 'Educating the Entrepreneurs' in February 2009. There were presentations from IADT at EdTech 2009 on Wikis for student assignments and on the use of online mapping tools for a visual arts practice off-site module. Lecturers present both posters and papers at appropriate discipline conferences on teaching and learning, such as the Psychology, Learning and Teaching conferences (held every two years). Two lecturers (Palmer and Heagney) wrote a chapter in a peer-reviewed publication on learning and teaching.

These developments illustrate the scholarship of teaching and learning in IADT and provide the framework for the review and analysis of the impact of the LIN academic professional development programme at IADT.

Academic professional development

Professional development of teaching and learning is part of IADT's overall staff development policy. The teaching and learning committee tends to lead the planning of staff development for teaching and learning through the suggestion and organisation of workshops, etc. This began in a small way in 2007–8 and has developed since then. However, there is evidence of a reactive approach to the professional development of teaching and learning (as noted by Johnson (1997)) that may contrast with a more active development of academic discipline or professional practice skills.

The launch of *Creating Futures: IADT Strategic Plan 2008–2012* showed IADT's commitment to teaching and learning with a key objective:

> To continually develop and test learning and teaching strategies which meet the needs and opportunities presented by diverse learning groups, emergent technologies and evolving cultures. (IADT 2008a, p. 16)

This led to the staff training, learning and development officer joining the teaching and learning committee to enable the achievement of the actions for this objective, including 'provision of training and development for staff in both extant and existing paradigms' (IADT 2008b). A practical accredited programme in learning and teaching was identified as part of the annual analysis of training needs for teaching staff.

IADT and LIN

IADT was a member of the SIF 1 sectoral project, of which LIN is a part, from its inception. The head of the School of Creative Technologies was the institute's representative on the steering group until 2007, when the head of the Department of Learning Sciences was appointed. Membership of the steering group was part of the responsibilities of the role. The development of the APD modules was underway at this stage, and Marion Palmer joined the APD working group.

In early 2009, the Certificate in Learning and Teaching was validated in Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT). It was to be piloted in 2009–10. Following discussions, it was decided to explore the possibility of piloting the programme in IADT in parallel with AIT. There were a number of key issues:

- Team teaching is a key approach in the programme. Did IADT have the capacity to put together a suitable programme team?

- Permission of both institutes for the pilot.

- The cost of the programme.

IADT has a number of staff with learning and teaching qualifications as well as an interest in learning and teaching development. The head of the Department of Learning Sciences and the staff training, learning and development officer have Masters in education, the registrar has a Doctorate in lifelong learning and staff across the schools have educational qualifications in higher education or other levels of education. The author has just completed a Doctorate in education, researching teaching in institutes of technology (Palmer 2009). It quickly became clear that it would be possible to put together a suitable programme team to manage and run the Certificate. The permission and considerable support of both institutes was readily available and, following an agreement with respect to costs, formal permission was given to pilot the Certificate in IADT in parallel with AIT.

APD award development

Programme team

Given the range of skills required and the wish to make this an institute experience, the team was recruited from across the institute. It was agreed that the Certificate programme would be led by the head of the Department of Learning Sciences and the staff training, learning and development officer. Members of the team included the registrar, staff from the library, ICT and a representative from each of the three schools. All either are members of the teaching and learning committee or have qualifications in third-level teaching and learning, mainly from DIT. Participation in the programme team was voluntary: there was no time remission or payment for the work.

Students

The programme was advertised to IADT staff in June 2009, and staff were invited to apply in September 2009. The programme was open to all staff in IADT provided their manager approved their attendance and they could attend the sessions.

There were ten participants on this programme: one head of department, five lecturers, two library staff, one member of staff from student and academic affairs and one external candidate. The group was 40% male and 60% female, with an average age of about 39. The participants came from across the institute. Four participants held PhDs, four had a Masters degree, one held a degree and one a Level 8 Special Purpose Award with relevant experience. Because this is an AIT programme, the participants were registered with AIT.

Assessment of the award

Assessment of the Certificate was by a portfolio. There were four elements to this. The first part was a seminar paper of 1,500 words on a topic of the participant's choice. This was designed to introduce students to the literature on education, and to encourage them to read, analyse and apply some element of educational theory to their practice. The next element was a screen cast. This is a short video to support learning in a blended, online or distance-education mode. The third element was peer observation to encourage participants to reflect on their teaching by observing a class and being observed teaching. The final part of the portfolio was a reflective essay on the programme. Overall, the assessment was pass/fail.

APD pilot study

Programme development and planning was carried out in collaboration with AIT, and this is the subject of Section 2.6. This

collaboration included the development of the programme handbook for students and the development of a tutor handbook for the programme teams. Assessment dates and briefs were planned at the start of the year, in conjunction with AIT.

The programme in IADT mirrored the programme in AIT. Ten three-hour sessions ran in 2009–10; seven sessions ran in the first term and three in the last term. All sessions for the Certificate took place in the STAR Training Centre in the Media Cube. The Certificate was matched funding for the SIF 2 IoTI/DIT Flexible Learning Project, because it supported staff development for flexible learning.

At local level, there was a systematic approach to planning and development. The programme team leaders met on a regular basis to plan and review each session. The sessions were planned with the members of the programme team leading the session; one of the programme team leaders also attended each session, to ensure continuity. The focus of the work was the modelling of best practice in teaching and learning such as lesson planning, clear preparation of sessions and assessment elements. Blackboard was a key element in the programme, both as a support and as a means of interaction.

Some sessions needed considerable planning and thought. The focus of the sessions varied from theoretical underpinnings such as learning theories or assessment to practical classroom issues such as lesson planning and the use of Blackboard. Reflective practice was a key theme of the programme. Microteaching is invaluable, but its implementation with colleagues required thought and care; however, basing it on reflective practice meant that it was planned well. One session on active learning was led by our colleague from AIT.

There was one meeting of the programme board in Athlone with a videoconference to IADT. Marion Palmer attended the meeting in

Athlone, and other members of the programme team and the student representative attended in IADT.

All ten participants completed the programme and were awarded the Certificate in June 2010. Three have progressed to further professional development in teaching and learning.

Reflections on the APD pilot

Running the programme has been a valuable experience. The impact of the programme on the programme team, the students and the institute as a whole has been positive, although demanding. The programme was evaluated by a student survey, as reported in the LIN AIT case study (Section 3.1) ($n = 6$). Initially the impact on the students will be considered, then the demands on the programme team and finally the impact on the institute.

The demands of the programme on the learner were considerable. The response to the sessions varied with the participants, and depended on their interests and experience. Attendance was very good and met the 80% requirement of the programme. The development of a community of learners was evident over the ten sessions. The approach taken in the workshops – discussion and engagement – supported the participants in considering their professional practice, and was enjoyed by students; for instance, class interaction was noted by two survey respondents as the most enjoyable part of the programme. The use of Blackboard discussion topics also required them to consider and articulate ideas about learning. The use of Blackboard discussion posts fell off during the year. As one student noted in the final essay, when the programme team stopped using Blackboard so did the students. Peer observation and microteaching were identified as changing teaching practice by four of the survey participants.

The assessment load was identified as an issue early on and continued to be discussed by the students; for example, 'a lot of assessment for 10 credits' (IADT Respondent 3). The response of the students to the assessment varied. Most found the seminar paper difficult and struggled to produce good work. The reading about education was difficult because they were novices and used to being experts. Interestingly, referencing was an issue. Some did not use references in their professional practice. Others found it difficult to adjust to the required reference style. Adhering to the deadline for submission was also difficult, particularly because there was a draft submission and then the submission of the completed revised work. The other elements of the assessment were completed on time.

Overall, the programme was a positive experience for the students. They recommend that colleagues in the institute take the programme. Figure 3.2.1 shows the participants' key learnings at the end of the programme, as identified at the final wrap-up session.
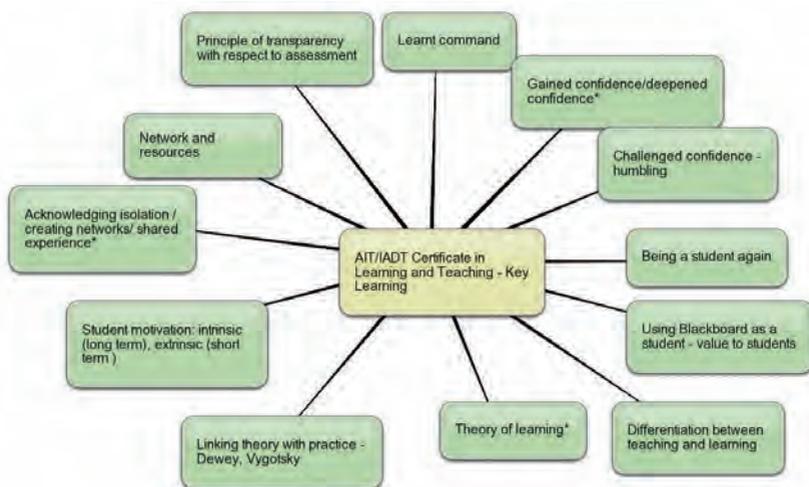
Figure 3.2.1: Key learnings from the Certificate
(March 2010)

For the programme team, it was a most interesting and enjoyable experience. It is clear that being a member of the programme team represented professional development for each individual member. Preparing and running a session for colleagues was a challenge, let alone assessing a colleague's work. It was also additional work.

The assessment workload was considerable for the programme team. It was a challenge to observe the dates, to get the assignments assessed and get feedback to students on time. The assessment of the portfolio was distributed among the programme team, with two members assessing each element. Each element was double-marked, with the outcome agreed between the two assessors. For some elements of the portfolio there was interaction with AIT as we reviewed work from the other pilot site.

The seminar paper was surprising. This element of the portfolio was designed in two stages: the submission of first a draft and then, following feedback, a revised completed paper. Students found it difficult to select a topic, develop a draft and reference appropriately, although a wide range of topics emerged (e.g. assessment, motivation, experiential learning and active learning). It was evident that students needed support in terms of writing and referencing. The final seminar papers were a considerable improvement, but there was a heavy workload on the members of the programme team assessing the papers.

The screen cast element of the assessment was a particular challenge because none of the programme team had developed or used screencasts. This had to be learned in order to enable the students to achieve this element of the portfolio. Developing the peer observation drew on previous experience of the team: one member had been a lecturer in teacher education prior to joining IADT. This element of the assessment went well, as did the final reflective essay.

Working with colleagues across the institute on a programme team was a novel and rewarding experience – sharing and developing best practice. Working with colleagues as learners was demanding, and the expectations of the team and of participants had to be clarified and checked constantly. It was essential that there was respect and comfort on both sides. The distribution of the assessment across the programme team was essential. Separation of roles was another important issue. One of the programme leaders was head of department of two of the participants, and this had to be put aside within the sessions and when assessing work.

Managing the programme team was considered. Because this represented additional work, it was agreed to keep programme team meetings to a minimum – there were two over the year.

The programme assessment strategy was essential. It was challenging enough to develop and/or implement the sessions without having to plan the assessment. One issue that arose during the year was the incomplete feedback/grading sheets for the different aspects of the portfolio; these were developed in association with AIT, which did delay feedback on portfolio elements in some cases.

It is clear that both the running of the programme and the effort put into running it paid off well in terms of learner feedback and the impact of the programme in IADT.

Lessons learned from the pilot

The Certificate in Learning and Teaching can be managed in terms of student workload by lecturers on full hours. It can be run from within institute resources at reasonable cost. However, the student workload is considerable and assessment needs review. The seminar paper is very demanding on the participants, and they need additional support in terms of referencing and writing skills

workshops. It was also suggested that the approach to the seminar paper be revised and the learners be offered more support in reading and selecting areas for writing. This view was supported by the external examiner. It was suggested that the programme remains as is, with the credits adjusted to 15 ECTS credits.

The Certificate is sustainable in IADT, at least in the short term. IADT is supportive of the programme, as is AIT. The programme team are willing to support the award again. Having the resources developed this year will enable the programme team to implement the programme in coming years more easily. To ensure that the award is sustainable into the future, new programme team members will be needed. There are sufficient staff without any professional base for teaching and learning to ensure that there are learners for the programme.

Impact on attitudes to teaching and learning development across the institute

The Certificate in Learning and Teaching was run from within institute resources. It was the first formal accredited support for teaching at the institute. The impact of the programme in IADT was surprising: it brought the professional base for teaching, learning and assessment into focus within the institute. Over the year there were 18 people working professionally on developing learning and teaching; this had an enormous impact at many levels within the institute.

The programme seemed to develop awareness of staff development for teaching and learning across the institute. Firstly, because it drew participants from across the institute and regular attendance at the workshops was required, it meant that many areas of the institute were aware of the programme. Secondly, the fact that participants were required to attend two additional workshops on

teaching and learning during the programme encouraged the teaching and learning committee to ensure that there was a wide range of offerings internally in IADT, online (e.g. IT Sligo's live webinar series in early 2010) and externally at other institutions. Participants were attending these additional workshops/teaching and learning events and encouraging their colleagues to attend. Thirdly, the participants' colleagues saw them working on and studying teaching and learning as they completed the assessment tasks.

The support and involvement at all levels within the institute brought teaching and learning into focus. During the year there were programmatic reviews across the three schools. The work done in developing learning and teaching support, including running the Certificate in Learning and Teaching, was commended in each case.

Research has indicated that learning to teach in institutes of technology is individual and lacks coherence, and that as a result there is little professional base for learning, teaching and assessment (Palmer 2009). The Certificate in Learning and Teaching has provided a coherent introduction to the professional knowledge required for teaching in a group setting that has enabled networks to be developed, as seen in Figure 3.2.1. Taking part in the pilot Certificate in Learning and Teaching has enabled IADT to implement some of the recommendations of this research, such as:

- Encourage lecturers to plan for professional development as a teacher.

- Encourage lecturers to work together.

- Support teacher development through a mixture of work-based learning, events and formal learning.

- Encourage all staff in the institutes to attend teaching and learning events.

- Resource educational development through staffing and materials. (Palmer 2009, pp. 157–8)

It has provided a means for lecturers and all staff in the institute to consider teaching both as a professional role and as part of the system. Furthermore, it has provided opportunities for staff to work together through microteaching and peer observation, opportunities that enable workplace learning.

Acknowledgements

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3.3 Development of the personal development planning and reflection, action and evidence review modules

Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT) and Dr Jen Harvey (DIT)

Introduction

In February 2008, the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) conducted a sector-wide survey of teaching and learning activities and needs in all of the institutes of technology in Ireland (excluding Sligo IT), including Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). 84.6% (55) of all Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) respondents expressed an interest in further academic/professional development/training. In addition, 65.5% (36) of all AIT respondents were interested in following the accredited route. The most popular programme format was a series of accredited one-day workshops leading to a qualification, for example a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Certificate. 59.1% (13) of lecturers and 50% (8) of assistant lecturers indicated a preference for this approach. Findings from a needs analysis conducted by the Learning, Teaching and Technology Centre (LTTC) with newly appointed and existing academic staff on the institution data collected in 2002 and again in 2005 had also previously indicated that a broad range of professional development opportunities were required by staff, including workshops, CPD courses and accredited programmes.

Initially, a 5-ECTS CPD programme was considered by the LIN accredited professional development (APD) working group as the model for the shared APD programme (see Section 2.2). In order to inform the development of such an APD model, a pilot of the CPD model was carried out in AIT in 2008. The focus was on the development of a learner-centred approach to teaching and the development of academics as reflective practitioners. With the

requirement by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) of a minimum volume of 10 ECTS credits per named award, a 10-ECTS modular structure was used for the LIN APD Special Purpose Awards. As outlined previously, the LIN project subsequently commissioned the development of seven Level 9 Special Purpose Awards in Learning and Teaching in seven different partner institutions. However, while initial feedback suggested that participants were only interested in completing individual modules, a need soon emerged: staff were becoming interested in combining them into a Postgraduate Certificate or using them to gain exemptions into a Level 9 Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching (30 ECTS credits). Different learning pathways had already been considered in order that institute of technology (IoT) staff could potentially gain access to a Diploma in Higher Education (through DIT, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM) and University of Ulster), a Masters or eventually a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) at Level 10.

A number of different possible combinations of the seven awards into an accredited postgraduate award were explored through the creation of different learner pathways. At that time, a number of issues (outlined in Section 2.2) – for example regarding consistency and quality of approach, potential overlap in content between awards and concerns regarding the overall quality and level of learning outcomes achieved across the combined awards – were of concern to the validating institutions. By way of addressing some of these concerns, it was proposed that two short 5-ECTS modules would be developed (see Section 2.2 for an outline of their development and Appendix 2 for an outline of the modules). At that stage, the intention was for these modules to function as capstone modules as part of the LIN model to support the attainment of such a Postgraduate Certificate qualification (30 ECTS credits) through their combination with two HETAC Special Purpose Awards

(5 + 10 + 10 + 5 ECTS credits). In part, they would serve to ensure to the institution validating the award attainment of the standard required for programme learning outcomes at Level 9 within the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) framework.

PDP module design and development

By serving as capstones, the 5-ECTS modules were initially designed to firstly prepare participants prior to commencing their first APD award and then to reflect upon their later APD learning experiences as they prepared evidence of having achieved the overall LIN shared programme outcomes. The modules aimed to emphasise the developing generic competencies underpinned by professional values within the context of their own subject-disciplinary practice. These competencies include designing individual learning plans, use of a variety of teaching and learning support methods and resources, skills to support student learning more effectively and strategies for reviewing and evaluating their own teaching and professional development. It was also felt that these modules might be of more general interest to staff who already had a heavy workload and would benefit from guidance and support of their existing teaching practice. Appendix 1.3 provides an overview of the way it was envisaged that the modules might relate to the three proposed LIN learning pathways.

