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University Education Model: Socialisation Report 2022

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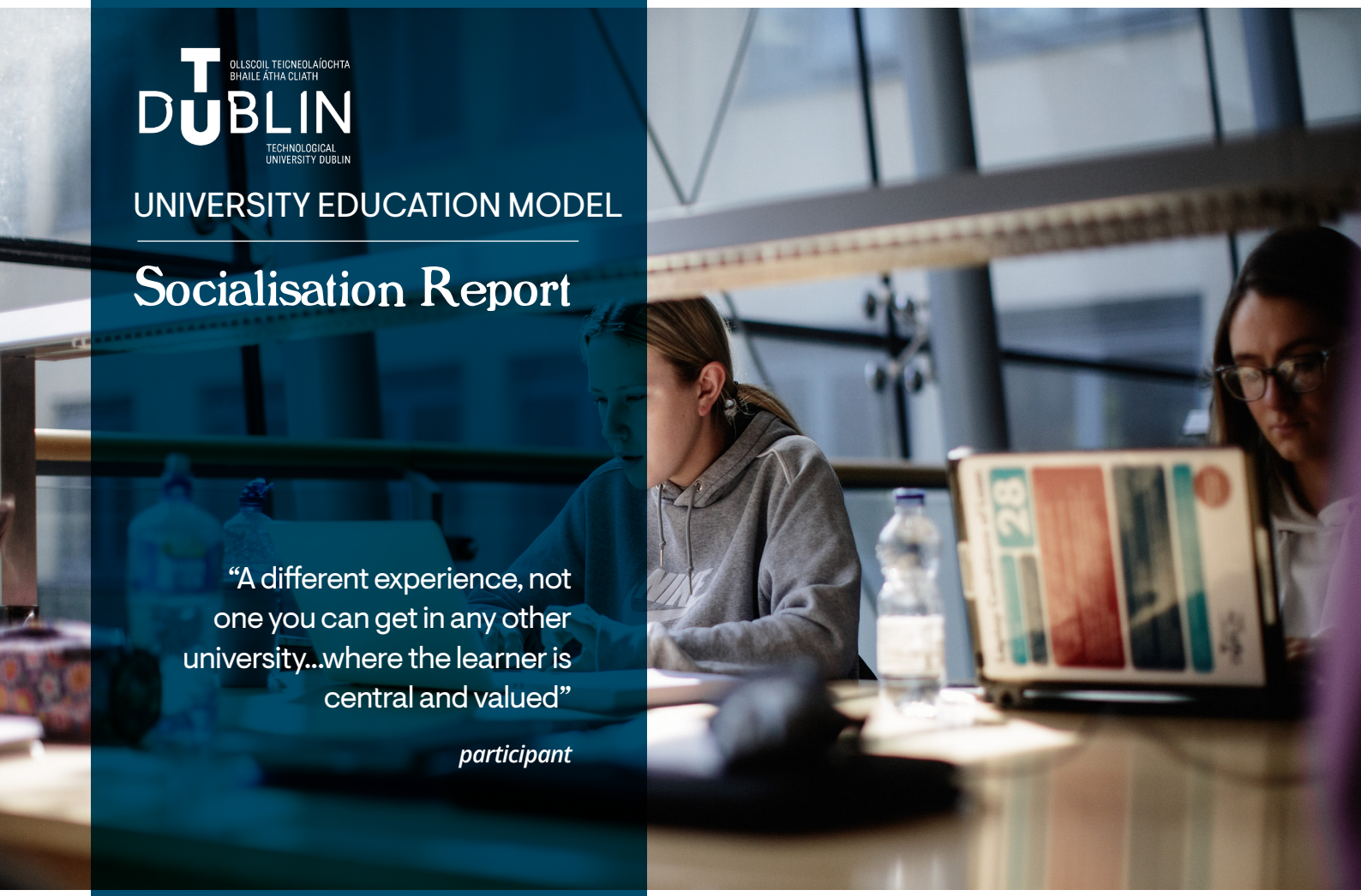


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OLLSCOIL TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA BHAILE ÁTHA CLIATH
TUDUBLIN
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION MODEL

Socialisation Report



"A different experience, not one you can get in any other university...where the learner is central and valued"

participant

This report provides a comprehensive account of the early-stage socialisation of the University Education Model (UEM) concepts and interpretation with internal staff and students, as well as external community and industry stakeholders.

