TEACHING AND LEARNING CASE STUDY	
Name of Institution/ Organisation	Maynooth University
Who led the initiative?	Student Skills & Success
Date and timeframe of the initiative	Academic Year 2023/24 and ongoing.
What was the reach of the initiative?	3,500+ first year undergraduate students each academic year.
Initiative Title	'My Maynooth on Moodle' – Maynooth University Online Orientation Programme
Aims/ Objectives	The 'My Maynooth on Moodle' programme aims to present important orientation information to students in an engaging manner across the entire first-year experience. It achieves this through; • Providing crucial information to students in advance of on-campus orientation • Delivering asynchronous, self-paced and modular content on Moodle, MU's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) • Providing holistic content to students preparing them to develop themselves personally, professionally, and academically • Partnering with students to develop relatable and engaging content across a variety of mediums • Releasing new content on a monthly basis to meet students where they are with relevant information
Rationale and Identified Needs	When Maynooth University transitioned back to an on-campus orientation programme following the pandemic, we appreciated the role an online orientation could play in supporting the more traditional on-campus orientation activities. The identified needs for such a programme are; • To provide students with relevant information in advance of their on-campus welcome, easing anxiety and building belonging. • To allow students to become familiar with the Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle) in advance of commencement of teaching & learning. • To assist students in developing their learning style while also signposting learning and support services. • To ease the 'information overload' that students face at orientation by splitting content across a year-long programme.

	• To provide a source of empathy, validation, and reassurance through sharing student peer experiences.
Frameworks, Policies, or Strategies Aligned **(internal, local or national)**	• Maynooth University Student Success Strategy (Maynooth University) • Maynooth University Strategic Plan 2023-2028 (Maynooth University) • A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022–2028 (HEA) • Next Steps for Teaching and Learning: Moving Forward Together (National Forum) • Embedding Student Success: A Guiding Framework (National Forum) • Guide to Developing Enabling Policies for Digital and Open Teaching and Learning (National Forum) • Steps to Partnership (National Student Engagement Programme) • National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (Department of Education)
Summary (Max 400 Words)	'My Maynooth on Moodle' was developed to be asynchronous, self-paced, modular, and delivered through Maynooth's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Moodle. This allows students the opportunity to explore content related to their transition to university in advance of arriving on campus while also starting to become familiar with their VLE environment before classwork takes place. From the start, Maynooth University valued a holistic approach to online orientation content- it should have the goal of providing holistic content to students preparing them to develop themselves personally, professionally, and academically in line with our strategic vision for student success. There are 2 modules available to students when they first register with the university. Content includes; a welcome to the university campus and introduction of our values and expectations; information on student timetables, subject choices and what to expect in your first lecture, what the first 4 weeks on campus will look like; introducing assignments, labs and tutorials; and providing information on areas such as the library, learning supports and extra-curricular activity. This information is complemented with interactive activities, reflections, and student experience videos. Each month a new module is released with the aim of meeting students where they are on their orientation journey. For example, our colleagues in Student Services have seen increases in students presenting with issues such as loneliness after the first few weeks have passed- we address this online during the November release in a section entitled 'Challenges and how to overcome them' where university colleagues collaborated on content around loneliness, overwhelm, and developing study/life balance. This