During the stage of developing a major LIN award, a hybrid model was offered by DIT to LIN partner staff. This provided staff completing a recognised 10-ECTS APD Special Purpose Award with an opportunity to progress onto a DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching module. For successful completion of the full Level 9 programme, the participant would complete a 15-ECTS Certificate module and a 5-ECTS capstone module in addition to their 10-ECTS award. The final 5-ECTS personal development process (PDP) module would serve to pull together evidence of

having achieved all the learning outcomes of the full DIT 30-ECTS postgraduate award.

The DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching programme has been offered in DIT since 2000 and was offered in AIT and IT Carlow from 2007. The Postgraduate Certificate was designed to provide the increasingly diverse teaching and learning expertise needed by academic staff in all subject disciplines in today's higher education institutions. All DIT staff are required to undertake the Certificate if they do not already possess an equivalent qualification. The modules are offered to existing appointed members of IoT staff who teach or support teaching on a full- or part-time basis. Teaching activities may include lecturing, demonstrating, or leading seminars or tutorials. The DIT Postgraduate Certificate was revalidated in January 2010 as a Postgraduate Diploma in Third-level Learning and Teaching. Staff who have completed the Postgraduate Certificate can upgrade their award to the major award by completing a bridging course with DIT.

DIT Postgraduate Diploma

Programme aims

To enable academic staff in the third-level sector to:

- be effective, competent lecturers, by providing them with a range of skills and knowledge to design, deliver and evaluate education programmes; and

- plan, develop and then reflect upon their own professional development.

Programme learning outcomes

By successful completion of this programme, participants will be able to:

- critically reflect on and develop their teaching through a range of self, peer and student monitoring techniques to develop their own teaching philosophy statement;

- critically review the concept of professionalism within the context of their professional practice and identify professional values underpinning best practice;

- engage with a community of teachers in higher education from a variety of subject disciplines and academic staff in learning and teaching;

- utilise national and international research findings to develop their practice in line with relevant research in the field of educational research;

- inform their teaching practice with a critical awareness of the socio-cultural context of changes within higher education;

- implement a student-centred approach to teaching practice; and

- develop a strategy for their continued professional development in the context of lifelong learning.

PDP module delivery and implementation

In March and May 2010, DIT implemented the first of the PDP modules; 16 participants were from IADT and AIT, along with two participants from Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). The programme took place over two full days. In between the face-to-face sessions, participants had access to online resources and PowerPoint notes from the sessions. The course was supported by

the use of the DIT virtual learning environment (VLE), webcourses. The first day concentrated on developing a common understanding of a LIN value system and competencies, and developing a project for personal development. It was important from the outset that the professional development of participants would be set against an agreed set of competencies and values. The group discussion facilitated by the tutor enabled the group to start a refection process that would underpin the personal development project that they wished to undertake. The LIN core values were used as a guideline to the discussion.

Once an agreed framework for development had been established, the group explored how to structure a personal development plan. The different models of personal development proved to be a moot point of discussion for the group. Again, agreement was needed to aid the participants in establishing their own PDP. However, because of the tight timeframe the projects would involve minor changes to practice, informed by literature, that could be documented. At the end of the one-day session, each participant had defined a personal development project that would be put in place before the end of the semester.

In between the face-to-face sessions, the participants were given the opportunity to discuss their personal development project with their peers and the tutor. The participants were also given the opportunity to obtain formative feedback on their written assignments. However, not all participants availed of the opportunity. Because the programme is validated as a Level 9 award, it was important to place emphasis on the quality of research and the presentation of research for the assignments. The second day-long session took place in May; each participant reported on how their project was developing and presented it to their peers. In June 2010, all participants submitted a 2,500-word assignment. In September 2010, all participants had passed the course and were awarded their Certificates in October 2010. One of the graduates

has now progressed onto the Postgraduate Diploma programme with DIT.

Lessons learned from the pilot

For future iterations of the programme, the timing of the sessions would need to be revised. Informal feedback from the participants indicated that this time of year was particularly busy, and they found it difficult to carry out the necessary research to back up their personal development plan. The implementation of change and any attempt to measure that change would also need to take place over a longer period of time. Therefore, it is recommended that the module be delivered early in the first semester and that the participants be given much more time to evaluate the implementation of any change that they wish to research.

3.4 Certificate in Enquiry-based Learning

Hugh McCabe (ITB)

Introduction

Enquiry-based learning (EBL) is an approach to teaching that is driven by a process of enquiry on the part of the learners (Kahn & O'Rourke 2005). Learners can be required to engage in tasks such as solving problems, carrying out projects or investigating answers to research questions. The onus is on the learners to take responsibility for their own learning, with the assigned tasks being carefully designed in order to provide the stimulus and impetus for this process. Therefore, the job of the teacher becomes one of facilitator rather than the more traditional role of information provider. In a typical EBL scenario, the learners work in groups and so group-facilitation skills are a key factor when it comes to successful deployment of the method. EBL is an umbrella term that encompasses a number of pedagogical methods that share these characteristics, such as project- or problem-based learning (PBL) (Boud & Feletti 1998).

These methods are becoming increasingly common in third-level education because they are seen as an effective way of nurturing many important skills that traditional curricula struggle to address. These would include team-working, independent learning, communications and negotiation skills, and problem solving. In the Irish context, a quick glance at the programme-level learning outcomes for Level 7 and Level 8 courses would indicate that methods that help to develop these sorts of skills are of crucial importance. To quote but one example, it is stated that graduates of Level 8 programmes should not just have experience of working in teams but have experience of '*leading* heterogeneous teams' (my emphasis) (NQAI 2003).

However, delivering a module or a course by means of EBL is not something to be undertaken lightly: typically, it requires a completely different approach to teaching, to assessment and to interaction with the learners. For these reasons, it was felt that an APD module on EBL, the successful completion of which would result in the award of a Certificate in Enquiry-based Learning, would be a valuable addition to the suite of modules under development as part of the LIN SIF 1 project. The Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB) has had a strong involvement with EBL methods for a number of years, in particular by way of a SIF 1 project on integrating PBL into the Engineering Department; consequently, ITB volunteered to lead the development, accreditation and piloting of the EBL module.

Module design

The module design was carried out in collaboration with members of the APD group and benefited enormously from some initial face-to-face brainstorming meetings. The process continued by means of submitting drafts of the module documentation to the PBWiki site and review based on feedback received in this manner.

Learning outcomes

The final agreed set of learning outcomes stated that 'on successful completion of this module, a student will be able to:

1. critically discuss current practice in EBL and contextualise this discussion within broader developments in educational research;

2. design and evaluate a strategy for integrating EBL techniques into a curriculum and appreciate the constraints, challenges and opportunities involved;

3. select from a variety of feedback, evaluation and assessment methodologies that are suitable for EBL, and develop a strategy to apply them in the context of their own professional practice;

4. develop appropriate problems suitable for stimulating learning within their own subject discipline and demonstrate the constructive alignment of these problems with the learning outcomes; and

5. practise the skills required to support the formation, facilitation and encouragement of learning in groups.'

Learning outcome 1 is driven by the need for participants to be able to contextualise EBL within a broader framework of educational research and to have an understanding of the theoretical perspectives that underpin its use. For example, we might examine how Biggs' work on assessment (Biggs 2003) is relevant not just to practical considerations of how to design problems to align with learning outcomes, but also to the entire motivation for the use of EBL itself. The second learning outcome reflects the fact that theoretical considerations can often come unstuck in the face of practical issues pertaining to actual delivery. It is important that the participants leave the course with an understanding of what the practical issues, difficulties and constraints involved in deploying EBL are, and how to go about designing a strategy for deployment that takes account of these. Assessment is a key issue with any educational approach and there are particular considerations involved in assessing EBL work, so learning outcome 3 addresses this. It also insists that participants consider assessment in the 'context of their own professional practice': the notion of taking the learning and applying it directly to the participant's own teaching practice is a core idea of the EBL module. Learning outcome 4 also continues this: it requires participants to be able to take one of their own modules and rework the curriculum, delivery and assessment

strategy in order to make effective use of EBL. The final learning outcome reflects the fact that managing group work is a crucial component of EBL.

Module delivery

This module, and indeed all of the other APD modules, is aimed at full-time academic staff. Therefore, it was important to organise the delivery of the module in a manner that makes it feasible for those with full teaching schedules to attend. The traditional model of a weekly slot over the course of a semester was not felt to be suitable: firstly, it is impossible to find a weekly time slot that suits academic staff from varying departments and with varying timetables; secondly, the commitment to attending a weekly session might be one that participants are unwilling or unable to make. It was also important to organise the module delivery in such a way as to allow participants the opportunity to apply their learning within their own teaching practice; and indeed, as we will discuss shortly, this activity is a key part of the actual assessment of the module.

In light of these considerations, two decisions were made early on with respect to module delivery. The first one was that a *blended learning* approach would be used: this would entail a set of face-to-face workshops combined with online independent learning activities. The second decision was that the module delivery would take place over two semesters. A set of workshops would be delivered in the first semester; the second semester would be used by participants to apply their learning within their own teaching practice, and then reflect and report upon this experience.

The rationale for delivering a set of intensive workshops in semester 1 was to remove the necessity of participants having to make themselves available every week. Six workshops were designed, each focusing on a core aspect of EBL. Because each was designed to

be of 3–4 hours' duration, it is possible to deliver two in one full-day session. Consequently, participants have to attend for three full days during the first semester. The content of the six workshops is as follows:

- *Workshop 1: Context.* This comprises course induction, overview of EBL models and theories, situation of EBL within general teaching and learning theory, and some reflection on the participants' own professional practice.

- *Workshop 2*: *In practice.* This workshop is designed to give the participants some direct insight into the use of EBL in the Irish third-level context by presenting and reflecting on a number of case studies.

- *Workshop 3*: *Group work.* Managing, facilitating and supporting group learning.

- *Workshop 4*: *Problem design.* This workshop looks at how to design problems for a PBL-style course effectively, and involves the participants in designing problems for their own modules.

- *Workshop 5*: *Assessment*. The use of EBL presents particular issues when it comes to assessment, so this session examines the role of assessment in the process and considers a number of different assessment strategies.

- *Workshop 6*: *Technology and EBL*. This workshop looks at how technology can be used to support EBL practice, particularly in the context of distance and blended learning.

In addition to attending these workshops, the participants are required to engage in a set of independent learning activities, each of which are assessed. These are as follows:

- *Task 1: Research exercise (10%).* Participants are asked to critically review one or more journal or conference papers pertaining to EBL.

- *Task 2: Curriculum design and integration (10%).* Participants examine their own professional context and devise a strategy for incorporating EBL (or aspects thereof) into their work. This strategy should take into account all the likely constraints and challenges that this implies.

- *Task 3: Assessment methodologies (10%).* Participants examine various ways of assessing EBL work and then select (or devise) and justify appropriate methods for their own context.

- *Task 4: Problem design (10%).* Participants devise one or more problems suitable for stimulating learning with their own subject discipline and/or professional context.

The goal of the first semester is not just to give the participants the knowledge they need to embark on using EBL, but also to facilitate them to develop an appropriate model for applying EBL within their own teaching practice. This model is put into concrete form by requiring them, over the course of the first-semester assessments, to develop a detailed and considered plan for exactly how to do this.

The second semester involves the participants applying this model to their own work. Ideally, this involves applying EBL within a module or a course that they have been assigned to teach, and then analysing and reporting upon this experience. A number of assessment deliverables must be produced based on this. These are:

- *Reflective journal (20%).* Participants will be expected to reflect on this activity, and the first-semester work, on an ongoing basis by means of an online reflective journal.

- *Report (40%)*. This will describe and reflect on the results of this experience, and might take the form of an academic paper or a reflective piece.
- *Presentation (10%)*. At the end of the semester, a one-day wrap session will be held where participants present and share their conclusions.

In some cases, for operational reasons perhaps, it may not be possible for a participant to actually apply EBL in their teaching during the second semester of the course – in which case, an alternative means of satisfying this requirement can be agreed. For example, a participant might undertake a research project instead, or a substantial curriculum development exercise.

Innovative practice

There were a number of innovative aspects to the module that are worth focusing on briefly.

Facilitating online communications with a content management system (CMS)

We have already discussed the necessity of using a blended learning approach in order to accommodate the varied work schedules of the target audience for the module. This involves scheduling the required contact hours into three full-day workshops in the first semester and one full-day wrap session in the second, with other activities being facilitated by online means. However, we have not yet discussed how this online aspect of the module is managed.

Rather than using a conventional learning management system (LMS), such as Moodle, it was decided that a dedicated website for

the module driven by a content management system (CMS)[32] – so that users could upload, share and edit content – might provide a more flexible and interesting online experience. Such a site would allow participants on the course to have online discussions by means of forums, post articles, create blogs and access whatever course content is placed there by the tutor(s). The decision to use a CMS rather than an LMS such as Moodle was taken for a number of reasons:

- LMS systems tend to be geared towards in-house use and not towards making content available to users outside a particular course or institution. By utilising a CMS instead, we open up the possibility of an online resource that not just facilitates the running of the module, but builds into a useful resource for the larger academic community.

- An LMS has a very specific feature set designed to support the academic context. A CMS is designed to support a much broader range of applications and hence it has numerous features not available in an LMS.

However, the disadvantage of taking this approach is that while setting up a new page for a course on an LMS like Moodle is a simple and trivial matter, setting up a site using a CMS, with all the required features necessary to support online delivery, is a substantial task. In our case, we had already created a site that could be extended for this purpose. As part of the SIF 1 Problem-based Learning Project, a CMS-driven website (ContinuePBL.ie) was designed and implemented, primarily to serve as a 'problem pool'. By this we mean that academics engaged in PBL can upload descriptions of, and

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[32]   A CMS is a software application for creating a website that is specifically targeted at situations where multiple users will be contributing content on an ongoing basis. Such users can be given logins allowing them appropriate levels of access, depending on what they are allowed to contribute.

documents related to, problems that they use in their teaching. These problems can be tagged and categorised and then accessed by other academics. The site also included the facility for administrators to post news articles on PBL-related matters, for members to create blogs, and for all users to engage in discussions via the forums. Building on the existing functionality of this site then had a two-fold benefit. Firstly, it directed our EBL students towards a useful pre-existing resource; secondly, it drastically reduced the amount of effort necessary to put the required online course-support functionality in place.

In order to provide this extra functionality, some extensions were then implemented in order to cater to the needs of the Certificate in Enquiry-based Learning. These were as follows:

1. A new class of user called a participant was created for students of the EBL course.

2. A new site section called EBL Certificate was added, into which course materials could be placed by the tutor(s). This was only visible to participants.

3. Dedicated forums were set up that participants and tutors could access. These could be used by participants to discuss the module and by the tutor(s).

4. Participants were given the ability to create blogs, which could be used as reflective journals. They had the choice of making these only visible to other participants and tutor(s) or to make them visible to any site visitors.

5. The tutors were given the ability to post news items that were automatically forwarded by email to all participants on the course.
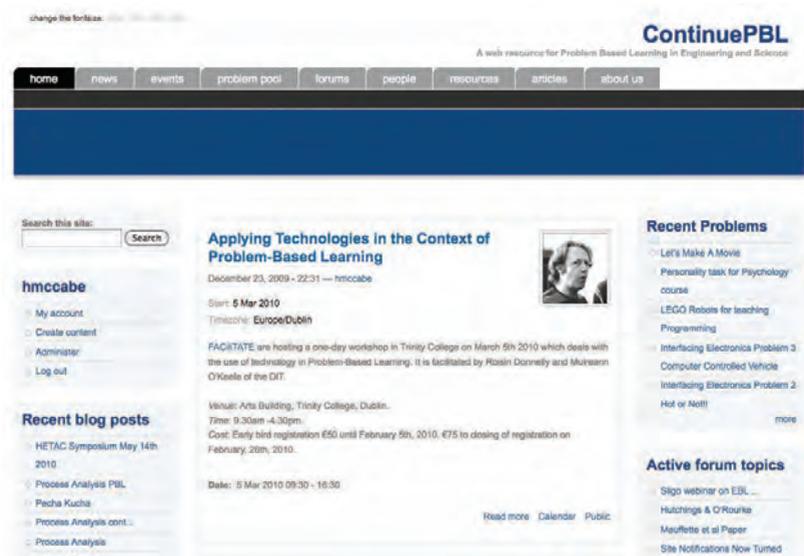
Figure 3.4.1: The CONTINUEPBL website

Providing a variety of viewpoints

EBL encompasses a broad palette of approaches, ranging from closely prescribed step-based models, such as the form of PBL originally formulated by McMasters University (Neufeld & Barrows 1974), to looser models incorporating various pedagogic techniques within an investigative framework (Kahn & O'Rourke 2005). Our experiences using PBL at ITB led us to conclude that attempts to advocate and promote one particular model were counter-productive, and that one particular formulation of it cannot possibly suit the wide variety of subjects, levels of experience (on the part of both tutors and learners) and contexts to which it might be applied.

Therefore, we decided that, for the purposes of the EBL course, it was important to provide the participants with a variety of viewpoints, and expose them to tutors and workshop facilitators

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that would reflect the wide variety of ways in which EBL can be employed. Furthermore, we felt it was important that the tutors would not be drawn from one single institution; while this would be the simplest thing to do from an operational point of view, it would be more beneficial to the participants to learn how EBL is employed across different educational establishments in Ireland. The sequence of six workshops provides a natural way of achieving this, with the intention being to invite workshop facilitators from a variety of institutions to deliver workshops that match their areas of expertise. In this way, the view of EBL that is presented is not simply the view of the individual co-ordinating the course, and neither is it simply the view of the particular institution hosting it, but rather a broader view of how it is employed right across the third-level sector in Ireland.