The report and its analysis demonstrate an increasing understanding of the UEM 10 Guiding Principles, how they might inform the UEM and 4 emergent themes to be considered in relation to its further development.

32 EVENTS

4 EMERGENT THEMES

80% POSITIVITY

10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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INTRODUCTION

Central to advancing the design and development of a new University Education Model (UEM), for TU Dublin, is the engagement of our stakeholders throughout the process. This report provides a comprehensive account of the early-stage socialisation of UEM concepts and interpretation with staff at all levels and student stakeholders in the main. The emerging themes of Connected, Learner Centred, TU Dublin Enablers and Graduate Employability are in evidence from the analysis of the accumulated inputs.

These themes are underpinned by Sustainable Development Goal No.4 that of a Quality Education and fortified by the strategic intent of the University to deliver on a dynamic new model of education 'transforming the learning opportunities and experience for all,' (PE1), by ensuring a "High-quality education combined with social and personal development, employability" [Code 361].



Image: Collage of Jamboards (i.e. a digital post-it activities)

"some flexibility in the choice of modules, proper guidance given (in advance) for assignments, spacing out of assignments... more ongoing assessment rather than a huge focus on exams (particularly end of semester), plus allowing for different modes of assessment which play to people's strengths. All these are ways of creating a more learner-centred experience " *- Aisling Kenny student intern analyst*

METHODOLOGY

Thirty-two, online, socialisation events took place over the three-month period between December 2021 to February 2022. Participants at these interactive events came from all parts of TU Dublin; academic and professional services, as well as external industry and community stakeholders, and comprised 235 participants, of which 6% (n=14) were learners. Within each event there were two primary modes of participant engagement; free chat-box contributions and invited participation activities. Contributions to the two invited activities focussed participant engagement through two separate trigger questions and were conducted via a Waterfall (i.e., a timed chat-box activity) and a JamBoard (i.e., a digital post-it activity). Inputs collated (n=545) from the Waterfall and JamBoard activities were extracted from the relevant source (Teams chat for the Waterfall and Google Board for the JamBoard) and inputted into Excel for ease of collaborative analysis.

Each input was subjected to thematic analysis using Excel to host the data by six analysts in total; three academic staff analysts from the UEM team, referred to as academic analysts, and three TU Dublin undergraduate students who are also National Forum interns currently, and referred to as intern analysts in this report.

A collaborative approach was taken to analyse the inputs. Each analyst completed a common fundamental training on thematic analysis to ensure consistency of approach and application. Initially, each analyst coded a subset of the inputs (n=182) inductively to open codes and, subsequently, deductively to the 10 Guiding Principles of the TU Dublin Education Model. Learn more about the 10 Guiding Principles here: tudublin.ie/intranet/education-model/

ALIGNMENT TO DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Deductive coding was used to align to the guiding principles and subsequently analysed for frequency of mapping, i.e., how often the intern analyst and the academic analyst mapped to the same guiding principle. The grouped column chart, Figure 1 illustrates the comparison made between intern analyst and academic analyst regarding total mapping frequency for each input. It is apparent from this table that both the intern analysts and academic analysts viewed the inputs very similarly in terms of their connectedness to the UEM 10 Guiding Principles. This supports the view that there is an accepted understanding of the 10 Guiding Principles between the student intern analysts and academic analysts.

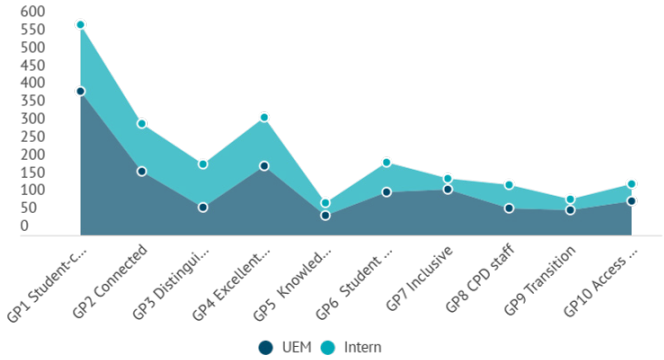


Figure 1 Comparison between student intern and academic staff of total mapping frequency for each input

By separating the learners who took part in the socialisation events from the staff, the grouped column chart, Figure 2, provides the breakdown of comparisons made between learners and academic staff for each input. For example, how closely did participant inputs align to any of the ten guiding principles? According to this analysis, there is substantial understanding between staff and learners on the alignment too and level of importance of the guiding principles. For example, guiding principles one and four are represented in the top three for both groups.

