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UEM Guiding Principle 6 (Highly engaged student experience)

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UEM Essentials
Guiding Principle
6

OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

At a glance

Guiding Principle 6
Highly engaged student experience

Demonstrate embedded engagement with industry and community partners in through processes, policies and practices to provide an engaged student experience of learning to become rounded and engaged citizens

HIGHLY ENGAGED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Learner engagement is a central tenet to meaningful learning; without learner engagement the quantity of the learner's experience and quality of a learner's participation and ultimately, learning, is reduced. Learner engagement encompasses all aspects of a learning experience and spans across a learner's cognitive, emotional and behavioural levels (Naibert, et al., 2022). However, there are influences that impact engagement beyond the learner and these include interactions with peers, staff, university and the wider community. The National Student Engagement Programme (NStep), in consultation with multiple stakeholders, developed five principles of student engagement: Dialogue, Trust, Equity and Inclusivity, Empowerment and Students as co-creators. These principles foster valued, meaningful, and collaborative relationships with peers, staff and the university leading to an enhanced and engaged learner experience. Furthermore a highly engaged student experience aligns with the University's strategic intent of 'nurturing bright minds, creativity and ambition' (PE1).

FOR MORE INFO

education.model@tudublin.ie

https://www.tudublin.ie

INTRODUCTION

Forming alliances with industry and community partners empowers students and faculty to embed engagement opportunities with these partners and combines teaching and learning, research, and innovation. The National Strategy for Higher Education, 2030 refers to civic and community engagement as one of the “three core roles of higher education”. The mission of the Irish Universities Association (IUA,2022) is to assist Irish higher education institutions in integrating, scaling, and promoting societal engagement across faculty and student teaching, learning, and research for societal impact. They do this through two major initiatives: Campus Engage and StudentVolunteer.ie. These initiatives seek to improve opportunities for students to work with civic society organisations through accredited learning, growth in engaged research, deepening and strengthening industry links to align with workforce demands, expand research partnerships, and support regional development through their network.



RELEVANCE TO THE UEM

Providing opportunities for learners to engage with workplace, community and professional environments, are a key element to enhancing the TU Dublin learner experience. This Guiding Principle recognises the value of encouraging closer connections in order to prepare for navigating and solving the issues of society. For example the award winning programme for Students Learning With Communities involves TU Dublin City Campus staff and/ or students collaborating with underserved community partners (local groups, not-for-profit organisations, charities etc) to develop real-life projects for mutual benefit. Learning comes alive for the students as they work on these projects with community partners, developing professional transferable skills, and enhancing their understanding of their specialist subject skills and of the community they work with. Students receive course credits for their work, as these projects are embedded into their studies. Community partners become part of the teaching process through the collaboration, contributing their knowledge and expertise, and increasing the relevance of TU Dublin research and programmes of study.

EMERGENT PERSPECTIVES

TU Dublin learners are supported to engage with industry and community partners as well as staff and their university, throughout their learning journey to shape their learning experience. These learning engagements can be part of the formal learning process, and accredited as such; or they can be part of a learners co-curricular informal learning and can further contribute to their development as a rounded and engaged citizen (Knight-McKenna, Felten & Darby, 2018). Some examples of engaged learning experiences from across TU Dublin include TU Dublin Apprenticeships, Work Placements and Internships, and Students Learning With Communities(SLWC).

TU Dublin Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship is a traditional formal education where the student does a portion of their learning in the workplace and a portion in TU Dublin. Apprenticeship is an essential part of a learner's qualification in several areas including medical, legal, financial and technical careers.
Traditional Craft Apprenticeships in Ireland, lead to the learner becoming a fully qualified craftsperson. Training for craft apprenticeships generally takes a minimum of four years.
On successful completion of their training, apprentices become recognised craftspeople in Ireland. The apprentices are registered as qualified craftsperson by SOLAS, the Further Education and Training Authority.



Work Placements and Internships

Work Placement is considered an integral element of Higher Education programmes at TU Dublin. It offers an opportunity for students to apply what they have learned, continue to learn new practice-based skills and also to gain an understanding of what is required of them in the workplace. Work Placements vary in duration and the awarding of credits across TU Dublin. Generally speaking, the terms 'work placement' and 'internship' have the same meaning - a period of pre-career full-time work experience at a company. However, work placements are usually held during the academic term time (with academic credits allocated) whereas internships are usually offered to graduates outside of term time and after graduation. From an employer perspective, the advantages of internship and work placement for students include opportunities to develop research links, recruit graduates and to engage with a Higher Education Institute in the transfer of knowledge and the development of employment-ready graduates.

Our Student Voice

The "Our Student Voice'' resources developed in Technological University Dublin, are a suite of online resources designed to provide training and guidance for students, in particular class representatives. By engaging with these resources, students are assisted in developing the requisite knowledge and skills for effective participation in academic quality assurance and quality enhancement processes, thus strengthening student engagement and enhancing the student voice.

> *Student engagement ... thrives in an inclusive environment, where all students are supported to engage in learning and activities that reflect their needs and aspirations. Students are empowered to take opportunities to play an active role.*
>
> NStep (2020)

The training resources and digital badges have been co-designed by a project team of staff and students from across TU Dublin guided by best practice internationally.

Find out more about the University Education Model (UEM) @ TU Dublin Intranet

CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

Bagnall (2007) focused on the goals of educational partnerships and described them as being developed "toward," "for," or "in" learning. Partnerships are agreements that enhance learning opportunities. Some challenging questions to reflect on when considering this Guiding Principle are:

- How might we sustain student involvement in the engagement process with industry and community partners that is relevant and timely for learning outcomes?
- How might we enhance collaboration with industry and community partners that is interdisciplinary and cross-institutional and develops capacity to deal with complex environments and challenges?
- How might a highly engaged student experience with industry and community partners achieve the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) and the IDGs (Inner Development Goals) for a sustainable world by 2030?
- How might student engagement with industry and community partners increase the awareness, challenges and opportunities of future employment in a diverse workplace setting and address social justice issues ?

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