Pilot delivery of award

The Certificate in Enquiry-based Learning went through the validation process at ITB during 2009 and was then run on a pilot basis from October 2009 to May 2010. The course was advertised internally, and 11 academics from ITB signed up for it. They were joined by one external participant from Cork Institute of Technology, who heard about the course through the APD network. The participants came from a variety of academic disciplines. There were three engineers, five lecturers from the Business School, three computer scientists and a physicist. Only one of the participants had significant experience in employing any form of EBL previously, having been involved in the SIF Problem-based Learning Project and consequently having taught engineering courses with PBL. Three of the others had experimented in a limited manner with the use of EBL in their teaching, while the remaining eight had not. There was also a wide range of previous exposure to formal teaching and learning education. Some of the participants had postgraduate

qualifications in teaching and learning, while others had had no previous formal training.

The first semester comprised a series of three full days, each of which comprised two workshops. As explained previously, a variety of facilitators were engaged. Workshop 1 (Context) was facilitated by Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT) and Hugh McCabe (ITB). The afternoon session, Workshop 2 (In Practice), involved Raymond Manley (ITB), Laura Cuddihy (DIT) and Stephen Howell (ITT) all presenting their experiences on using EBL in their work. Workshop 3 (Group Work) was facilitated by Dr Gerard Ryder (Institute of Technology Tallaght (ITT)), while Workshop 4 (Problem Design) was facilitated by Dr Terry Barrett (University College Dublin (UCD)). The third session comprised Workshop 5 (Assessment), which was handled by Dr Brian Bowe (DIT) and Workshop 6 (Technology and EBL), with Dr Roisin Donnelly (DIT). In tandem with these workshops, the participants were assigned a number of assessment tasks, as described previously.

In the second semester, the participants engaged in the use of EBL within their own professional practice, or a relevant research project.

A wide variety of work was undertaken. Some examples included: the incorporation of PBL into a number of IT modules across year 2 and year 3 of the Bachelor of Business Studies with Information Technology; the introduction of EBL into a project management module; the use of EBL in applied media studies; and an EBL approach to digital design in engineering. Another participant, who was unable to incorporate EBL directly into their teaching schedule for the second semester, elected instead to undertake a research exercise whereby he considered a variety of teaching activities in which he has been engaged over the course of his career, and produced a reflective piece that analysed them within the context of the EBL research literature. In each case a report was produced, and

the participants presented the results of their second-semester work at a workshop session in May.

Of the 12 participants, ten completed the Certificate successfully. The two who did not complete attended and engaged with the workshops in the first semester, but cited pressures of work in the second semester as the reason why they were unable to carry out the required course work. The results of the students who completed the module showed a range of levels of achievement. Four students achieved B grades or higher, with the remaining six achieving grades between C and B–.

Evaluating the pilot study of the award

Feedback was solicited by means of an online survey, which four of the students responded to. Overall the feedback was positive, and in spite of the small number of respondents some interesting issues arise. For example, three out of the four respondents indicated that the programme was different to what they expected, but nevertheless all of the respondents confirmed that it was relevant to their needs. The participants were happy with the programme content, with just one suggesting that it was 'too limited'.

When asked whether they felt that any additional teaching sessions would have been useful, three out of the four respondents indicated that they would appreciate more sessions in the second semester to help them with their implementation of EBL. For example, one states:

> It would be useful to have a workshop simply for participants to bring along their authored syllabi and assessment scheme and problem descriptions, and work with others to improve them.

Another participant puts forward a similar idea:

A weekly/monthly meeting of participants so we could share out progress stories and challenges as we attempted to implement EBL.

When questioned about what changes should be made to the programme, each of them returned again to this issue, reinforcing its importance.

The respondents were also asked about the levels of support offered, and were asked to comment on the online activities. Two students were happy with the levels of support, whereas two were not. If we look at the comments, it seems that the problem may lie with how the participants themselves made use of the online system, as opposed to a problem with the system itself:

Good but were not really used by participants.

The website system was very useful, both as a repository for some of the reading material, and for the group forums, and for the source of messages from the lecturer to all participants.

Very good. Liked the site and ensured that I captured my learnings on an ongoing basis and could share with others. However, not fully utilised by all and thus limited the learning and sharing opportunities for us as a group.

Lessons learned from the pilot study

The levels of engagement with the online activities were certainly not as strong as was hoped, and the question of how to encourage more participation is one that must be addressed in the future.

Encouragingly, all four of the respondents stated that they would recommend the programme to someone else and all four stated that they would consider further accredited programmes in teaching

and learning as a result of completing this one. One final comment is worth quoting in full:

> Great course. Information overload, and only so much that can be done in one semester to learn and apply. This is the importance of sharing our ongoing experiences both online and 'over coffee'. Well worth doing and I personally saw significant benefit with my students this year, and with this course had the courage to try these methods.

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3.5 Technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher education

Dr Liam Boyle (LIT)

Introduction

As part of its contribution to the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) accredited professional development (APD) programme, Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) was lead partner in the development of a 10-ECTS Level 9 award in technology-enhanced learning (TEL), focused particularly on information and communications technologies (ICT). Following the LIN APD model, successful completion of the award leads to a Special Purpose Certificate in Technology-enhanced Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

ICTs are ubiquitous in contemporary society, and it is natural that educators in third-level institutions should seek to harness the power of these technologies to support student learning. The internet is of particular interest because of the way that it facilitates communication and makes vast information resources and online tools readily available at the click of a mouse. Benefits for learners include flexibility about where and when they access learning materials. For distance learners, the web allows a level of interactivity and immediacy that is not possible with traditional distance-education methods. Web resources can also be used to enrich classroom learning by adding vibrancy and vividness to classroom topics.

This award is designed to help teaching staff in the institute of technology (IoT) sector to make better use of ICT in their teaching. While staff appreciate the advantages offered by these technologies, they are often disinclined to engage with them because they are uncertain about how to leverage these advantages and they have

little time to invest in the development effort. In addition, institutional resources to support their efforts in this regard may be extremely meagre.

Cognisant of these limitations, the aim for this award is to work with readily available tools and to build on the skills that teaching staff already possess. Rather than produce learning technologists, the aim is to help working teachers to identify the pedagogical advantages of new technologies and equip them to adapt these technologies to their own teaching needs.

Outline of the TEL award

For this award, it is not enough that participants learn how to use new technologies; they need to be able to employ them to best pedagogic effect. The award seeks to help teaching staff in the IoT sector to get the best out of readily available information and communications technologies in order to improve the experience for students and to enhance their learning. For this reason, the award introduces participants to theories concerning the relationship between learning and technology, and to evidence-based research on best practice in TEL. Participants are also introduced to social factors related to TEL, such as questions of access and digital exclusion. In addition, they have an opportunity to design and implement technological solutions to pedagogic problems in their own area of practice.

The overall learning outcomes established for this award were that learners should be able to:

- critically appraise theories concerning the relationship between technology and learning, with a view to designing TEL events and opportunities;

- compare and contrast a range of information and communications technologies available to teachers in higher education and evaluate their effectiveness;

- develop multimedia materials and learning objects for teaching purposes; and

- effectively select and use appropriate technologies in their own teaching.

These award learning outcomes were translated into unit outcomes. Initially ten topic areas were identified, which suggested ten units. However, it was felt that this would be too many because learners would be moving too rapidly from one topic to the next, without the opportunity to properly absorb and integrate the learning. The original ten topics were combined and modified to create a final count of five units, as follows:

- Unit 1: Introduction to TEL.

- Unit 2: Learning theory and TEL.

- Unit 3: Harnessing the web.

- Unit 4: Creating digital content.

- Unit 5: Locating and evaluating digital resources.

It was decided that the award would normally be delivered over a single semester of 12–15 weeks, from an initial briefing seminar to the submission of the final assessment. It was resolved early on that a flexible and blended approach to delivery would be adopted for this award. Attendance requirements would be kept at a minimum, and would include an initial briefing session and interim lab sessions in a computer suite. The briefing session would also be an opportunity for participants to meet with their fellow learners before they were required to communicate with them online in award forums. It was thought that this initial bonding exercise would

improve the quality of online engagement. An overall attendance requirement of 12 hours was included in the award specification. The precise use to be made of this time is likely to vary from group to group, depending on the specific requirements of any particular cohort. Participants have the support of an online tutor who provides information and poses questions in asynchronous online forums, and whom they may contact at any stage for advice. Online forums are also available for communication with their fellow learners. In addition, a set of self-instructional materials and various digital resources were prepared and made available to learners through the award website. Learners are required to work through the materials and complete assigned portfolio activities as they do so. The teaching model is based on reflective practice: the activities require participants to try things out in practice and to reflect on their effectiveness.

It is a challenge to design an award that offers value to teaching staff from a wide range of disciplines, who have various levels of prior experience with ICT and who are at different stages of their teaching careers. The starting point is where participants already are with technology. For example, most lecturing staff are already familiar with Microsoft PowerPoint for the preparation of classroom presentations. In this award they explore the possibilities of this tool for authoring e-learning objects. In addition, participants use free or open-source applications where possible, such as CamStudio screen recording, Nvu web authoring and the Audacity audio editor. These and similar tools were also used to create the learning objects to support the module, so that award delivery modelled the technology that it set out to teach.

Assessment for this award comprises three elements:

- portfolio of practical and reflective activities;
- contributions to online forums; and

- final assignment.

For their final assignment, participants are asked to identify a pedagogic problem in their own teaching and to develop a technology-supported response to this problem. The individual portfolio tasks are designed to build towards this final assignment by giving participants the opportunity to trial various ideas and to begin their investigations of the relevant theory. Participants receive formative feedback on their responses to portfolio activities and may submit revised responses with their final assignments.

APD award development process

The development process for this award consisted of two distinct phases. First, the award specification was drawn up and the award validated. Second, learning materials were developed to support the delivery. Throughout its development, there were various discussions on what to include and on the approach to be adopted in teaching the award.

APD award specification and validation

A core committee of interested parties was established to draft the award specification, consisting mainly of staff from the Teaching and Learning Centre in LIT plus an interested staff member from another institute. In order to facilitate contributions from as wide a base as possible, a Wiki was created using the Wiki service at pbworks.com and members of the LIN APD group were notified. Ideas offered through the Wiki were incorporated into the module specification, where possible.

The award specification was developed through multiple drafts, which were circulated by email to the development committee for comment; the comments on each draft fed into the development of

a subsequent draft. There was concern to achieve an appropriate balance between theory and practice. The award needed to introduce participants to the practical skills and tools to support their teaching. As a Level 9 award, however, it was essential to challenge participants to think through the pedagogical challenges involved and to inform themselves on the relevant academic literature for the topic. At the same time, it was necessary to keep prerequisite learning to a minimum in order to meet the needs of teaching staff across a range of disciplines and at different stages in their teaching careers.

Because the Teaching and Learning Centre in LIT is not an academic department, it was necessary to identify a host department that would be willing to have the award validated. Some concern was expressed within the institute on the advisability of developing an award that was not linked to a major award. Although the module was to merit a Special Purpose Award in its own right, the intention for the longer term was that this could form part of, or contribute credit to, a major award. It was argued that this was putting the cart before the horse, and that such a module should only be developed as a component in a major programme. After some consideration, the School of the Built Environment agreed to host the module as a standalone professional development module. A validation panel was convened, including an external teaching and learning specialist from another academic institution and an external e-learning expert from industry, and the validation was successfully completed.

Creating the instructional materials

Instructional materials for the award include self-instructional texts and web-based learning objects. Some preliminary work on these began before the formal validation of the award, and this work continued apace once the module was validated.

Self-instructional learner guides were prepared, incorporating the following features:

- *Structure*: Content was divided into units, with each unit containing an introduction and a statement of unit learning outcomes.

- *Language*: The language used in the learner guides is conversational and personal, addressing the learner in the second-person singular 'you' or with a collegiate 'we'.

- *Non-portfolio activities*: Each unit includes several non-portfolio activities, both reflective and practical, to encourage active learning.

- *Portfolio activities*: Each unit contained one portfolio activity for each unit, designed to draw together learning from the unit and develop skills towards completing the final assignment.

- *Links and further reading*: Because there is already a vast amount of information on this subject freely available on the web, it was decided to leverage this advantage by providing links and pointers to various external sources. These provided opportunities for participants to deepen and extend their knowledge.

In order that the delivery of this award should model approaches that the learners could emulate, the learning objects used to support the award were produced at relatively low cost using readily available or free software, involving nothing beyond what an individual teacher with minimal budget should be able to produce.

Learning objects created for the module can be divided into two major categories:

- *Slide-based learning objects*: These narrated presentations were developed in Microsoft PowerPoint and rendered in Flash format using the free iSpring PowerPoint-to-Flash converter. Audio was prepared using the open-source Audacity audio editor. (See Figure 3.5.1.)

- *Screencasts*: Mini-tutorials on how to use various software tools. These were created mainly using the open-source CamStudio software. (See Figure 3.5.2.)

Figure 3.5.1: Screenshot from 'Learning theories and ICT' learning object
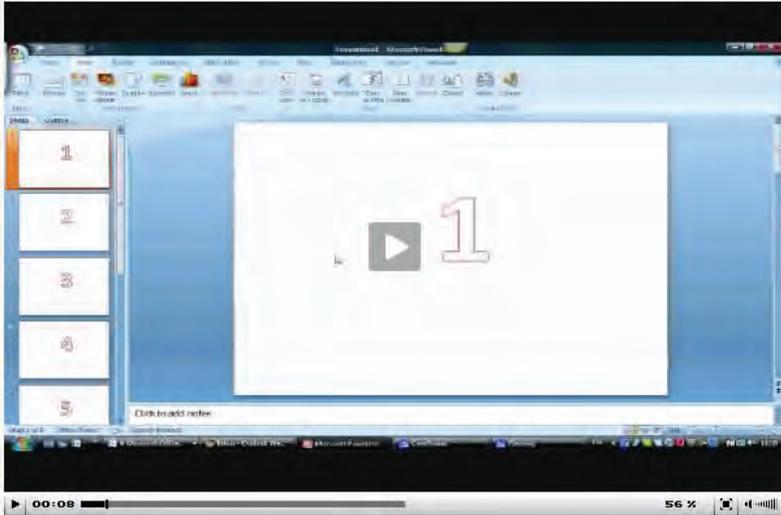
Figure 3.5.2: Screencast: demonstrating the use of PowerPoint for e-learning

APD pilot delivery

A pilot delivery of this award for LIT teaching staff took place from February to May 2010. Just over 40 members of staff had expressed interest in the module, and 14 elected to participate in the pilot. The award was delivered using LIT's Moodle virtual learning environment. Several participants withdrew during delivery, citing time pressures. Five completed all units and submitted final assignments. The quality of work submitted was high, and all of those who completed the module achieved an honours grade. Some of those who withdrew indicated that they would wish to resume at a later stage when they had fewer demands on their time. Some of those who completed also commented on time demands, saying that the award had been more time-consuming than they had anticipated.

Enjoyed the course but found it difficult to finish due to teaching commitments.

It was very time-consuming but worth it.

While this award offers significant flexibility regarding when and where participants conduct their study, the overall notional hours of learner effort imputed to a 10-ECTS award is significant, some 200 hours. Even with maximum flexibility, staff struggle to make available the requisite time to complete such a module. Institute of technology teachers have a heavy teaching load – 18 hours per week for assistant lecturers and 16 hours per week for lecturers. Apart from the total number of teaching hours, the distribution of hours throughout the week limits the capability for participating in attendance-based staff development events. This fact formed part of the justification for adopting a largely asynchronous approach to delivery, with the self-instructional manuals and learning objects that learners could access at a time and place of their choosing.

Overall, those who completed the award said they were glad they had participated. They liked the online materials and they were satisfied with the balance between theory and practice in module content. Major criticisms centred on the time demands, the low level of engagement in online forums and a desire for more attendance-based workshops/tutorials.

I am extremely glad I participated in this course.

I have really enjoyed a completely new area of study.

Although participants stated that they would have liked more workshops or scheduled classes, attendance at the interim lab sessions was actually quite poor, because of clashes with participants' teaching schedules. With such heavy teaching loads, it proved impossible to schedule class times that did not clash with some teaching obligations.

The course materials – learner guides and learning objects – were well received. The learner guides were especially favoured, with one learner stating 'I have printed off all the learner guides as they are an invaluable resource document' and another saying that they were 'the most helpful part of the course as they provided links to other theories'. Another commented that material provided clear direction in relation to assigned tasks.

The learning objects were also valued, with one learner stating that 'navigation through the objects was convenient for replaying sections', a view echoed by another learner who stated that 'the ability to play objects over and over was very convenient'. This ability meant that participants could learn at their own pace, revisiting aspects that were unclear, and moving on once they had learned the appropriate lesson.

One criticism was that 'some learning objects were a little too long and slow in delivery'. Indeed, two of the learning objects were 40 minutes each in duration. While these objects supported learner navigation with menus and skip buttons, it might be desirable in future to break down each of these objects into a set of smaller objects.

Learners were required to complete a portfolio of short activities plus a more substantial final assignment for assessment. Responses to individual portfolio activities were submitted as they were completed, and formative feedback was provided. Some of the early responses displayed a tendency for surface-level engagement with the topics, but as time went by deeper and more sophisticated responses became the norm, leading to well-considered final assignments. Learners were generally pleased with the activities and the opportunities that these provided for practical work:

> I really enjoyed the practical side of the course.

> I enjoyed working through the practical assignments.

There was some criticism of the wording of activities. According to one learner, 'some of the wording on the portfolio activities was a little confusing'. In fact, there was little evidence of this in the responses submitted by learners, who found that generally they conformed to requirements.