	approach is taken across the programme with content early on encouraging students to develop their learning style and habits while signposting them to university services and supports that can assist with this. A cornerstone of the programme are the student videos which feature throughout. These videos are candid and relatable expressions of what student life and experience is like here in Maynooth, shared by a diverse cohort of speakers. They speak about what first year was like for them- what they learned, what worked and didn't work, what were the highs and the lows. These videos aim to be a source of empathy, validation, and reassurance for new students demonstrating that others have experienced similar challenges to them. Overall, the programme grows with the students throughout their first year in Maynooth and prepares them for their transition to second year of study.
Did you collaborate with internal and/or external stakeholders to deliver?	Initial technical set-up involved collaboration with services across the university including; IT Services, Registry, Timetabling and the Centre for Teaching & Learning. Content was then developed in consultation with colleagues across all areas of the university community including; Student Services, Library, EDI, Access, Fees & Grants, Programme Advisory, Oifig na Gaeilge, Maynooth Students' Union, and academic colleagues. Students were key stakeholders throughout its development and were involved across the programme in roles as advisors, developers and creators.
Organisation and Planning	The work of the programme was managed by the Student Success Officer and guided by an 'Online Orientation Taskforce' which comprised of students and staff which in turn reported to the wider university Orientation Leadership Group. • Content is developed and approved by a group of nominated stakeholders from departments across the university. • The initial pilot programme was developed across the summer of 2023 and launched to our incoming first-years in September 2023. • User evaluation data presented to the working groups in Semester 1 2023/24. • Students undertake a content evaluation process in Semester 2 2023/24 and report back to the Student Success Officer. • A revised content plan and monthly release structure was developed in Semester 2 2023/24. • The Student Success Officer and 2 Student Interns work on developing the revised programme which is launched in September 2024 and is ongoing.
What resources did you need?	The programme was funded as a core component of our SATLE 2022 submission. This provided funding for the recruitment of a Student Success Officer, renumeration for student micro interns and for the video production

	required for the student videos. A project such as this is reliant on the successful engagement of stakeholders across the university giving their time to develop content.
Has it been evaluated? How successful has it been?	The programme has a built-in evaluation mechanism which students undertake at the end of the second module. Five key metrics were agreed upon and the most recent results (October 2024) are as follows; • The topics covered within the online orientation should be relevant to new students. **98%** of students Strongly Agreed or Agreed. • The programme should be presented in a manner that makes it likely that students will reengage with it. **78%** of students Strongly Agreed or Agreed. • After taking the course, students should be more aware of the University supports and services available to help them be successful. **97%** of students Strongly Agreed or Agreed. • The course should be judged as providing important information about the student's transition to University. **98%** of students Strongly Agreed or Agreed. • After taking the course, students should feel better prepared for starting University. **91%** of students Strongly Agreed or Agreed.
Any future plans, including the sustainability of the initiative?	• There is a need to consider how this approach to providing students with online access to key information could be extended for mid and final year students also. • Given the success of positive student feedback and stakeholder engagement to date, it is anticipated that this initiative will become mainstreamed once the current SATLE funding period concludes.
Key Learning Points	• Students valued the peer-led elements most as it provided them with a relatable view of the student experience, providing reassurance that they were not alone in experiencing challenges. • A project such as this relies on stakeholder engagement and meticulous coordination as it brings together a lot of information from across the university. • Through offering an online activity in advance of them arriving students had the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the campus and quell anxiety about starting something new in unfamiliar surroundings. • The programme has provided us with an opportunity for us to road-test different approaches and techniques within our VLE on a large cohort of students in a low-stakes environment.

	• Working on this project has called for us to reexamine beliefs that we as staff had about particular transitions and what students think and feel. Involving students in this work allows us to sense-check our activity and respond to the current student experience

Teaching and Learning Focus Areas (please tick all that apply)

Categories	Elements	Topics	Target Groups
Commit ☒	Leadership, Strategy & Governance ☒	Digital Transformation ☒	Students ☒
Coordinate ☒	Curriculum and Assessment ☐	Education for Sustainable Development ☐	Staff ☒
Consult ☒	Innovation in Teaching ☒	Academic Integrity ☐	Wider community ☐
Create ☒	Professional Development ☐	Inclusive and Equitable Teaching Practices ☐	Other ☐
Celebrate & Continue ☒	Research and Evaluation ☐	Innovations in Assessment and Feedback ☐	
		Student Engagement and Partnership ☒	
		Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approaches ☒	
		Artificial Intelligence ☐	
		Other ☐	

Contact Details

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Links	**My Maynooth on Moodle** Landing Page: 01_My Maynooth on Moodle_Landing Page.jpg Course Content: 02_My Maynooth on Moodle_Course Content.jpg First Steps Module: 03_My Maynooth on Moodle_First Steps.jpg Video Content: 04_My Maynooth on Moodle_Video Content.jpg Activity: 05_My Maynooth on Moodle_Activity.jpg Video Library: 06_My Maynooth on Moodle_Video Library.jpg Graphic: 07_My Maynooth on Moodle_Graphic.png