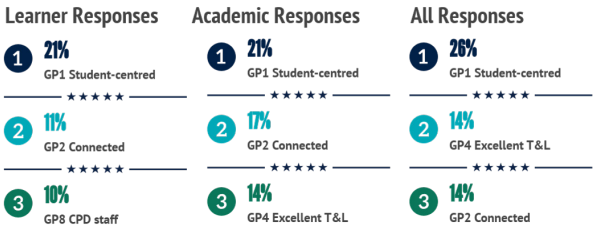


Figure 2 Alignment of Inputs to UEM Design Principles

This table is quite revealing in several ways. First, is the recognition of the significance of guiding principle one (GP1), student-centred by all respondent types. This suggests a clear understanding of guiding principle one and its call to support student initiative and agency in determining their own learning path and the need to promote, encourage and support student engagement and connectedness with the entire University community.

Secondly, is the call for a connected, engaged, internationalised curriculum as described in guiding principle two (GP2). This highlights the requirement to maintain a strong emphasis on the application of knowledge, research and scholarship, sustainability, experiential learning and development of active citizenship through all interactions with students enabled by the integration of research-led innovative teaching; enquiry-based collaborative learning and research skill development; workplace, community and international experiential learning; career development learning; and the full range of formal, informal and technology-enhanced learning experiences.

Finally, guiding principle eight (GP8) of continuously developing, committed and caring staff is selected by learners. This suggests that they recognise the value of excellence in teaching and student development and recognise the need for providing staff with high-quality staff development opportunities and resources with practice based CPD that will be recognised within a national professional development framework.

EMERGING THEMES

Inductive, individual, subset coding was compared as part of a paired coding partnership with one member of academic staff working collaboratively with a learner. The pair identified first pass agreements between their coding, with a focus on same/similar semantic codes. Subsequently, discursive second and third rounds of coding and code reduction ensured a complete agreed alignment between each pair for their raw data subset and concentrated the final code count to less than ten codes per pair. The reduced codes for all three pairs were combined and shared with all analysts for review, consideration and development into themes.

Asynchronous discussion permitted the interpretation of four themes from the collapsed codes; **Connected, Learner Centred, TU Dublin Enablers** and **Graduate Employability**. These four themes are situated under the overarching SDG theme of a '**Quality Education**.' Each theme was defined and reported upon to complete the thematic analysis process.

THEME 1 CONNECTED

Connected illuminates a strong theme from the inputs garnered during the online socialisation events, accounting for close to one-third of all the codes when combined, under this theme (30%). The Connected theme is interpreted as the anchor that analytically encompasses the codes DEIB (Diversity, Equality, Inclusion and Belonging), a social and community experience and an inclusive teaching and learning ecosystem. During the thematic analysis, an exploration of the relationships between these codes led to specified patterns that permitted the emergence of Connected as a theme that enables a quality education. Connected is described in this context as:

- Compositional diversity as reflected in the numbers (DEIB) an experience(s) that fosters a sense of belonging; "community, friendship, opportunity, support, empowerment, belonging, success, achievement, fun" [Code 4]
- Opportunities to engage with others through collective social conviviality (a social community experience); "Skills development, growth (social and professional, fun, new experiences, new ideas" [Code 233].
- An educational environment that promotes inclusive and integrative settings, systems and structures (an inclusive teaching and learning ecosystem); "A holistic learning environment. Not just academic, expanding the learning but also social, making connections, networking, growing as people as well as the academic" [Code 272] and "create a system that enables, empowers and mediates students' needs" [Code 311].

A sense of belonging is important to all learners in pursuit of academic achievements. The connected theme warrants a monitoring and cultivation of an inclusive campus environment and a sense of individual and collective belonging from registration to graduation. So how can we collectively "Work to establish a culture where students, in all their diversity, are seen as significant participants in shaping the education they receive" [Code 307].