Activities were submitted to the tutor using the Dropbox feature in Moodle, which meant that the work was visible only to the tutor. One learner suggested that this was a mistake: 'I would have liked to see some of the work other class members did. I think this would have been really motivational and I'm sure I would have learned a lot from them and how they put their learning objects together.' This point is reasonable, and more opportunities to share work will be provided in future. In an attendance-based module, learners view one another's work simply by virtue of sharing the same lab. In a largely online programme, explicit attention needs to be directed at this issue.

Some activities required learners to make contributions to online asynchronous forums. Learners were also encouraged to make further use of the forums to share ideas and discuss topics.

Lessons learned

Apart from the required contributions there was little engagement with the forums, and this was reflected in the evaluation:

> I found a disengagement in general towards the forums.

> Participation was probably a necessity more than a preference.

This is an area that will require further attention in the future. Some participants speculated on reasons for the poor use made of the forums:

> I suspect students felt they were being assessed by the forums rather than the forums being used as a platform for assistance.

> Monthly class meetings might have fostered more familiarity among class members, which would have made it easier to ask questions and interact on the forum.

Learners were asked what they liked most and least about the module. Various aspects featured in the 'most liked' list:

> I enjoyed the learner guides, the shared resources, the various technologies introduced step by step.

> I really enjoyed the first unit, the YouTube clips about the history of technology. The discussion on digital exclusion was enjoyable.

> The learning objects and learner guides were most helpful, as were the discussion forums.

> The portfolio activities.

> There is such a wealth of high-quality free software available. Learning of their existence and their uses was the highlight of this course for me.

> I have enjoyed the course enormously, especially the practical assignments.

In contrast with the wide range on the 'most liked' list, dissatisfaction centred on two related aspects of the module: the low level of engagement in online forums and the fact that there were too few contact classes:

> Probably the online forums. Possibly, a certain level of vulnerability was felt by others and myself included.

> The only time I saw my classmates was on the opening day; there was no other opportunity to meet with them and discuss the course. I'm sure they would have been a great learning recourse and support.

> Would have preferred a few contact classes to go through the technology packages for tips, etc.

> The addition of some contact classes may have contributed to shared and peer learning.

A lot has been learned from the pilot delivery, and the lessons from this evaluation will inform the future development of the module. In particular, more workshops will be scheduled and more opportunities will be provided for participants to share ideas with their fellow learners.

Although this module merits a Special Purpose Certificate in its own right, it is intended that, in the longer term, the module will contribute credits to a major award, together with the APD modules available from other institutes. This approach received support from participants, and those who had completed this module were unanimous in wanting to take further modules towards a major award:

> I really enjoyed this module and I do hope it will contribute to a major award down the line.

Conclusion

The Special Purpose Certificate in Technology-enhanced Teaching and Learning in Higher Education was developed by LIT as a contribution to the LIN APD process, and to help serve the professional development needs of teaching staff in the IoT sector. The award has been piloted successfully within LIT, and an evaluation of the pilot suggests a high level of satisfaction with the

content and the learning materials. The blend of delivery methods chosen for the pilot will be fine-tuned to provide more contact classes and more opportunities for learners to share ideas with one another. The next step is to offer the module throughout the third-level sector.

3.6 IT Sligo Certificate in Researching Educational Practice

Dr Etain Kiely (IT Sligo), Kevin Savage (IT Sligo), Meliosa O'Brien (IT Sligo) and Stephanie Donegan (IT Sligo)

This Special Purpose Award aims to develop the scholarship of learning and teaching (Boyer 1997) to enhance student learning experiences in higher education in Ireland. The module has been validated as a standalone 10-credit module that can contribute to a national academic professional development (APD) award at Level 9. The focus is on educational rather than disciplinary research (Boyer 1990, Zuber-Skerrit 1992), and views researching practice as a positive approach to enhancing student learning and the continuous transformation of academic cultures and communities (Kreber 2003).

It is intended that graduates of the award will be able to investigate and publish on their own educational practices. This section reviews the context in which this module is situated in terms of IT Sligo's strategic direction and developments nationally and internationally in this area.

IT Sligo's education development context

IT Sligo is committed to developing and enhancing students' learning experiences, and this is evidenced in the institute's learning, teaching and assessment strategy (LTA) (2010). Table 3.6.1 demonstrates the alignment of this APD module with a number of guiding principles of this strategy.

Learning, teaching and assessment strategy	Addressed by APD Special Purpose Award?
Academic staff to be encouraged, guided and facilitated to participate in pedagogical training, self-development and research in both pedagogical and other academic disciplines.	Yes
Learning and teaching practices are informed by the best available evidence from educational research and other sources, including educators' reflection on their own experience. The institute has a responsibility for facilitating access to such evidence.	Yes

Table 3.6.1: IT Sligo's learning, teaching and assessment strategy mapped against the outputs of the APD module.

The APD Special Purpose Award (see Appendix 2.4) will contribute towards the institute achieving the goals of the LTA, and research strategies specifically in themed areas such as the module will:

1. Equip staff with the skills to investigate their practice and encourage the continued development of student-centred approaches.

2. Provide evidence-based data to ensure quality assurance and enhancement.

3. Embed the scholarship of learning and teaching by enabling staff to publish and disseminate the findings of researching their practice.

4. Promote a collaborative culture of peer support and exploration around continuous academic professional development.

The Special Purpose Award will also bridge gaps highlighted in IT Sligo's Institutional Review (2008). The review team, led by Professor Tom Collins, recommended that in reviewing its activities, the institute should place an increased emphasis on benchmarking against national and international standards and practices. This APD Special Purpose Award will empower staff to explore and benchmark their own practices.

The award will address aspects of IT Sligo's research and innovation strategy: it encourages applied research relating to teaching and learning, and promotes multidisciplinary collaboration and partnership among staff. The research output will involve staff evaluating their teaching, which will enable them to make well-informed decisions and ensure the best return on time and workload investment. Online resources and tools developed for this Special Purpose Award will be shared with academic staff through the module website. This will enable a self-paced and systematic approach in enabling IT Sligo as a learning organisation.

The national context

The significance of staff integrating research with teaching has been prioritised in national government funding initiatives such as the National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL) programme. Their vision is:

> One where research and teaching go hand in hand; where students and academics work in inclusive research, teaching and learning partnerships; where opportunities are created for all students to engage in and be challenged by appropriate scholarly activity from

their first year of undergraduate studies; where students enjoy the highest possible quality learning experience.

The APD Special Purpose Award has benefited from the many excellent resources available on the NAIRTL website (www.nairtl.ie) that benchmark national developments through funding and conference proceedings.

In addition, many accredited programmes in learning and teaching are offered nationally by Irish universities and institutes of technology. Most include a research methods module as part of a broader programme and are often delivered through face-to-face workshops and seminars.

This IT Sligo Special Purpose Award intends to offer a unique approach to integrating research into educators' practice. It is being offered as a standalone module and strives to ensure a flexible approach to participation and assessment. The emphases of the assessments and learning are on an authentic mode of assessment with a publication output, and a peer-supported online learning environment, respectively.

This Special Purpose Award intends to advocate and support a learner-centred philosophy with:

- flexible online delivery;
- peer-supported learning opportunity;
- authentic assessments with real-world relevance; and
- access to standalone modular units with opportunities to integrate with capstone modules and progression pathways to a national APD award.

This is in keeping with developments emerging in national policy documents such as the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) assessments standards, which reference relevant and authentic assessments and the National Framework of

Qualifications (NFQ) flexible and transparent pathways for progression and access. International documents on quality enhancement call for a more supported and collaborative approach to developing educational research.

The international context

Internationally, there are many well-established organisations that integrate research, teaching, learning and assessment. These organisations are striving to develop the scholarship of learning and teaching internationally. These include the UK Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE, www.srhe.ac.uk), the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER, www.acer.edu.au) and the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED, www.osds.uwa.edu.au/iced). The IT Sligo APD module development team participated in a number of international activities, as elaborated in the section on module development process.

Rationale for module learning outcomes

The Educational Development Unit and Engineering Department adapted and evolved the module outcomes (see Appendix 2.4) informed by feedback from a number of staff consultation phases. The requirement and demand for this award were established strongly during this process.

Staff identified that the module should encourage a systematic approach to enquiring into education practices in a variety of settings and environments, such as lecture theatres, group settings, work-based and online distance learning. The feedback led to the development of the learning outcomes and assessment strategies for this module.

In May 2007, 64 staff responded to a survey that sought to explore accreditation and recognition routes for staff. The most popular

route, identified by 29% of staff, was a Special Purpose Award (10 ECTS credits). When given space to comment, time emerged as a major obstacle to staff development.

2. If given the opportunity to pursue an accredited educational qualification in Teaching and Learning which of the following would you be most likely to undertake and complete?

Legend	Response
▢	i. Single Subject Certificate/Minor Award (10+ credits) (18)
▢	ii. Postgraduate Certificate (30 credits) (12)
▢	iii. Postgraduate Diploma (60 credits)iii. Postgraduate Diploma (60 credits) (13)
▢	iv. Postgraduate Masters (research thesis) (120 credits) (14)
▢	No answer (5)

Figure 3.6.1: Survey results on accredited educational qualifications

These findings were reinforced during a staff development day on 8 May 2009. Staff used interactive clickers to give feedback. Sixty-two clickers were used; 31% of staff indicated that time was the greatest barrier to learning, as shown in Figure 3.6.2.

9	What is the greatest barrier to your development?	
A	31%	Time
B	2%	Confidence
C	30%	Non teaching activities (admin)
D	12%	Work life balance
E	12%	Knowing who to talk to
F	12%	Other

Figure 3.6.2: Survey results on staff development barriers

Peer-supported learning circles were included in the Special Purpose Award after feedback indicated that 34% of staff believed this would assist in their academic development, as presented in Figure 3.6.3.

7	What would assist you in your academic development		
	A	9%	Mentoring from experienced colleague
	B	20%	Peer collaboration
	C	34%	Learning circle (teaching approaches)
	D	30%	Module clusters/sharing groups
	E	6%	other

Figure 3.6.3: Survey results on mechanisms to assist academic development

Nationally, the findings of a survey conducted by LIN reinforced this concept of flexible professional development opportunities. In October 2008, staff were emailed the module descriptor and asked for responses or suggestions for enhancement. Here is a sample of the resulting feedback:

> The module looks fantastic for people like me who don't have an education research background but have engaged in consultancy / action research for a number of years and need to upskill for the teaching / research environment, so count me in as a potential customer. I think the module title says exactly what is will do and sometimes we get hung up on groovy titles. Look forward to hearing more. (Lecturer 5)

This Special Purpose Award may also be considered an elective for the SIF 1 project Research Alliance. For more details, see www.researchalliance.ie.

After this consultation phase, it was agreed that the module would engage staff in exploring their everyday learning experiences in a systematic way and share this as a means of continuing APD. Participants will engage in and reflect on educational research by developing their analytical and evaluative skills of data collection,

analysis and dissemination. The development team agreed that this would be reflected in the learning outcomes of the module.

This module was developed in compliance with IT Sligo's quality assurance procedures for Special Purpose Awards. The development team mapped the learning outcomes of this award to the sub-strand standards and learning domains stipulated by the NFQ. These include:

- knowledge: breadth and kind (NFQ sub-strand KK/KB);

- know-how and skill: range and selectivity (KH/S); and

- competence: context, role, learning to learn and insight (CC), (CR), (CLL), (CI).

The overall knowledge, skills and competence outcomes acquired in the award are shown in Table 3.6.2.

Intended outcomes: the learner should be able to	NFQ sub-strands
Explore and articulate core concepts relating to educational research	KK, KB
Investigate and plan a strategy for researching educational practice	KH/S
Critically evaluate research findings and studies within the educational context	KH/S
Engage in and reflect on educational enquiry	CC, CR, CLL, CI
Disseminate research findings / outcomes in accordance with academic writing standards	KK/KB, KH/S, CC, CR, CLL, CI

Table 3.6.2: Intended learning outcomes mapped against NFQ sub-strand

The process of APD module development

After a series of meetings beginning in 2008, and in collaboration with LIN, a proposal was forwarded to the policy committee of the

School of Engineering for module development. This was in turn forwarded to the planning and co-ordination committee of the Academic Council, and was subsequently approved for development by the executive team for external validation. These procedures are in keeping with IT Sligo's quality assurance procedures.

A development team explored the module development within the School of Engineering in collaboration with the Educational Development Unit. The following consultations and collaboration occurred with education developers locally, nationally and internationally:

Consultation with	Consultation	Outputs
Local staff and specialists	Staff survey, emails and focus groups	Change in title, emphasis on enquiry-based learning approach, flexible modular approach to staff development
LIN sector survey	National survey	Flexible modular approach to staff development
NAIRTL	Two-day workshop on integrating research and teaching, Trinity College Dublin	The importance of using case studies in demonstrating scholarship of teaching and learning
University of Oxford (December 2009)	Conference: 'Beyond teaching and research: inclusive understandings of academic practice'	The need for international benchmarking against good / next practice

Table 3.6.3: Consultations during the development phase

The team collaborated with the library staff in the institute to ensure adequate resources for staff participating in this module. While lecturers and researchers may be familiar with literature in their disciplines, they may be less familiar with the literature of the scholarship of teaching and learning. Helen Fallon (2009), a librarian

in National University of Ireland, Maynooth, compiled a chapter that outlines resources on higher education teaching and learning. Sinead Kelly, the deputy librarian in IT Sligo, used this chapter to evaluate the resources that IT Sligo can access and use. She cross-referenced this article and updated the book stock and subscriptions to the online journals to ensure that the most up-to-date information is available for the module. For example, IT Sligo has access to the top database in the area of teaching and learning in higher education – Academic Search Premier.

On request, library staff delivered information sessions on resources to research students.

Three members of the development team participated in an international conference entitled 'Beyond teaching and research: inclusive understandings of academic practice' at the University of Oxford from 13 to 15 December 2009.

Lessons learned from practice

At the time of writing, the LIN APD module has not yet been piloted in IT Sligo. However, the experiences of staff engaging in educational research have provided many lessons that will inform the implementation of the module.

Beyond this, a number of staff are actively engaging in accredited academic development programmes. Sixteen staff members are undertaking the Masters in Education from Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). This has had a very positive impact on staff development, and individuals undertaking this qualification have led many new initiatives. Two staff members participated in the Postgraduate Certificate delivered in Athlone by Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). Staff found this very beneficial, specifically the use of portfolio-based assessment modes. This was challenging but encouraged critical self-reflection.

The author is supervising educational research at Levels 9 and 10. These research students are using phenomenological and case study and action research methodologies. One PhD project, undertaken in collaboration with National University of Ireland, Galway, uses a participatory research strategy. The feedback and lessons from students using these approaches in Irish educational contexts will provide valuable resources. Interviews with these educational researchers will be used as learning resources within the module.

A number of specific tools and strategies have been piloted during the supervision process; these include the use of personal development planning templates, which have been particularly usefully in managing researchers' time and workload. A number of researchers have piloted the use of educational technology to enhance the collaborative experiences in educational research. These include Live Scribe Pens. These innovative tools enable researchers to capture qualitative research interviews by recording voice and handwriting during the interview. The software enables the researcher easy access to analyse the data. The team have reviewed these tools and presented their findings online at www.researchingpractice.com.

Plans for sustainability

The sustainability strategy for the module will be described under the three key criteria. Its sustainability will be determined by succeeding to:

1. Embed this module into IT Sligo staff development systems.

2. Use web-based technology platforms to provide national access to the module as part of the broader APD programme suite.

3. Evaluate participants' experiences to inform the module development and develop a publication profile.

Embedding in IT Sligo's staff development

The programme will be hosted and administered by the Department of Civil Engineering at IT Sligo. Additional resources, as required, may be provided by outside specialists and visiting lecturers. This school has vast experience in facilitating online distance learning modules and bespoke training programmes. Samples of the IT Sligo staff development webinar series are available at http://sligolearning.blogspot.com/. This was accessed by a national and international audience.

Typically, the duration of the staff development award would be part-time over 1 year. This represents the optimal completion time; however, students may also complete the module over a longer period (maximum duration of 2 years) to offer flexibility for those implementing educational research methodology.

Technology-enhanced learning access

IT Sligo has developed a reputation in facilitating online learning, with a number of Level 7, 8 and 9 qualifications offered in Science and Engineering. The modules are delivered using the Moodle platform and Connect Pro, which enables live lectures, podcast recordings and interactive meeting rooms. An example of a talk on educational research presented by the authors is available at http://connect.itsligo.ie/p81553234/. This offers a rich learning experience for learners located around Ireland and internationally. It also offers a more flexible way for academic staff to engage in the scholarship of learning and teaching. A peer-supported environment will be encouraged using learning circles in areas of interest.

The module is open to learners who have obtained a Level 8 honours degree and are employed as educators in Ireland. Other

candidates with alternative honours degrees and experience shall be considered on a case-by-case basis. It is proposed to have an initial intake of 14–20 participants.
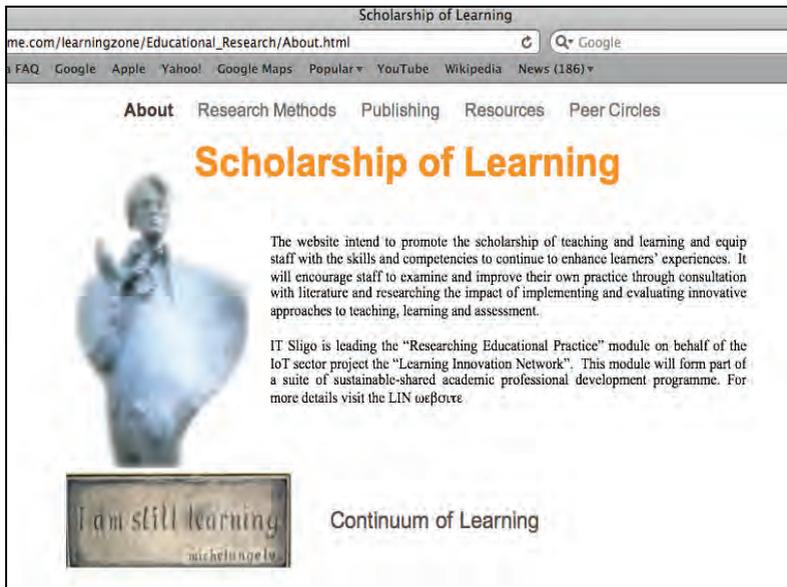
Figure 3.6.4: Screenshot from the IT Sligo scholarship resources website

A community of educational researchers will be encouraged through the use of a website offering specific resources and discourse for practitioners in higher education in Ireland and internationally.

Evaluation of effectiveness

The sustainability of the course will be dependent on how effective both academic staff and management consider the module to be at progressing the scholarship of learning and teaching in IT Sligo. This will be monitored constantly (McKinney 2004) using criteria to

evaluate staff experiences in terms of researching and publishing on their educational practices.

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3.7 Academic professional development within Waterford Institute of Technology

Dr John Wall (WIT)

Introduction

Educational institutions are well placed to support academic professional development (APD). As part of the delivery of learning, educators and educational institutions are continually planning programmes and events, engaging with participants, formulating and delivering development activities and measuring the effectiveness of the learning experience through various appropriate assessment methodologies.

Mirroring the aim of the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) APD award development programme to enable lecturers in the institutes of technology (IoTs) to take part in appropriate APD programmes, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) has developed a training and development plan that takes account of offering staff the opportunity to engage flexibly with further learning opportunities. As part of the LIN project, WIT was commissioned to tailor two existing awards – Assessment and Evaluation, and Mentoring – that these might be offered to the wider LIN community as part of a shared academic development programme and also as part of their institute programmes. The Assessment and Evaluation award was differentiated from the Formative Assessment and Feedback IT Carlow award, subsequently validated through Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT). The Mentoring award was, in part, intended to support IoT staff who were interested in being involved in mentoring participants through different LIN learner pathways within the shared academic development programme.

WIT, like other institutes, is working within a transforming higher education environment with: (1) changing expectations and demands on and from learners in higher education; (2) changing expectations and demands on the sector from government, employers and society; (3) new opportunities for learning enhancement and delivery being made possible through technology; and (4) the changing economic circumstances and ongoing debate on the funding of higher education. There are undoubtedly benefits to educational institutions in engaging in the delivery of APD. Empowering academic staff to meet these challenges will require continued support, learning and development support and guidance.

Context of the APD award within the institution

Berge (1998) and Vrasidas & Zembylas (2004) suggest that instructors are often asked to develop programmes using technology to support their delivery without the proper skill-sets or supports in place. Staff enablers can include further upskilling, support in the creation of web pages and support in the use of synchronous technologies. Greater flexibility, learning and integration of new technologies, and providing feedback in a more flexible manner, are all roles that management in institutions must facilitate.

Hirshon (2005) suggests that the nature of education is changing in terms of: (1) what higher-level institutes do and (2) the financial resources available to do it. More programmes are incorporating websites, more staff and students are using email for in-depth communication and more high-level institutions are facilitating their students in transacting administrative requirements via the internet (Johnstone 2002).

Current methods of working in educational institutions will be difficult to sustain in an environment where: (1) the funding to

institutions is reducing; (2) demand for services is increasing; (3) the demographic of students is changing; (4) students are more technologically literate and demanding; (5) the requirements to broaden access continue to grow; and (6) institutions are expected to provide flexible lifelong and work-based learning opportunities while maintaining the reputation for excellence in teaching, innovation and research.

In common with all educational institutions, WIT strives to facilitate graduates to develop their full potential both at college and beyond, in a distinctive manner. A challenge for WIT – as for all higher education institutes (HEIs) – is how to translate the aspiration of developing distinctive graduates as competent, mature and critical thinkers; responsible, informed citizens, capable of success in their chosen professions.

WIT strives to deliver a distinctive learner, augmenting their ability, skills and attitudes. To facilitate this, the institute is committed to supporting and developing good learning and teaching practices, supporting and developing good practice in assessment, developing the physical, social and technological environment in support of learning, teaching and assessment, quality management, and identifying and facilitating further enhancement in learning, teaching and assessment.

WIT has taken a number of key steps towards achieving this, including the modularisation of the curriculum and the roll-out of the Knowledge Transfer in the Curriculum project, which aims to enhance the ability of students to utilise the specific knowledge they gain at the institute in the world beyond it. The continued academic development of staff is one of the pillars in ensuring that graduates are empowered to reach their full potential.

Rationale for award outcomes and award content

Lecturers are responsible for devising, delivering and monitoring the assessment of any programmes they teach, with the support of the external examiners. The 10-ECTS LIN award in Assessment and Evaluation aims to enable lecturers to explore concepts in assessment and evaluation and to develop their knowledge and skills as effective assessors of student learning and programme evaluation.

The Certificate in Mentoring aims to develop teachers' and lecturers' abilities and dispositions to analyse and explain their academic and pedagogical thinking so that they can share their expertise and support their colleagues' professional development. Experienced teachers and lecturers have a wealth of knowledge and skills that may assist colleagues through mentoring support. Mentoring was among the areas that were identified as being of interest by respondents in both the 2007 and 2008 LIN surveys.

Outline of APD awards as part of LIN within WIT

As part of the LIN APD initiative, WIT committed to offering two modules from its existing Masters in Teaching and Learning (MALT) and Masters in Management in Education (MAME) programmes, namely: (1) Assessment and Evaluation and (2) Mentoring.

Learning outcomes: Certificate in Assessment and Evaluation

On completion of the Certificate in Assessment and Evaluation, participants will be able to:

- discuss the nature of assessment in the college environment both at individual student level (for accreditation and learning) and at system level (for quality assurance);

- critically review the formative and summative modes in their own courses;

- identify the knowledge and skills developed through a specific subject and demonstrate an awareness of how summative assessment affects student learning;

- design, implement and evaluate an appropriate assessment scheme for a specific subject area;

- consider the role of assessment in course design; and

- monitor the quality of course assessment processes.

Learning outcomes: Certificate in Mentoring

On completion of the Certificate in Mentoring, participants will be able to:

- demonstrate competence in reflective self-evaluation and professional/academic awareness;

- act as role model, coach, critical friend and colleague, involving sensitive selection from a range of complex skills;

- articulate a critical awareness of the general principles and practices of mentoring;

- demonstrate a systematic knowledge of mentoring at the forefront of current thinking and apply appropriate theoretical insights to the analysis and development of paradigms of teaching, learning and academic practice;

- demonstrate a range of skills in helping mentees to integrate theory and practice by observing, analysing and critiquing classroom practice in the light of professional norms and theory;

- express their comprehensive internalised worldview, articulate their implicit skills as teachers and share these;

- develop expertise in supporting and challenging mentees and thus improve themselves as teachers and academics; and

- carry out small-scale research in their own institutions.

Award structure and delivery

Both the Assessment and Evaluation and Mentoring awards consist of 10 NQF credits at Level 9. Participants will have 30 hours of classroom interaction in total. In addition, they will be expected to dedicate a total of approximately 200 hours of independent study to the programme.

Assessment of module

In the Assessment and Evaluation award, participants are expected to undertake preparatory reading and to complete two assignments. The first of these requires them to actively implement a new assessment approach in their own classroom and to critically and reflectively evaluate this experience, and the second requires them to work with classmates to prepare a group presentation on an element of assessment theory.

In the Mentoring module, participants are required to complete two assignments that relate to practical mentoring in the participant's own institution, a critique of various national and international 'competencies' and small-scale research.

WIT postgraduate programmes

WIT has delivered its existing MALT programme since 1996 and its MAME programme since 2004. This placed WIT in a position to

contribute to the development process. A more comprehensive outline of WIT Masters programmes is available in Appendix 2.5.

Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning

The structure of the Postgraduate Diploma / Masters in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education as configured in the 2008–9 academic year is a modular part-time 90-ECTS programme. Through this, participants can build up subjects and credits, enabling them to progress to a Postgraduate Diploma and a Masters qualification tailored to their specific needs as a teacher, a trainer or in student support. An outline of the structure of the MALT programme is included in Appendix 2.5.

In order to gain the Postgraduate Diploma, participants must take and pass all six mandatory modules. For the Masters, participants must have taken and passed the Postgraduate Diploma or its equivalent, and must successfully complete the Masters programme, which comprises an educational research methods module and a minor dissertation.

Master of Arts in Management in Education

The MAME programme is a 90-ECTS flexible modular part-time programme suited to practitioners in all levels of education – primary, post-primary, third-level, further and adult education. The course aims to provide education professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills in key areas of educational leadership, strategic planning, law, human resources and financial management, IT and mentoring that will inform their attitudes and practice into the future. The course, in line with the core values underpinning LIN, facilitates participants' individual development within their own educational sector, which is enriched by discussion with colleagues from across the educational spectrum.

This programme provides an opportunity for staff to acquire the knowledge and skills in key areas such as educational leadership, strategic planning, law, human resources and financial management, use of IT and mentoring that will inform their attitudes and practice into the future. The structure of the programme is as outlined in Appendix 2.5.

A range of modules are offered each year, from which participants select modules to suit their own development needs and put them towards the completion of the Masters programme. Through this, participants can build up modules and credits, enabling them to gain a Masters qualification tailored to their specific needs as a practitioner in education. In configuring the Masters programme in this way, the core values of LIN are sustained and embedded in the programme.

Master of Arts in Education

Further embedding LIN's core values, WIT is currently in the final stages of gaining approval for its Master of Arts in Education (FLAME) programme. This programme has been designed with the principles of LIN underpinning the development of this postgraduate qualification. The aim of the FLAME award is to offer education professionals flexible pathways to a Masters qualification.

The programme incorporates modules from the existing MALT, MAME and Master of Science in Science Education (Primary Science) awards. It also introduces new modules to cater for a wider student cohort who are interested in contemporary aspects of education. The mandatory, core modules will facilitate the acquisition of a range of educational, theoretical and practical approaches suitable for Level 9 study. Students will acquire competencies and transferable skills, gained through the mandatory modules, and can choose from a range of electives appropriate to their interests and practice, which is in line with the goals of LIN.

Plans for sustainability

In line with LIN's overarching objectives, and to facilitate the developmental needs of early-career academics, academics with extensive teaching experience as well as academics seeking to combine subject-discipline teaching with research interests, continuing to deliver relevant modules in a flexible manner as part of WIT's existing suite of Masters in the education domain has been identified as key to the continued development of the institute. During the academic year 2009–10 – mirroring the goal of LIN – WIT made available a comprehensive professional development programme to all staff within the institute. An abridged version of the offering, made available for academic staff, is outlined in the next section.

WIT staff training and development 2009–10

The institute continued to deliver on key elements of the Staff Development and Training Strategy and Plan 2007–10 to all staff during the academic year.

Here are some of the achievements of 2009–10.

- The dedicated professional development week programme in February 2010 was a success, with a total of 331 staff participating in the various workshops that were made available. Some of these workshops included writing for academic publication, turning your conference paper into a publication, MS Office 2007, occupational first aid, Endnote, Moodle, business simulation, conflict management and some personal development workshops.

- The delivery of two programmes at Levels 6 and 9 to 30 members of staff; an accredited 5-day leadership programme accredited at Level 6; an advanced leadership accredited module at Level 9.

- The practical pedagogy Level 9 module was delivered twice to 32 staff members: in September 2009 and again in January 2010.
- The research supervisory skills Level 9 module is still being delivered and is due to be completed at the end of May, with 20 staff members participating.

Sustainability for the future

The primary resource of any higher educational institution is the expertise of its staff. WIT has a creditable record in developing its staff, particularly through funding staff towards further qualifications, seminars, conference attendance and subject groups. A dedicated CPD co-ordinator promotes an ongoing programme of activities and a rich programme of events is made available during the professional development week. Many staff have made a significant personal investment of time and effort in working towards higher qualifications, and in the development of their research activities, affording new opportunities to enrich teaching. Formal teaching and learning qualifications are available to all staff on a voluntary basis. Through the development outlined in this section, WIT strives to embed the principles of LIN and offer development opportunities to all staff to enhance their expertise and experience in as flexible a manner as possible.

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Section 4: Where to next?

4.1 Institutes of Technology Ireland building upon the Learning Innovation Network

Dr Mark Glynn (IoTI) and Dr Richard Thorn (IoTI)

OverviewThe Learning Innovation Network (LIN) project personified the goals of the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF). This 3-year collaborative project between the 13 Irish institutes of technology (IoTs) and Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) was one of five stands within the project 'The Institutes of Technology Sector Learning Network: Delivering Systemic Change'. Having received the highest possible rating in the SIF evaluation (Davies 2010), it is vital that every effort is made to ensure the future of the excellent initiatives conducted by LIN. The publication of the highly anticipated Higher Education Authority (HEA) strategic review, to be released this year, will inevitably signal significant changes in higher education in Ireland. It is difficult to predict the exact recommendations emerging from this report, but change is inevitable. These changes make it difficult to plan with certainty the future of LIN. However, alignment and integration with existing projects and activities can ensure the continuation of LIN activities until the outcomes of the strategy report have been established. This section outlines the proposed measures to ensure the sustainability of the success achieved throughout the LIN project.

Introduction

SIF is intended to stimulate innovative thinking and action within higher education institutions (HEIs) and across the HE system. A common theme across the majority of SIF projects is a strong culture of collaboration between individual HEIs and across the HE system. Overall, Gordon Davies's evaluation suggests strongly that to date SIF has, by and large, been a successful initiative. One project that

received high praise was LIN. This network, the first of its kind, provided a platform for the continuing professional development of teaching staff throughout IoTs and also the sharing of good practice with respect to teaching and learning. The LIN project personified the goals of SIF. This 3-year collaborative project between the 13 Irish IoTs and DIT was one of five stands within the project 'The Institutes of Technology Sector Learning Network: Delivering Systemic Change'. The goals of the LIN project were:

- to scope the parameters of an agreed academic development programme;

- to provide a centrally co-ordinated repository service and portal; and

- to develop a model for a National Excellence in Learning and Teaching Awards system.

Sustaining LIN activities

In the short lifetime of the LIN project, it has obtained significant credibility among staff at all levels throughout the sector. This credibility and buy-in from staff was pivotal to the success of the project. In terms of sustainability, it is vital that the excellent work carried out under the auspices of LIN to achieve the aforementioned goals is mainstreamed into college activities or continued by other projects. Where appropriate, the branding of LIN should be included by other projects to take advantage of the credibility established by LIN. The logical next step is to identify activities and projects where the LIN brand may be utilised. Table 4.1.1 illustrates three major national projects that were identified as having common goals with the LIN project.

LIN goal	Projects with similar goals
To develop a model for a National Excellence in Learning and Teaching	The National Academy for the Integration of Research and

Awards system	Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (NAIRTL)
To provide a centrally co-ordinated repository service and portal	The National Digital Learning Repository (NDLR)
Shared academic development programme	The Flexible Learning Project, Dublin Regional Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA)

Table 4.1.1: National projects identified as having common goals with the LIN project

Goal 1: national excellence in learning and teaching

Another SIF-funded project that received high praise in the HEA SIF evaluation was the National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (NAIRTL).

The key differences between LIN and NAIRTL are:

- LIN represents collaboration between 13 institutes of technology and DIT, whereas NAIRTL is made up of five HEIs: University College, Cork, Cork Institute of Technology, National University of Ireland, Galway, Trinity College, Dublin and Waterford Institute of Technology. It is worth noting that while NAIRTL is informally affiliated to a further 33 HEIs, these links have not been formally established.

- LIN focused upon the practice of teaching across the IoT sector, whereas NAIRTL examines research into teaching and learning in higher education.

Collaboration among institutions is innovative in itself; its rapid increase is definitely a SIF achievement. Both projects have high levels of success on this front. LIN collaborated with NAIRTL many times to both promote and co-host workshops and seminars to enhance

teaching and learning in higher education. LIN has been particularly successful in their collaborative development of an accredited professional development (APD) programme, and this success could usefully be rolled out across the university sector: discussions are currently underway to explore the possibility of doing so across Dublin Regional Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA) partner institutions. NAIRTL have had increased success with the National Awards in Excellence in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. With the conclusion of the LIN project, it is recommended that efforts should be made to continue to support the NAIRTL awards within DIT and the IoT sector, rather than continue with the development of separate LIN awards in teaching and learning.

Goal 2: centrally co-ordinated repository service and portal

National Digital Learning Resources (NDLR) is a sectoral initiative, providing services and support to enable the sharing of digital learning content and teaching experience across universities, IoTs and associated colleges funded by the HEA. The NDLR mission is 'to promote and support higher education sector staff in the collaboration, development and sharing of learning resources and associate teaching practices'. The NDLR provides an online repository to support collaboration and the sharing of teaching and learning resources within the Irish third-level education sector.

It makes perfect sense that the existing structure of the NDLR continues to be utilised to support the development of learning, teaching and assessment-related resources that can be used to support the IoT sector rather than establish a new repository. As part of the CCLearn agreement, signed by all APD authors, it was already intended that the associated resource packs be shared across the sector.

Goal 3: academic professional development

HEA illustrated the importance that they place on professional development in their submission to the Higher Education Strategy Review (2009) – 'A more concerted emphasis on the initial and continuing training of academic staff, greater investment in learning resources and the adoption of institution-wide and system-wide supports for lecturers in learning technologies and innovative pedagogical approaches for learner engagement'. Towards the latter end of the project, LIN established strong collaboration with the SIF 2 Flexible Learning Project. The goal of the Flexible Learning Project is to significantly enhance the capability of the IoT sector in delivering supported flexible learning while simultaneously addressing established workforce development. While the goals of each project are different, staff development is a common theme. As a result, several LIN workshops and seminars for staff development were organised in collaboration with the Flexible Learning Project.