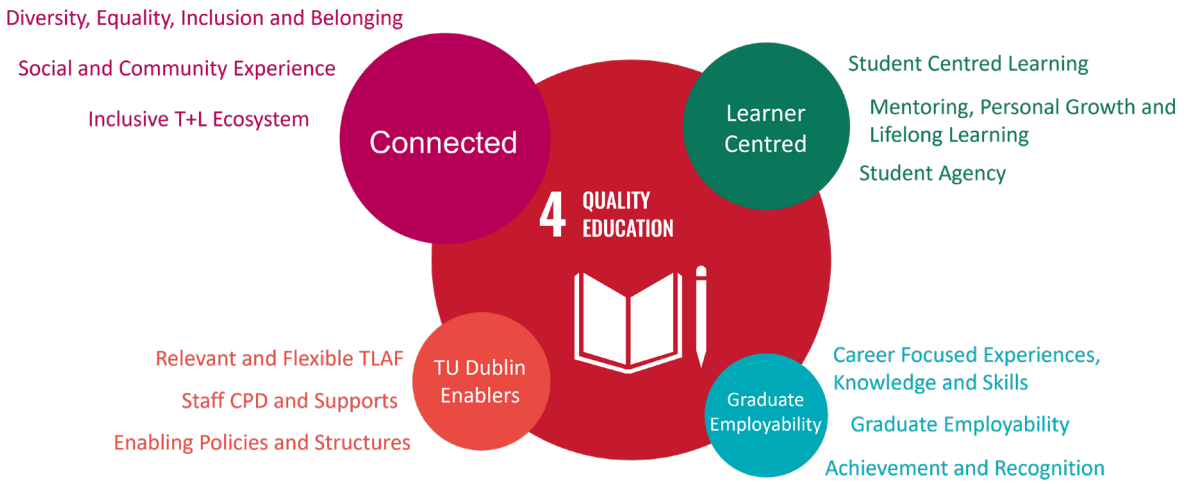


Figure 3 Emergent themes based on socialisation inputs

THEME 2 LEARNER CENTRED

The theme of **Learner Centred** includes the codes Student-Centred Learning, Mentoring, Personal Growth and Lifelong Learning, and Student Agency. The consolidation of these codes accounted for more than one-fifth of all the codes (22%) and represents a strong theme inferred from the inputs.

A Student-Centred approach places the learner central to all activities of the University. The respondents collectively described this as an "active and deep learning experience" [Code 203] that included "fun, professional opportunities, development, ideas, inspiration, sense of belonging [Code 437]
Universal Design for Learning was identified as an appropriate framework to support learners with a desire for "more adaptation of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL)" [Code 65]. Mentoring, Personal Growth and Lifelong Learning were reflected strongly, a clear call for all learners to have opportunities for "mentoring and friendship and career opportunities" [Code 252] while promoting a "passion for lifelong learning" [Code 5].

> ***"the social and community aspect of the college experience to be important both in individual development and in making connections which could be beneficial"***
> ***- Mark Keegan student intern analyst***

A move of focus from 'power over' to 'power with' was identified, building on the concept of student agency, this theme highlights the desire to offer "More student choice and student-led" [Code 17], and options that include "Choice and flexibility of learning pathways" [Code 419]



THEME 3 TU DUBLIN ENABLERS

The theme of **TU Dublin Enablers** is primarily made up of the codes Relevant and Flexible TLAF, Enabling Policies and Structures, and Staff CPD and Supports. The combination of these codes accounted for almost one-fifth of all the codes (19%) and represents a strong theme inferred from the data. The theme identifies the need for agile & flexible systems and supports both learners and staff. For example, respondents highlighted the need for "flexibility of registration & delivery, facilitate students selecting modules" [Code 470] delivered through a "1st class digital experience on the web, Info appeals and addresses student queries" [Code 19] with "academic support provided to learners at key junctures/inflection points in their 'pathway'" [Code 506]. Coded as part of Enabling Policies and Structures phrases captured identified timetabling as a key enabler with suggestions for "more efficient timetabling" [Code 469] supported through "practical support operationally in timetabling to support combining groups etc" [Code 63]. Lastly, there is an emphasis on Staff CPD, and support will a call for "Support and recognition for academic staff who are already delivering a respectful, dynamic and transformative experience for our students" [Code 132] and an appeal for "staff (particularly on the academic side) that have appropriate real-world workplace experience" [Code 463].