These workshops and seminars resulted in the creation and collation of numerous resources. In addition to reusable learning objects and other useful teaching material, expertise in a variety of subject matter was identified across the sector. Going forward, a dual approach is required to ensure the sustainability of these activities. Firstly, to build upon the ongoing LIN work by combining the commissioned APD modules and/or workshops into a recognised academic development programme for staff within the IoT sector and to consolidate pathways onto other existing awards. Secondly, to continue to disseminate good practice in teaching and learning and any associated resources that might be used to support this practice more effectively. Both of these elements are to be managed by the Flexible Learning Project. It is recommended that a working group comprising the previous LIN APD working group members be maintained as a way to sustain the work of the project into the future. The group will be chaired by an appropriate member of the Flexible Learning Project committee.

Academic professional development awards

Without doubt, the main achievement from LIN was the development of seven academic professional development awards. These awards have been piloted successfully within the institutes where they were developed. Further information on the specific awards is available within this publication. In terms of the future development and sustainability of this work, several challenges exist:

1. resources;
2. target audience; and
3. future development.

Resources

Not every college has the resources to run the APD modules. Amplified by the current economic environment, colleges will inevitably find it difficult to run entire programmes and even individual modules for the continuous professional development of their staff. Therefore, a facility must be put in place to identify the existing resources available within each institute. This database could be created and managed through existing technology, such as the web portal LinkedIn. Where a college has a shortfall in terms of resources the Flexible Learning Project, with the assistance of other IoTs, will try to accommodate the college where practically and economically feasible. This will involve a blend of *quid pro quo* arrangements between different colleges and financial support from the Flexible Learning Project (the former being the preferred and more sustainable option).

Target audience

There is a limited target audience of potential students within each institute. The APD modules are no different to every other new

course. Each new course should have a significant target audience to justify the resources allocated to running it. Therefore, significant effort should be placed into not only assessing the demand but also marketing the modules aggressively. While most of the material is directly relevant to the IoT sector, university lecturers should also be targeted. This will be achieved in two ways: direct marketing to staff, and seeking recognition of the modules in existing teaching and learning programmes in higher education in Ireland. This recognition process will facilitate participants to obtain teaching and learning qualifications following a variety of pathways, individually suited to meet their needs. In essence, the greater the flexibility, the larger the target audience. To further expand the target audience, postgraduate students wishing to follow a career in academia should be encouraged to participate. Flexibility in terms of delivery should also be examined. This will increase the market to include lecturers outside Ireland. Finally, the feasibility of adapting some of the modules to suit primary, post-primary and further education teachers should also be investigated.

Future development

Every course should evolve continually in order to remain relevant; for example, the technology-enhanced learning APD LIN module will need to be updated as new technology emerges. Each of the modules should be examined continually to determine if new evolving technologies can increase the flexibility of the modules in terms of module delivery. This updating of the modules will take time and resources. Because the modules will not generate a significant amount of revenue, support for updating will have to be accommodated. The Flexible Learning Project will co-ordinate the development of future modules and the modification of existing ones, in conjunction with other projects where appropriate. The collation of the APD modules into a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education is being managed by the Flexible

Learning Project under the auspices of the Modular Accreditation Programme (MAP).

Dissemination of good practice in teaching and learning

In addition to the development of an entire academic development programme, LIN facilitated workshops and seminars to upskill lecturers and disseminate good practice in teaching and learning. The majority of these workshops and seminars are related directly to the main goal of the Flexible Learning Project: increasing the capacity of the institutes to be flexible. Therefore, the Flexible Learning Project will continue to facilitate these workshops. A database of courses and associated resources will be made available to all colleges through the Flexible Learning Project. Collaboration is also being sought with the DRHEA and the Irish Learning Technology Association to identify the most efficient way to manage this database of expertise within the sector.

Finally, another successful element of LIN that will be continued under the auspices of the Flexible Learning Project will be the LIN newsletter. This newsletter proved a useful way to highlight good teaching and learning practices within an institute and across the sector.

Conclusion

Many of the recommendations about individual SIF projects (see Davies 2010) suggest further consolidation of projects and increased collaboration within sectors or across all of higher education. LIN achieved the highest possible rating in the recent SIF evaluation. However, this recognition does not guarantee future funding in today's economic climate. Therefore, automatic sustainability is not guaranteed. The aforementioned consolidations should maintain the LIN activities for the foreseeable future. Nonetheless, while

consolidation of some projects may achieve sustainability in the short term, there are significant differences between the universities and the IoTs with respect to teaching and learning. Therefore, mergers and consolidations of LIN with other projects should be considered carefully, with both goals and target audience taken into account.

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4.2 Final conclusions and recommendations

Dr Noel Fitzpatrick (DIT) and Dr Jen Harvey (DIT)

As the roll-out of the modules continues, it is only now that the full impact of the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) accredited professional development (APD) programmes is beginning to come to light. As more and more staff throughout the sector participate in LIN APD modules, the efficiency and sustainability of the LIN model is proving itself. For the future sustainability of the LIN APD model there is a need to explore how the different APD modules could now be combined leading to an overall award: therefore, in 2010 the focus moved to the development of such an award. Continuation of limited LIN funding under the auspices of the Institutes of Technology Ireland (IoTI) Flexible Learning Project will hopefully help progress this work. The overall impact of this innovative programme design will, it is hoped, become more and more evident as further emphasis is placed on the development of academics throughout their careers.

The collaborative nature of the project has had interesting, unexpected outcomes, the most important being a community of practice of learning and teaching in the institutes of technology (IoTs) – a community that continues to support the development of research and scholarship in learning and teaching. The group has been successful in continuing its community of practice working by securing a continuation of the LIN project with the assistance of the IoTI Flexible Learning Project, and has recently employed a LIN co-ordinator to help with the roll-out of the LIN APD modules across the sector. This support is invaluable for the continuation of LIN beyond its initial remit, which officially ended in December 2009.

As the economic context changes radically within the higher education sector and budgets become more restricted, the need to have efficient and sustainable models of the provision for academic

development programmes has now become a necessity. The LIN APD group has proven that collaboration can work efficiently within our sector and that collaboration can yield rewards. In addition, strong links have been established between LIN project partners and other Higher Education Authority (HEA) funded projects, such as National Digital Learning Resources (NDLR), Dublin Regional Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA), National Academy for Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning (NAIRTL), other national professional bodies, such as the All Ireland Society for Higher Education (AISHE), Educational Developers of Ireland Network (EDIN) and Irish Learning Technology Association (ILTA, and international associations such as Staff Educational Development Association (SEDA).

In summary, the LIN project has acted as a catalyst for a range of collaborative activities across the IoT sector, as outlined below.

Increased access to academic development support

Staff from partner IoTs will have had the opportunity to:

- attend or present research work at the LIN conference; and
- participate in short learning, teaching and assessment workshops in all the IoTs or to download the sessions from the site. A *quid pro quo* arrangement in the sharing of resources still stands within the LIN APD community in support of the APD roll-out

Increased number of IoT academic staff with a teaching qualification

Over 60 academic staff from IT Sligo, IT Tralee, Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT), IT Carlow, Cork Institute of Technology (CIT), and Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT) will have successfully completed the DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching in one of three partner centres: DIT, AIT or IT Carlow. Many of these staff have since become involved in the LIN

APD Special Purpose Award development and/or supporting staff within their own institution.

Easier access to a range of accredited programmes for IoT staff

By the end of the 2009–10 academic session, staff from seven different institutions had the opportunity to undertake a 10-ECTS Level 9 award developed and provided by local staff, and building upon local expertise within their own institution. DIT has provided 'train the trainer' workshops in four IoTs to help support this work. Because the APD awards were developed to build upon and address the specific needs identified, it is anticipated that these awards will continue to be offered into the future. An agreed APD registration fee for staff from LIN partner institutions helps to support this initiative.

Increased availability of a range of academic professional development pathways

Successful graduates with APD awards from Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB), IT Carlow, AIT and IT Sligo are now able to use these awards as part of a recognised pathway towards a DIT Postgraduate Diploma in Learning and Teaching award, with the possibility of combining the various awards as part of a LIN Postgraduate Certificate award by the end of 2010. Three different exemplar pathways were designed by the LIN APD working group to cater for the needs of academics at different stages of their professional careers: early-career academic, lecturer/specialist and lecturer/researcher.

Increased local IoT capacity and enhanced national knowledge base

As a result of commissioning work in seven IoTs to develop different APD Special Purpose Awards, each partner agreed under a ccLearn

arrangement to develop an APD pack of resources that would enable another institution to facilitate a similar award within their own institution. By the end of the academic year 2009-10 these collaboratively developed evaluated resources were available for use across the sector. By working collaboratively, the APD model has enabled the use of local expertise to the benefit of all partners at a national level.

A working, evaluated model for a national shared academic development programme

The original goal of the project was to scope a model for shared academic development. A key outcome of the work of the APD working group has been the development, piloting and evaluation of a new and effective working model that has built upon existing best practice within the sector.

In conclusion, with the publication of the Hunt report[33] and the recommendation that learning and teaching upskilling be obligatory for all staff, there will be an increased political will for the need to introduce academic development programmes for staff teaching in higher education. Therefore, the lessons learnt from the LIN APD group will be of great interest to the wider community of learning and teaching within higher education in Ireland.

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[33] Taken from Sean Flynn's article in the *Irish Times* on 24 August 2010 (www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2010/0824/1224277444858.html, accessed 13 September 2010).

Authors' biographies

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There, he led the production of courses on teaching in higher education; taught on the university's leadership development programme; researched the assessment of teaching portfolios; founded and led the University Teaching Awards scheme; and supported educational development projects for the Higher Education Funding Council for England's Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP) and Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL). David has co-edited three books on staff and educational development, and published some 60 papers, articles and reports on higher education topics including teaching, assessment, evaluation, course design, portfolios and personal development planning.

Liam Boyle PhD works at the Teaching and Learning Centre in Limerick Institute of Technology, with responsibilities related to academic staff development. Having worked for many years in the computer industry, Liam transferred to the education sector where he has developed and managed open and distance-learning programmes for several institutions, including National University of Ireland, Galway and Oscail, the National Distance Education Centre at Dublin City University. He has a particular interest in flexible and online approaches to learning.

Stephen Cassidy PhD is head of teaching and learning at IT Cork. In this role, he is responsible for managing, promoting and facilitating the development of effective learning, teaching and assessment strategies within the institute. His current interests are in the areas of curriculum design, teaching with technology and student-centred learning.

Stephen holds a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from National University of Ireland Galway and is a senior lecturer in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. He has supervised a number of postgraduate students in his specialist research areas of heat transfer and sustainable energy.

Noel Fitzpatrick PhD was the learning development officer for the LIN project. Noel has worked in higher education in Ireland and France for the last 20 years. Noel completed his PhD at the University of Paris 7 and his PhD was published as a book in 2008 (*Le Je(u) de Discours dans l'Oeuvre de Brian Friel*). He has published widely in the fields of education and technology-enhanced learning. He is an international expert in the field of computer-mediated communication and discourse analysis. Noel is currently co-ordinator of research for the School of Art, Design and Printing at the Dublin Institute of Technology; he is also the GradCAM fellow for the school. In 2009, along with colleagues from the school computing at Dublin Institute of Technology, he was successful in obtaining funding from the National Digital Research Centre for research into search engines and language acquisition (www.lingleonline.com). Noel lectures on critical theory, philosophy of art and contemporary French philosophy.

Mark Glynn PhD Following a PhD in Organic Chemistry, Mark spent just under 5 years working in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC), building relationships between the education sector and the pharmaceutical industry. Mark then worked as a lecturer for both Institute of Technology Tallaght Dublin and Hibernia College to lecture chemistry at all levels from first year to Masters

students, both face-to-face and online. He now works for the Institutes of Technology of Ireland. The main role of his present job is to increase the capacity of each institute to deliver their modules and courses in a flexible manner.

Nuala Harding has been the learning and teaching co-ordinator in Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT) since 2006. A graduate of St Angela's College of Education, Nuala was appointed lecturer in the School of Humanities at AIT in 2000. She was awarded a Postgraduate Diploma in Third-level Learning and Teaching in 2004 and an MA in Third-level Learning and Teaching in 2007.

Nuala co-ordinates the activities of the AIT Learning and Teaching Unit, which was established in 2006. The unit is dedicated to the support and advancement of learning, teaching and assessment in the institute. Her current research interests include the development of academic practice, learning enhancement through peer-assisted learning and technology-enhanced learning.

Jen Harvey PhD is currently head of the Learning, Teaching and Technology Centre (LTTC) of the Dublin Institute of Technology. She has been in this role since 2003; previously, she was the DIT head of distance education. Before moving to Dublin she worked as an implementation consultant for the Learning Technology Dissemination Initiative LTDI, a Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC)-funded project based in Institute for Computer Based Learning ICBL, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh. Jen has been and continues to be involved in a number of local and national collaborative strategic innovation projects including the Education in Employment Project, the Dublin Higher Education Regional Alliance and National Digital Learning Resources. She chaired the accredited professional development working group of the Learning Innovation Network as well as being a member of the steering committee.

Etain Kiely PhD is a science lecturer and education developer who is committed to enhancing students' learning experiences. Previously she was the learning and teaching co-ordinator within the Educational Development Unit in the Institute of Technology Sligo. She is a qualified science teacher and has taught and contributed to all levels of education in Ireland. Her PhD research used phenomenology to explore the mentoring phenomenon in science teacher education, and she recently published her Masters research as a book entitled *'Nanolab': Virtual Nanotechnology Education.* She is currently supervising PhDs and Masters in work-based learning, enhanced learning technologies and curriculum development.

Hugh McCabe is a lecturer in creative digital media at the Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB). He has taught a wide variety of subjects but currently specialises in computer graphics, sound engineering and digital video. Hugh introduced the use of enquiry-based learning for the teaching of computer graphics to ITB in 2008 and managed a major Strategic Innovation Fund project on integrating problem-based learning into the engineering curriculum over the period 2008–10. His research interests are primarily in the field of computer graphics. He established the graphics and gaming research group at ITB and has supervised numerous postgraduate students in this area. Prior to joining ITB in 2000 he held teaching and research positions at both University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin. He also has a strong interest in photography and completed a Certificate in Photography and Digital Imaging at the National College of Art, Dublin (NCAD)n 2010.

Larry McNutt is head of the School of Informatics and Engineering at Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB). Prior to joining ITB, Larry was senior lecturer at Institute of Technology Tallaght Dublin and has lectured at Southern Cross University Australia, Letterkenny IT, Dublin City University and Capella University. A Fellow of the Irish Computer Society, his research interests and publications include distance education, educational technology, instructional design and

computer science education. He is currently involved in a number of collaborative research projects in the e-learning area, funded by the Higher Education Authority Strategic Innovation Fund.

Larry studied computer science at University College Dublin, and holds a Masters degree in Education from the University of New England, Australia, and an EdD in Education from National University of Ireland, Maynooth, where his work explored the habitus of educational technologists. Further details on this project are available at www.mosceal.com or http://mosceal.pbworks.com or by contacting Larry directly.

Frank McMahon is a Dubliner who graduated from University College Dublin with the degrees of BComm and MBA, and much later completed a Doctorate in Education at the University of Sheffield. He started his academic career in 1970 when appointed as a lecturer at the Shannon College of Hotel Management, where he stayed until early 1977. During that period he also lectured at National University of Ireland Galway and helped establish an MBA programme there.

He joined Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) in 1977 as deputy principal of the college in Cathal Brugha Street, and was to remain with DIT until his recent retirement. During that period his roles included chair of the academic council, chairman of continuing education, director of the college in Cathal Brugha Street and ultimately director of academic affairs for over 10 years. He spent the period September 1985 to September 1988 as head of the Hotel and Tourism School of Zimbabwe.

He served as a member of the board of directors of the Central Applications Office (CAO (2000–10)), was chair of the International Education Board of Ireland (2004–7) and chaired the Irish Higher Education Network (2006–7). He was honoured with honorary professorships by the Budapest Business School and the Harbin Institute of Technology. He also served as a visiting professor to the

University of Economics, Prague. His recent publications include a co-edited book *Education and Leadership* (2008).

Dennis Murphy was appointed as the head of learning and teaching at Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) in September 2007, with responsibility for student services, staff development, international relations and GMIT participation in the Strategic Innovation Fund 1 Learning Innovation Network. He has been a permanent trustee of the Student Union in a private capacity since 1980.

He graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 1972 with an MSc in Economic Science and taught economics at University College Cork and Waterford Institute of Technology before being appointed secretary general of the National Youth Council of Ireland in 1974. He joined GMIT in 1977 as a lecturer in economics and served as secretary of the college branch of the Teachers Union of Ireland(TUI)for 6 years from 1978. He was appointed head of the Department of Hotel and Catering Management in December 1986 and was seconded to co-ordinate the GMIT application for delegated authority to make awards for taught programmes at Levels 8 and 9 on the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland framework in October 2003.

Muiris O'Connor has worked in the Higher Education Authority (HEA) since 2006. He began as senior policy analyst and is currently principal officer of the policy and planning section. He also served as acting head of the national access office in the HEA for a year between July 2007 and July 2008. Prior to joining the HEA, Muiris spent 5 years as statistician in the Department of Education and Science. Prior to his work with the Department, Muiris worked with the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI), the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG).

Over the years, Muiris has written reports on a wide range of subjects including social entrepreneurship, homelessness, lifelong learning, fees, access to higher education, gender in Irish education, flexible learning and student progression through higher education. He currently manages the Strategic Innovation Fund and had a role in drafting the national strategy for higher education. Muiris's educational qualifications include a BA in Sociology and Philosophy from University College Galway (now NUIG) (1994), an MA in European Social Policy Analysis from NUI Maynooth and University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (1997), a Postgraduate Diploma in Statistics from Trinity College (2000) and a postgraduate award (10 ECTS credits) in Higher Education Access: Equality in Policy and Practice from University College Dublin (2009).

Marion Palmer EdD is head of the Department of Learning Sciences at Institute of Art, Design and Technology Dun Laoghaire (IADT). She is chair of the institute's teaching and learning committee. Prior to becoming head of department Marion was a lecturer at IADT, teaching instructional design, physics and science, and working in science education. Marion is a member of the Council of the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) and has been awarded a Doctorate in Education on teaching in institutes of technology by Queen's University Belfast.

Richard Thorn PhD is a graduate of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and the Institute of Public Administration, Dublin. He has held teaching/research and management posts in Dublin Institute of Technology, TCD, Institute of Technology Sligo and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) and has held visiting lectureships in Coventry and Middlesex Universities. He is currently on secondment from his position of president of IT Sligo and is running national projects on flexible learning and research. He is European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE's) representative on the expert advisory group for the EU's Multidisciplinary Global University Ranking Project.

Appendix 1: Development of the LIN APD framework

LIN Survey 2007
Dr Etain Kiely IT Sligo

Key Issues Identified

Local Level - allowing scope for broader feedback on L&T

Institute and Sectoral Level
- **Academic Professional Development** - gaps, inconsistencies around L&T

  qualifications accreditation, support, incentives, recognition
- **Innovative modes of delivery and assessment** - Cross curricular and Discipline Based Pedagogy and Practice in specialist areas e.g.: Assessment, Problem Based Learning, Inquiry Based Learning, eLearning
- **Collaboration and Pooling of resources**

Appendix 1.2: LIN APD working group terms of reference

The task of the Learning Innovation Network (LIN) accredited professional development (APD) working group is to scope the parameters of an agreed academic development programme that meets local and national needs.

Sub-committee terms of reference

To inform the LIN steering committee about the establishment and roll-out of a new sustainable model for an agreed academic development programme by consulting with key stakeholder groups, where relevant, in order to:

- Guide the design, development and delivery of a structured CPD programme that can be developed collaboratively and delivered cross-institutionally within the project timescale and with particular reference to:
    - building upon best practice within existing academic development programmes;
    - utilisation of appropriate innovative methodologies;
    - addressing the needs of local and national key stakeholder groups in terms of the content, duration, location, mode of delivery and course structure; and
    - providing appropriate access, transfer and progression routes.
- Establish and embed an infrastructure that will support the roll-out of the academic development programme across and within the institute of technology (IoT) sector with particular reference to:
    - the creation of timely and appropriate training and mentoring programmes;
    - supported resource and course development, building upon local expertise and specialist areas; and
    - informing and changing local policies where relevant.
- Oversee the piloting and evaluation of an agreed academic development programme in at least three different IoTs.

Appendix 1.3: Summary of the LIN APD working group between 2007 and 2010

Date	Activity	Output
2007		
Jan	Institutional learning and teaching survey	Presentation / review Training needs analysis
Sept June	DIT PGCert rolled out 17 AIT (incl. 2 from IT Sligo) 2 IT Tralee 11 IT Carlow	33 IoT staff trained 48 workshops delivered
Dec	'Train the trainers' session	Trained IoT staff
2008		
Jan	Staff survey regarding format/content for LIN APDs	Initial IT Sligo survey data LIN survey data Needs analysis
Jan	5-ECTS DIT short course development	Accredited Short Course in Learning and Teaching (DIT)
Jan /Feb	5-ECTS LIN model development	Proposed DIT, WIT and LIT models for APDs
March	Review of existing Irish PGCerts/Dips – exemption opportunities	Review/links established
April	Workshop for APD designers	5-ECTS LIN model developed/ support infrastructure, incl. mentoring plan, agreed
May/ June	5-ECTS DIT L&T short course pilot	AIT pilot study completed: 9 academic, 3 support staff
May	APD meeting /meeting with HETAC – subsequent development of APD model	ToR for LIN APD 10-ECTS LIN Special Purpose Award model
August	Evaluation conducted: DIT short course off-campus PGCert	Evaluation report

Sept	Steering committee agreement re. commissioning of 7 LIN Special Purpose Awards	APD work initiated
Oct	APD curriculum design	APD curriculum design model established
Oct	Collaborative Wiki established	APD Wiki to support working group activities
Dec	Workshop: values, teacher competencies identified APD model developed	Agreed LIN values and teacher competencies
2009		
Jan	RLO workshop	APD resources developed
Jan	AIT Special Purpose Award validated	LIN APD Special Purpose Award validated
Feb	IT Sligo Special Purpose Award started validation process	1 LIN APD Special Purpose Award validated Nov
Feb	LIN MOU and ccLearn copyright agreed	LIN ccLearn copyright agreement
March	LIN PGCert infrastructure + design proposed – 3 learner pathways	LIN PGCert model – 3 learner pathways
March	IT Carlow Special Purpose Award approved for validation	
April	ITB SPA validated	1 LIN APD SPA validated
May	LIT SPA presented for validation	1 LIN APD SPA validated
June	PDP/RAE DIT modules validated as integrated modules	Appendix 1: LIN modules validated
Sept	APD resource pack outline agreed / evaluation strategy approved	APD pack framework / LIN PGCert evaluation strategy
Sept	LIN PGCert programme learning outcomes identified Evaluation strategy proposed	LIN PGCert programme learning outcomes agreed (using DIT Cert)
Sept /Oct	18 participants enrolled AIT APD 12 participants enrolled ITB APD 9 participants enrolled in IADT	18 graduates March 2010 12 graduates May 2010 9 graduates March 2010

Oct	DIT training provided IT Carlow	
Oct	IT Sligo APD validated – participants enrolled Jan 2010 IT Carlow APD validated – 9 participants start Feb 2010	First graduates from shared APD (DIT/IT Carlow)
Nov	Meeting of APD working group with IoTI re. APD continuation LIN APD co-ordinator post scoped	Agreed LIN/IoTI way forward
Nov	4 APDs recognised as part of DIT PGCert	Collaborative PGCert available in 4 institutions
Nov/ Dec	APD evaluation strategy developed	APD evaluation strategy approved
Dec	WIT APD validated – participants enrolled 2010	
2010		
Jan	DIT provision of APD training for AIT, ITB, IADT staff	
Jan	APD collaborative curric. event	
Feb – May	DIT PDP modules 1 and 2 run with staff from 3 IoTs	PDP modules piloted with APDs
April	APD workshop to develop LIN Cert programme outcomes	LIN PGCert learning outcomes developed
May	APDs evaluated / resource packs developed	8 APD packs available
Oct	APD collaborative curriculum publication developed	LIN APD publication completed – launched Oct
Sept /Oct	Shared APD LIN PGCert /Dip rolled out across partner institutions – IoTI co-ordinated?	

Appendix 1.4: Backward curriculum design process used by the LIN APD working group

Model for Collaborative Course Design: A conversation and reflection based online course design process

Dr Roisin Donnelly, 2008

http://www.ion.illinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/instructionalstrategies.asp - use psp to get this image

Backwards Design: adapted from Fink's (2003)[1] and Wiggins and McTighe (1998) course design and development process; encourages a complete rethinking of the design process. Software to be used PBWiki and freeware[2]

PHASE 1: Situational analysis: thoughtful analysis of the factors impacting the instructional situation	For each of the 3 phases:
Outcomes to be attained by the end of the APD course: Implicit in the outcomes are: application, integration, a caring about the subject, learning how to learn — APD course assessment strategies & feedback — APD course learning activities	Utilise the PBWiki space for reflection by all course designers Reflect on: - everyone involved enter their learning & teaching belief systems (i.e. philosophy, values, goals for C.D.) - discuss the processes of course planning - question the decision-making assumptions
PHASE 2: Assembling the course components into a APD course structure	
PHASE 3: Staff collaborate to design the assessment system and a course evaluation plan whilst simultaneously developing the course syllabus	

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[1] Fink, L.D. (2003) *Creating significant learning experiences: An integrated approach to designing college courses.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (1998) *Understanding by Design.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

[2] http://learnweb.harvard.edu/ccdt/ - free collaborative curriculum design tool

Appendix 1.5: 5- and 10-ECTS LIN APD models

Initial interview (institutional representative)
Select appropriate learning pathway/Direct to advisor

APD advisor supported module

Lecturer/specialist
Meeting with Learning dev. or APD advisor

Lecturer/practitioner
Meeting with Learning dev. or APD advisor

Lecturer/researcher
Meeting with Learning dev. or APD advisor

Presentation of evidence of reflecting upon teaching practice
Assessment /planning with advisor

ongoing Local Mentor support

Presentation of evidence of changing ones practice
Assessment /reviewing with advisor

Evidence review PDP/action plan 5 ECTS

Eg eLearning module, enquiry based learning etc Option 10 ECTS

Eg assessment, mentoring etc Option 10 ECTS

Evidence based reflective activity 5 ECTS

PGCert

Getting started/ PDP/action plan 5 ECTS

Learning and teaching module Core 10 ECTS

Eg Mentoring or Assessment etc Option 10 ECTS

Evidence based reflective activity 5 ECTS

PGCert

Advisor

ongoing Mentor support

Evidence review PDP/action plan 5 ECTS

Research methods Core 10 ECTS

Specialist module (or research project) 10 ECTS

Evidence based reflective activity 5 ECTS

PGCert

Presentation of evidence modifying practice/ research
Assessment /planning with advisor

ongoing Local Mentor support

Presentation of evidence of researching ones practice
Assessment /reviewing with advisor

Institutional representative
- directs lecturer to various pathways;
- provides advice and guidance in terms of longer-term career development (non-descriptive);
- liaises re. roles, pathways and advisors;
- provides, collates and keeps information up to date;
- (helps lecturer do draft of development plan – output from initial meeting);
- provides mentor; and
- facilitates evaluation of pilot programme.

APD/learning advisor (role can be local or national)
- assesses both 5-ECTS modules;
- signs off on certificate;
- advises and guides;
- APD planning;
- gives individual and group advice;
- helps set up a community of practice;
- scaffolds reflective practice; and
- supports portfolio development.

Tutor
- teaches;
- runs and assesses module;
- submits and files results to APD advisor;
- facilitates achievement of learning outcomes;
- facilitates formative feedback;
- keeps up to date with research/scholarship; and
- provides online support.

Local support mentor

- acts as sounding board;
- is a peer with more experience or knowledge of the system;
- provides pastoral advice (buddy, not counselling);
- facilitates reflective element; and
- provides formative peer observation if wanted?

Mentoring process

- finite
- time
- lines drawn

Appendix 2: APD module descriptors

Programme aims

This award aims to provide participants with an opportunity to develop key areas in learning, teaching and assessment in order to be competent teachers taking cognisance of the potential and challenges of blended and distance learning.

Programme and award learning outcomes

On successful completion of this award, the learner will/should be able to:

- select from a variety of methods for enabling effective learning, innovative teaching and appropriate assessment strategies;

- apply appropriate methods to their teaching situation and professional context;

- review their teaching and modify accordingly;

- engage with a community of teachers in higher education in a process of continuous professional development;

- develop and demonstrate a professional reflective enquiry base to inform their teaching in higher education institutions; and

- inform their teaching with a critical awareness of the changing socio-cultural context of higher education.

The learning outcomes matched to the standards required for a Level 9 award on the national framework of qualifications (NFQ) (NQAI 2003, p. 17) during the validation process:

NFQ Level 9	Interim standards	Programme learning outcomes
Knowledge (*Breadth*)	A systematic understanding of knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning	Select from a variety of methods for enabling effective learning, innovative teaching and appropriate assessment strategies
Knowledge (*Kind*)	A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning	Inform their teaching with a critical awareness of the changing socio-cultural context of higher education
Know-how and skill (*Range*)	Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research, and equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry	Select from a variety of methods for enabling effective learning, innovative teaching and appropriate assessment strategies
Know-how and skill (*Selectivity*)	Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning: develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques	Apply appropriate methods to their teaching situation and professional context
Competence (*Context*)	Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill-defined contexts	Review their teaching and modify accordingly

NFQ Level 9	Interim standards	Programme learning outcomes
Competence *(Role)*	Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity	Engage with a community of teachers in higher education in a process of continuous professional development
Competence *(Learning to learn)*	Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development	Develop and demonstrate a professional reflective enquiry base to inform their teaching in higher education institutions

Assessment

Assessment is through submission of a portfolio of evidence based on teaching practice, incorporating examples of teaching activities. There are four individual components to the portfolio:

1. the seminar paper;
2. the production of a digital reusable learning object or screen cast;
3. peer observation; and
4. wrap-up reflective essay.

The programme is assessed on a pass/fail basis.

The portfolio should demonstrate the participant's ability to incorporate reflection into the development of their practice. The participants engage in a continuous reflective process, which is an integral part of their professional development. The written components should show clearly that the participants have engaged with current literature in educational research and reflected on the

implications of such research for their practice. The reflective elements should be based on evidence of this translation of theory into practice through critical and analytical commentary on their own teaching practice, through microteaching, peer observation or tutor observations.

Roll-out of AIT Special Purpose Award in collaboration with IADT

Session no.	Theme of session	AIT leaders	IADT leaders
1	Introduction to programme	Nuala Harding Luke Fannon Michael Russell Seamus Ryan Geraldine McDermott Miriam O'Connor Pearl Moore	Marion Palmer Mary Anne O'Carroll
2	Learning theories, reflective practice	Michael Russell Luke Fannon	Marion Palmer
3	Library and Blackboard	Una O'Connor Geraldine McDermott	Helen Wybrants Muiris O'Grady
4	Microteaching	Nuala Harding Luke Fannon Michael Russell Seamus Ryan Miriam O'Connor Pearl Moore	Mary Anne O'Carroll Sharon McGreevy Marion Palmer

Session no.	Theme of session	AIT leaders	IADT leaders
5	Learning outcomes, lesson planning, classroom management	Nuala Harding Pearl Moore Luke Fannon	Ron Hamilton Mary Anne O'Carroll
6	Effective use of technology in the classroom	Seamus Ryan Luke Fannon	Muiris O'Grady Marion Palmer
7	Diversity in the classroom	Dr Annie Doona	Dr Annie Doona
8	Active learning strategies and group work	Nuala Harding Michael Russell	Nuala Harding AIT Hannah Barton
9	Assessment	Marion Palmer	Marion Palmer
10	Wrap up and review session	Miriam O'Connor, Luke Fannon Pearl Moore Seamus Ryan	Mary Anne O'Carroll Marion Palmer

Appendix 2.2: Dublin Institute of Technology: Module 1 – personal development planning

Module authors: Dr Jen Harvey, Dr Noel Fitzpatrick

Aim

This module aims to encourage participants to reflect on their own past, current and future professional development, particularly in terms of its influence and impact upon colleagues, learners and institutional development.

By working with a learning advisor and by exploring a number of possible learning opportunities, they will plan a self-directed professional development programme of activity to meet their professional development needs and to develop the skills required to further their professional development at postgraduate level.

The creation of a negotiated personal professional development action plan and targets that will lead to the successful completion of the DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching will be integral to this process.

Participants will be encouraged to design a strategy to support them to reflect upon and evaluate the effectiveness of their devised programme and the potential impact upon their students' learning, as well as their own personal development, professional growth and professional influence.

Learning outcomes

By successful completion of this module, participants will be able to:

- review critically their professional experience, influence and impact, their teaching situation and professional context;

- identify their professional development needs;
- plan targets to address their professional development needs;
- develop a strategy to support the achievement of targets;
- analyse the concept of professionalism within the context of their professional practice;
- identify how the process of reflective enquiry can help inform changes in their practice;
- develop a teaching philosophy statement; and
- engage with a community of teachers and educational developers in higher education for continuing professional development, networking and ongoing support.

Learning and teaching methods

The taught element of the modules consists of three days of interactive class sessions supported by online activities and two sessions with their module learning advisor. Within this, individual tutorials followed by group-based activities will be used to support participants to create, undertake and reflect upon a negotiated learning programme for their ongoing personal development within their teaching situation and professional context.

These sessions will include opportunities to reflect individually upon their professional development, identify their own metacognitive strategies, and revise existing areas of their professional practice both individually and as part of a learning community with fellow teachers.

A variety of strategies will be used to encourage reflective practice, peer feedback and discussion. This component has been designed to enhance teaching and to promote open collegial discussion about teaching performance and professional values.

Syllabus

Identifying and setting goals and targets for personal development and professional growth. Models of professional development and the relationship between theory and practice. Planning, designing and monitoring the effectiveness and acceptability of a personal development programme and the development process: its implications and operation. Analysis of past learning, current and future learning needs.

Teaching philosophy statement: Personal teaching statement, philosophy of teaching statement, research skills, academic and reflective writing, widening participation in third-level higher education, equity in teaching practice.

Professional values and skills development: Concepts of academic professional values, academic standing and practice. Potential influence and impact of different professional strategies upon colleagues, learners and institutional development. *Study skills*: critical reading and writing. *Understanding research articles*: Locate and use professional and research literature critically and analytically. *Academic writing techniques*: time management

Learning community: Peer observing and observing peers, tutor observation, membership of a community of practice in learning and teaching.

Assessment

Assessment is through a portfolio submission, comprising:

1. *A reflective paper* on their teaching practice and professional values, to include their teaching philosophy statement (1,000 words).

2. *Negotiated personal development plan* (1,000 words), to include:

- a critical review of their professional experience, and the influence and impact of their professional practice; and

- an outline programme of activities with goals and targets for their own professional development building upon this review, detailing how these might be evidenced in line with the Postgraduate Certificate and in the context of appropriate professional and research literature.