THEME 4 GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

The theme of **Graduate Employability** encompasses the codes Career-focused experiences, knowledge and skills (including Authentic Assessment), Engaged learning experiences, and Achievement and Recognition. The combination of these codes accounted for almost one-quarter of all the codes (24%) and represents a strong theme inferred from the inputs. The theme includes a noticeably clear call for our learners to find meaningful employment following their learning path in TU Dublin "Initially and primarily a good job" is what learners expect from Higher Education [Code 141]. However, a more rounded understanding of Graduate Employability was also observed and included the need to be an agile graduate ("have the flexible skills to adapt to change" [Code 81]), to have a positive mindset ("a future direction grounded in...positivity, confidence and new skills" [Code 139]) and to have an impact on the world in which we live ("an opportunity to make a change in the world for the better" [Code 227]).

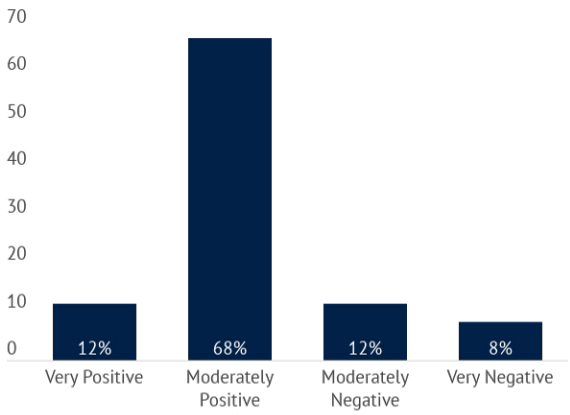


Figure 4 Sentiment analysis of participants inputs

NVivo was used as a diagnostic tool to capture the sentiment analysis of all participants' inputs on how they perceived the concept of the UEM. The chart above reveals the mining in opinion that there is an overall positive reaction (80%) to the UEM concept and early-stage thinking during the socialisation events.

KEY FINDINGS

The socialisation events played a significant role in the discovery phase of the development of TU Dublin Education Model. They provided a real, open, transparent opportunity for the whole University community to engage in conversations around the concept of an education model and its real value in our daily practice. In addition, this report and its analysis demonstrate an increasing comprehension of the UEM 10 Guiding Principles.

The inputs form a key component of the development of the UEM and will be complemented with existing and past TU Dublin projects and processes, a current institutional memory mine, exploration of the literature (grey and scholarly) and continued interaction with all interested in the development of the UEM. As noted, the key focus of the development of the UEM is to support the University in meeting its goals set out in the Strategic Intent of the University.

"There is a need for flexible pathways of learning in TU Dublin, for students with disabilities, those engaging in part-time work, and for student parents. Courses, university administrative bodies, and extracurricular supports must enable students to experience flexibility in their university education and in their lives." - Kara Lord Bisset student intern analyst

With this in mind there are a variety of questions that this report raises and solutions that will need to be identified as we proceed; these questions might include:

- How might we promote, encourage and support student engagement and connectedness with the entire university community?
- How might we provide a connected, engaged and internationalised co-created curriculum?
- How might we place a strong emphasis on the application of knowledge, research and scholarship?
- How might we promote and recognise excellence in teaching and student development?
- How might we adopt enhanced agility, flexibility and sustainability of provision, supported by imaginative use of technology?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- The University Education Model Project Charter [https://www.tudublin.ie/media/intranet/education-model/documents/University-Education-Model-Project_Charter_Approved-by-AC-01.12.21.pdf]
- 10 Guiding Principles for a TU Dublin Education Model, approved by Academic Council in June 2020. [https://www.tudublin.ie/media/intranet/education-model/documents/10-Guiding-Principles-for-a-TU-Dublin-Education-Model.pdf]
- University Guidance, approved by Academic Council in December 2021. [https://www.tudublin.ie/media/intranet/education-model/documents/University-Guidance.pdf]
- TU Dublin University Education Model Project Promo - A short promotional video for the TU Dublin University Education Model (UEM). [https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/86bad1e9-1784-475a-84ea-f494b3a8bc2a]