Essential reading

Note: The module will require the participants to source relevant and pertinent material and review scholarly work in order to comply with the standard required for a Level 9 postgraduate programme. The DIT Mount Street library provides access to a wide range of books and literature on learning, teaching and assessment in higher education that can be used to support participants' activities within this module.

The following books are provided here only to indicate the level and type of books that the participants will be expected to read.

Brookfield, S. (1987). *Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging Adults to Explore Alternative Ways of Thinking and Acting.* Open University, Buckingham.

Moon, J. (2000). *Reflection in Learning and Professional Development: Theory and Practice.* Kogan Page, London.

Race, P. (2001). *The Lecturer's Toolkit: a Practical Guide to Learning, Teaching and Assessment* (2nd edn). Kogan Page, London.

Module authors: Dr Jen Harvey, Dr Noel Fitzpatrick

Aim

This module aims to build upon the work undertaken as part of Module 1 (professional development planning) by exploring evidence drawn from module activities undertaken as part of participants' negotiated learning programme of activities, and leading towards completion of the Postgraduate Certificate programme.

By working with a learning advisor and through associated structured individual and group-based activities, the module also aims to support participants' critical evaluation and the development of extended professional action by integrating all components undertaken within an agreed coherent set of learning and work-based activities. Participants will be encouraged to reflect upon and evaluate the effectiveness of their devised programme and the impact upon their students' learning, personal development and professional growth within their own institutional context.

A learning advisor will guide the preparation and presentation of evidence of learning outcomes attained through their negotiated work programme to the appropriate academic standard for successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this module, successful candidates should be able to:
- review critically the effectiveness of their negotiated devised programme, the attainment of their learning goals and the

resultant impact upon personal development and professional growth within their own institutional context;

- evaluate the effectiveness of their devised programme to develop appropriate advanced skills within their selected areas of professional development, and demonstrate the resultant impact upon their students' learning;
- review the concept of professionalism within the changing context of their professional practice and how the process of reflective enquiry can inform changes in their practice;
- share experiences of, and mechanisms for, coping across a range of teaching situations as part of a learning community within their selected specialist areas;
- review critically selected programme learning outcomes in the context of their teaching philosophy statement and relevant literature.

Learning and teaching methods

The taught element of the modules consists of three days of interactive class sessions supported by online activities and two sessions with their module learning advisor. Within this, individual tutorials followed by group-based activities will be used to support participants to create, undertake and reflect upon a negotiated learning programme for their ongoing personal development within their teaching situation and professional context. These sessions will include opportunities to reflect individually upon their professional development, identify their own metacognitive strategies, and revise existing areas of their professional practice both individually and as part of a learning community with fellow teachers. A variety of strategies will be used to encourage reflective practice, peer feedback and discussion. This component has been designed to enhance teaching and promote open collegial discussion about teaching performance and professional values

Syllabus

Personal development planning: Reflecting and evaluating attainment of goals and target for negotiated programmes of personal development, in particular in terms of its influence and impact upon colleagues, learners and institutional development.

Analysis of past and current learning needs: Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and acceptability of the personal development programme process. Identifying follow-up development activities and progress against the programme learning outcomes.

Professional values and skills development: Concepts of academic scholarship and professionalism, current issues in education and potential impact upon professional standing, professional values and enhanced professional practice. Effective communication skills, advanced academic writing. Widening participation in third-level higher education, equity in teaching practice.

Evidence review: Selecting, analysing and evaluating evidence of professional practice, alignment of learning evidence with professional standards and specific programme outcomes.

Learning community: Peer observing and observing peers, tutor observation, community of practice.

Assessment

Assessment is through a portfolio submission, comprising:

1. Evidence of attaining and critically evaluating goals and targets as part of their negotiated personal development plan (2,000 words plus evidence).
2. A presentation of evidence and associated reflections/critical review aligned with the agreed goals and targets for their own professional development plan and in the context of appropriate

research literature. The evidence to be in line with the Postgraduate Certificate programme learning outcomes, their professional values and teaching philosophy.

Essential reading

Note: The module will require the participants to source relevant and pertinent material and review scholarly work in order to comply with the standard required for a Level 9 postgraduate programme. The DIT Mount Street library provides access to a wide range of books and literature on learning, teaching and assessment in higher education that can be used to support participants' activities within this module.

The following books are provided here only to indicate the level and type of books that the participants will be expected to read.

Brookfield, S. (1987). *Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging Adults to Explore Alternative Ways of Thinking and Acting.* Open University, Buckingham.

Moon, J. (2000). *Reflection in Learning and Professional Development: Theory and Practice.* Kogan Page, London.

Race, P. (2001). *The Lecturer's Toolkit: a Practical Guide to Learning, Teaching and Assessment* (2nd edn). Kogan Page, London.

Appendix 2.4: IT Sligo Researching Educational Practice Special Purpose Award

Researching Educational Practice

- Level 9 Special Purpose Award (10 ECTS) -

Who is it for?

This module will cater for educators at all career phases as well as academics seeking to combine subject discipline teaching with research interests. Participants will adopt a systematic approach to enquiring into and publishing on their education practices in a variety of settings and environments.

What will you get out of it?

The publication based assessment mode will equip you with skills to produce papers appropriate for national and international education journals and conferences in your area of interest.

Progression pathways include use of these credits towards Post-graduate Diplomas and Masters degree programmes in Education.

How is it delivered?

This module will be delivered flexibly online through enquiry based learning. Both internal and external specialists will facilitate online live lectures and activities. Frequent feedback will be structured around proposal writing, data collection and analysis, and dissemination. Engagement in and reflection on educational research will be promoted through peer based learning and support activities.

A workshop face-face and/or online (via webcam and virtual meeting room) will be facilitated at the start and end of the module.

Requirements and Cost

Entry Requirements: An Honours Degree or equivalent

Enrolment: January 2010

Technical: All you need is a pc with internet and headset.

Fee: €800

CONTACT DETAILS

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E-mail: kiely.etain@itsligo.ie

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Description

This programme will cater for educators at all career phases as well as academics seeking to combine subject-discipline teaching with research interests. Participants will adopt a systematic approach to enquiring into and publishing on their education practices in a variety of settings and environments.

This award will be delivered flexibly online through enquiry-based learning. Both internal and external specialists will facilitate online live lectures and activities. Frequent feedback will be structured around proposal writing, data collection and analysis, and dissemination. Engagement in and reflection on educational research will be promoted through peer-based learning and support activities.

Aim

To equip academic staff with the skills to research, reflect and improve their own practice.

Learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, the learner will/should be able to:

- explore and articulate core concepts relating to educational research;
- investigate and plan a strategy for researching educational practice;
- critically evaluate research findings and studies within the educational context;
- engage in and reflect on educational enquiry; and
- publish research outcomes in accordance with academic writing standards.

Assessment

This module provide authentic assessment opportunities with a requirement for participants to write a proposal, review and critique research and report on their research outcomes in a paper format.

Appendix 2.5: Waterford Institute of Technology Masters programmes

Table A2.5.1: Structure of the Masters in Teaching and Learning (MALT) programme

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA (60 CREDITS)		MASTERS (90 CREDITS)
MANDATORY MODULES	ELECTIVE MODULES (CHOOSE 2)	
Pedagogy 1 & 2 (10 credits)	Adult learning (5 credits)	Educational research methods (10 credits)
Curriculum (10 credits)	Blended learning (5 credits)	Dissertation (20 credits)
Assessment and evaluation (10 credits)	Research supervisory skills (5 credits)	
Reflective practice 1 (10 credits)	Reflective practice 2 (5 credits)	
Issues and perspectives in further and higher education (10 credits)		

Table A2.5.2: Structure of the Masters in Management in Education (MAME) programme

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA (60 CREDITS)		MASTERS (90 CREDITS)
MANDATORY MODULES	ELECTIVE MODULES (CHOOSE 2)	
Academic enquiry (10 credits)	Enterprise and innovation (10 credits)	Research methods in education (10 credits)
Leading learning (20 credits)	Human resource management in education (10 credits)	Dissertation (20 credits)
	Information technology in education (10 credits)	
	Financial management in education (10 credits)	
	Mentoring (10 credits)	
	Public relations in education (10 credits)	
	Education law (10 credits)	
	Strategic planning in education (10 credits)	
	Practical leadership (10 credits)	

Appendix 3: Case study acknowledgements

AIT Certificate in Learning programme team

AIT team	Role	Special interest	Assessment: draft and final submission
Nuala Harding	Learning and teaching co-ordinator	Active learning, curriculum design, lecture design	Seminar paper
Pearl Moore	Lecturer, School of Humanities	Reflective practice, classroom management	Peer observation and wrap-up reflective essay
Luke Fannon	Lecturer, School of Business	Learning theories, e-learning, lecture design	Screen cast and abstract
Miriam O'Connor	Lecturer, School of Science	Reflective practice, microteaching	Peer observation and wrap-up reflective essay
Seamus Ryan	Lecturer, School of Business and Engineering	E-learning, digital learning resources, distance and blended learning	Screen cast and abstract
Geraldine McDermott	Lecturer, School of Humanities	Moodle – use of VLE from student and lecturer perspectives	N/A
Michael Russell	Lecturer, School of Engineering	Learning theories, group work, reflective practice	Seminar paper
Una O'Connor	Assistant librarian	Resourcing educational research	N/A

IADT programme pilot team

Dr Marion Palmer	Head of Department of Learning Sciences
Mary Anne O'Carroll	Staff training, learning and development officer
Dr Annie Doona	Registrar
Muiris O'Grady	E-learning project officer
Helen Wybrants	Systems librarian
Sharon McGreevy	School of Business and Humanities
Ron Hamilton	School of Creative Arts
Hannah Barton	School of Creative Technologies

Marion Palmer and Mary Anne O'Carroll were the programme leaders.

Appendix 4: LIN APD evaluation strategy

Introduction

By adopting a utilisation-focused approach within the context of the overall project, the APD evaluation strategy functioned at several levels, each with their associated stakeholder group interests and concerns.

During the project, the evaluation work related primarily to the development and piloting of the APD awards, before exploring the ways in which these are combined effectively into a LIN Postgraduate Certificate. Initially, a structured peer-review process was proposed whereby institutional Special Purpose Award developers helped to support the evaluation of an award pilot study in another institution.

Key stakeholder groups and concerns are outlined as follows.

Project level

Funders (HEA)

Key questions: Has the project achieved the intended project outcomes, i.e. has a shared APD programme been developed? Is the APD programme developed a cost-effective way to achieve the desired project outcomes, i.e. sustainable, innovative, of an appropriate quality, potentially transferable across the sector? What has been the impact of the programme within institutions, across the sector?

Institutions

Key questions: What has been or will be the impact of our involvement in delivering a LIN Special Purpose Award (as part of a

programme)? Will/does the programme provide our staff with appropriate, cost-effective, relevant, timely academic development? How effectively has this work been embedded within the institution?

APD developers

Key questions: What has been the impact of the collaborative process on the shared development of modules? How has this work impacted at an institutional level in terms of policy changes, resource allocation?

Programme level

Institutions

Key questions: What is/has been the impact of our staff participating and/or supporting the LIN shared APD programme and is it a worthwhile resource investment? How do the access, transfer and progression opportunities afforded through this programme function for our staff? Have there been any resultant changes in institutional and/or academic practice, and has there been an impact upon student learning, retention, etc? How might these programmes be effectively sustained into the future?

APD developers

Key questions: Are all the modules of an appropriate size, level and quality for the Postgraduate programme? What else might help to improve participant learning? How effectively do the awards combine into one award? What is working well, and what needs to be modified and how? How well do the capstone modules work to support participant personal development planning, selection of modules and the subsequent presentation of evidence towards a Postgraduate Certificate award? How effectively have staff been supported at each institution and what else might have helped?

Academic staff

Key questions: Does the programme provide me with relevant, current, timely, professional academic development and how might I apply this to my own teaching practice?

APD level

APD developers

Key questions: How effective has the module been in supporting participants to achieve the intended learning outcomes? What is working well, and what needs to be modified and how? Where are participants having difficulties with and what might help? What kinds of information / materials / resources need to be included in the APD pack? What changes need to be made to the module in order that it might be offered in another institution?

Academic staff

Key questions: Does the programme provide me with relevant, current, timely, professional academic development and how might I apply this to my own teaching practice? How well have I been supported through the learner pathway process?

LIN evaluation in practice

In January 2007, a needs analysis of institute of technology staff was conducted as an initial study to help inform the work of the project. Considerable work towards addressing the learning and teaching support needs identified as part of this study has now been completed. Evaluation was integral within all aspects of the work of the APD working group.

Evaluation of the off-campus Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching

Building upon the existing Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching programme, offered in DIT since 2001, a blended off-campus model was developed as part of this project. This model moved from once a week, half-day teaching sessions to two blocks of two or three teaching days per semester and linked together with relevant online support activities. From 2007–8, this model was rolled out in AIT and IT Carlow, with participants from IT Tralee and IT Sligo attending in Athlone. The timing of the teaching input and the module content was negotiated with institute learning and teaching staff in order to link into local needs and to build upon local specialist areas. As well as the routine evaluation conducted at module and programme level by DIT, an evaluation study was conducted to help inform the LIN project APD roll-out. This was written up as a project report.

Evaluation of the LIN APD model

There were several iterations of the APD model as it progressed from 5-ECTS to 10-ECTS modules and then to a proposed 30-ECTS LIN Postgraduate Certificate model. A pilot evaluation study was conducted in AIT of a 5-ECTS short course structure with associated exemptions onto the DIT off-campus Postgraduate Certificate programme. Design workshops, facilitated sessions and peer-review activities through the LIN APD Wiki built upon feedback from this work and resulted in the creation of a shared template for a LIN 10-ECTS Special Purpose Award that could be validated within the majority of partner institutions and combined within different learning pathways to form a Postgraduate Certificate in other institutions. Structured peer-review processes, facilitated across each of the partner institutions by the LIN learning development officer, ensured a consistency of approach between awards. A workshop facilitated by the RLO-CETL in ITTD developed a structured approach

to designing, developing and evaluating resources that might be used to support the awards. APD pack outlines were developed and agreed to ensure that relevant and appropriate materials were prepared, evaluated and made available to the LIN community.

Evaluation of the LIN APD awards

Seven partner institutions were commissioned to develop, validate and evaluate APD awards prior to making them available to the wider LIN community within APD packs.

Each institution has now completed the validation and associated review of the APD awards, and the majority have students enrolled on their programme. Each of these APD designer institutions have enlisted the support of a critical friend to work with them in the review and subsequent evaluation of their APD awards. APD programmes from four partner institutions are now recognised as part of the DIT Postgraduate Certificate in Third-level Learning and Teaching pathway and have been reviewed within DIT in that context.

As one of the outcomes of a one-day workshop, a participant survey was constructed to provide feedback from each of the institutional APD awards. This was conducted online by AIT, IADT and ITB.

LIN APD evaluation survey questions: APD students

Your name   **Your institution**

APD award title/institution

Your educational, learning and teaching background

1. **Please indicate below the highest qualification you have previously achieved** (please tick):

   a)   _____   Diploma

   b)   _____   Degree

   c)   _____   Masters

   d)   _____   PhD

   e)   _____   other (please specify)

2. **Prior to this course and within the last 5 years, have you undertaken / completed any of the following in learning and teaching related topics** (please tick all that apply):

   a)   _____   workshops / seminars

   b)   _____   accredited short courses

   c)   _____   Postgraduate Certificate / Diploma / Masters

   d)   _____   EdD / PhD

   e)   _____   other (please specify)

3. **If you ticked yes in Q2, please specify what was undertaken for each**:

   a)   _____ workshops / seminars

   b)   _____ accredited short courses

   c)   _____ Postgraduate Certificate / Diploma / Masters

4. **Have you ever applied for a teaching award / funding to support your learning and teaching activities (e.g. NAIRTL / NDLR, etc)?**

____ No ____ Yes

If yes, please briefly outline project / intervention

Enrolment on this programme

5. How did you first hear about this course (please tick)

a) ____ institute website

b) ____ email circular

c) ____ from a colleague/friend

d) ____ LIN flyer/ leaflet

e) ____other (please specify)

6. From the factors listed below, which two most impacted upon your decision to do this course:

a) ____ the length of the course

b) ____ time of day/year that the course was offered

c) ____ the institution offering the award

d) ____ the cost of the award

e) ____ progression opportunities available after successful completion of the award

f) ____ other (please specify)

Course relevance

7. Was the course different to what you had expected?

_____ No _____ Yes

If yes, in what way was it different?

8. How did you feel about the content of the course? (please circle a number)

Very relevant   Not relevant
to my needs   to my needs

    5   4   3   2   1

Course content

9. Do you have any comments about the order, content or areas covered during this course? If so, please summarise

10. Were there any additional teaching and learning sessions that you felt should have been included in the course?

_____ No _____ Yes

If yes, please specify.

Assessment methods

11. There were a variety of different methods used to assess and provide feedback on your learning as part of this course. Did these work well? If not, what might have been more appropriate for you?

Levels of support

12. Did you feel that you had adequate support during this course?

_____ Yes _____ No

If no, what would have helped?

Any comments on the online activities used to support this course?

Overall comments

13. For you, which parts of this course have:
   a) Been most useful?

   b) Been least useful?

   c) Resulted in you making a change to your teaching practice?

   d) Been most enjoyable?

14. If the course was to run again, are there any changes you feel would help improve the course? Please describe.

15. Would you recommend the course to someone else? Please give a reason.

16. As a result of undertaking this programme, would you consider doing further accredited programmes in learning and teaching?

_____ Yes _____ No

Please give a reason.

17. Any other comments?