NEXT STEPS

- Use the key findings from the UEM Socialisation phase, and combine with other sources such as the IMPACT Teaching and Learning Innovation and Practice report, to create a prototype Framework of Learning Experiences.
- Share and review the prototype Framework of Learning Experiences with internal and external stakeholders; revise and iterate to a usable Framework.
- Experiment with high impact Learning Experiences from the Framework of Learning Experiences within, and across, the Schools of TU Dublin.
- Engage staff, students and external stakeholders in Framework of Learning Experiences experimentation, subsequently review, evaluate and showcase findings and lessons learnt.
- Explore Flexible Learning Pathways with a view to developing a model for implementation in practice

"A framework of experiences from which learners attending TU Dublin can learn and grow, offering them the skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications they require"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A key focus of the UEM is the student voice and ensuring that they have opportunities to participate in its development, with that in mind it is of immense benefit that three TU Dublin undergraduate students who are also National Forum interns worked in partnership in the analysis and development of this report. The interns are Kara Lord Bisset, Mark Keegan, and Aisling Kenny.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Education model guiding principles which will characterise the TU Dublin educational experience for all students (approved by Academic Council, June 2020)

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1 - Student-centred and student- engaged for student success

- Promote, encourage and support student initiative and agency in determining their own learning path, to allow flexibility in accessing their education through diverse and innovative modes of engagement.
- Promote, encourage and support student engagement and connectedness with the entire university community, integrating the learning experience and developing active citizenship, along with team working, leadership, entrepreneurship, work preparedness and other key skills.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2 - Connected, engaged, internationalised curriculum

- Providing a connected, engaged and internationalised curriculum, co-created and delivered in partnership with the student and with industry, community, HE and international partners;
- Maintain a strong emphasis on the application of knowledge, research and scholarship, sustainability, experiential learning and development of active citizenship through all interactions with students.
- Integrate research-led innovative teaching; enquiry-based collaborative learning and research skill development; workplace, community and international experiential learning; career development learning; and the full range of formal, informal and technology-enhanced learning experiences in the formation of the graduate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3 - Distinguished by diversity of provision and focus on practice and career development

- Make full use of apprenticeship and skills based learning approaches in a continuum from Level 6 to Level 10.
- Focus on practice, experiential learning and career development using a range of learning styles and experiences.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 4 - Excellent, flexible, agile teaching & learning

- Make full use of innovative teaching, learning and assessment practice, utilising multiple modes of delivery and interaction.
- Adopt enhanced agility, flexibility and sustainability of provision, supported by imaginative and judicious use of technology.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 5 - Knowledge - creation to application

- Demonstrate commitment to knowledge creation, research and scholarship using leading edge knowledge in disciplines at all levels.
- Deepen the knowledge of researchers as innovative workplace practitioners participating in leading edge and engaged research, and effective knowledge exchange.

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.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 7 - Inclusive, Global, Multicultural

- Foster and develop a multi-cultural, globally connected and inclusive learning community with strong international exchange of students and staff, physical and virtual.
- Respect and value the diversity of learning, culture, and skills that students bring will be, to enrich learning for all through peer-learning networks, student mentors, international team projects and co-curricular activities

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 8 - Continuously developing, committedand caring staff

- Promote and recognise excellence in teaching and student development.
- Promote and support high-quality staff development opportunities and resources with practice-based CPD that will be recognised within a national professional development framework.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 9 - Transition

- Provide a proactive, caring and flexible approach to support students as they transition to higher education and in the programme choices they make
- Develop accessible pathways to ensure students are as well prepared as possible when joining TU Dublin, and proactively support students to adjust to HE and develop self-efficacy throughout the transition period.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 10 - Access and equal opportunity

- Energetically and proactively facilitate equitable access to education and opportunities for all students and potential students, particularly those from underrepresented communities, regardless of economic or social background, disability, gender, racial or cultural background or belief.
- Support and promote a culture of equality, inclusion and respect for all in the TU Dublin community.



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