

Dublin City University
Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath



Leading through Challenge
University Strategy 2009-2011

Leading through Challenge 2009 - 2011

Enhancement of Learning Strategy

Executive Summary

This strategy emerges from the current social and economic context for higher education in Ireland. It is clear that a number of common policy drivers are emerging which directly relate to the enhancement of learning agenda in Irish higher education. These include the need to:

- foster **innovative and creative graduates** who can operate flexibly in the workplace
- develop **flexible provision** including part-time, online and distance learning and the encouragement of lifelong learning
- ensure **equity of access** and opportunity
- use a range of assessments to ensure that a **wide range of learning outcomes** are achieved
- deepen the range and **quality of learning outcomes** and
- align **teaching and research**.

Even in advance of the current economic crisis, Irish higher education was facing serious challenges with respect to rapid increase in student numbers, under-funding, global competition and a continually changing and increasingly diverse student population. While posing challenges for sustainability and engagement, DCU also views these as a source of opportunities to do what we do best – innovate in the face of adversity. Having been established in the 1970s and having developed and grown during the depressed 1980s, we are aware that a key DCU strength is our ability to flourish in trying times.

DCU prepares graduates to be active citizens of a global environment, with the ability to prosper in a slow as well as a buoyant economy. As well as excellent disciplinary skills and specialist knowledge in emerging, high-potential areas, graduates need higher-order skills such as critical thinking, ethics, problem-solving, creativity and research methodologies, as well as skills applicable in a more general, societal context such as civic engagement and global awareness.

The *Enhancement of Learning Strategic Plan* builds on the success of the previous *Learning Innovation Strategic Plan (2006-2008)*. Much was achieved over the period of the previous strategy including:

- major academic reform through the **Academic Framework for Innovation (AFI)**
- the appointment of **Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning** to support change in each Faculty
- the setting up of the **Learning Innovation Advisory Panel (LIAP)**
- the development of a comprehensive **e-Learning Strategy**
- the mainstreaming of the **Learning Innovation Unit (LIU)**
- the first university to embark on a major thematic quality review of the **First Year Experience**
- the establishment of the **Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA)** as a potential vehicle to progress co-operation and collaboration in teaching and learning.

Building on this analysis of the global, national and institutional environments, along with a detailed evaluation of the outcomes of the previous strategic plan, an extensive consultation process involving External and Internal Advisory Groups led to the identification of four overarching strategic objectives.

Objective 1: Strengthening the distinctive DCU learning experience

The welcoming experience of the DCU campus, the contemporary portfolio of programmes, along with the opportunity for our graduates to acquire skills and knowledge beyond their core disciplines through work integrated learning, civic engagement and other contextual learning activities, will ensure our graduates have a quality educational experience that will equip them to deal with a rapidly changing social and economic environment.

Objective 1 is elaborated through two sub-objectives: 1.1: Facilitating the transition to higher education. 1.2: Achieving distinctive learning outcomes

Objective 2: Advancing the flexible, responsive and accessible university

In addition to aligning with the NFQ and developing more student-centred learning outcomes-based programmes, DCU will open up new routes for access, mature and part-time and distance education students and redesign its progression structures with the aim of building in increased flexibility on progression pathways for full-time students.

Objective 2 is elaborated through three sub-objectives: 2.1: Implementing the Academic Framework for Innovation (AFI). 2.2: Achieving flexible learning. 2.3: Targeting greater access and participation of under-represented groups.

Objective 3: Enhancing the quality of teaching and learning

The quality of programmes, teaching quality and the student experience are consistently rated very highly by students, graduates, alumni and employers, both through formal surveys and through qualitative feedback. DCU will extend its current procedures to capture and demonstrate the quality of its teaching and learning activities.

Objective 3 is elaborated through the sub-objective:3.1: Enhancing teaching excellence.

Objective 4: Ensuring the integration of teaching and research

The integration of disciplinary research findings and the development of research methodologies at undergraduate level will be a strategic priority during the term of this current plan. Concurrently, DCU will seek to ensure that staff are exposed to the outcomes of pedagogic research into teaching and learning, and have the opportunities and incentives to pursue scholarship in this field.

Objective 4 is elaborated through three sub-objectives:4.1: Research-informed teaching. 4.2: Integrating research on teaching and learning. 4.3: Supporting high-quality teaching and learning

A comprehensive set of initiatives is linked with each of these four objectives and sub-objectives. In turn, key performance indicators are identified for each initiative along with the staff responsible for oversight of delivery within a specified timeframe.

In this way, progress towards the achievement of the objectives of the strategy will be monitored on a regular basis.

Preface

The *Enhancement of Learning Strategy (EoL)* is one of the major component strategies underpinning DCU's Institutional Plan to 2011.

It builds directly on the success of the *Learning Innovation Strategy 2006-2008* - a key element of which was the introduction of a pioneering curriculum reform project, the Academic Framework for Innovation (AFI).

The external environment has changed dramatically in the period since we embarked on this planning cycle - impacting on the social and economic circumstances of our students, our staff and the communities which we serve.

The underlying core values we identified for our educational mission remain, however, valid. In a time of turmoil they possibly become even more important than ever. It is these values which will position DCU to be as well equipped as possible to respond to the challenging environment in the best interests of our students - undergraduate, postgraduate and research; full-time, part-time, and distance; those entering via access routes; national and international; school leavers and adults.

This ambitious Plan emerged following a comprehensive consultation exercise within the university and externally. I would like to express my appreciation to members of the External Advisory Group and the Governing Authority Working Group who gave so generously of their time and expertise. Across the university, I was struck by the high level of engagement from Faculties, students and support units, in particular, through their representatives on the Internal Advisory Group. I am grateful to all involved, not least my colleagues in the Office of the Vice-President for Learning Innovation.

Professor Maria Slowey
Vice-President for Learning Innovation

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1.0 The Economic and Social Context

DCU's *Enhancement of Learning Strategy 2009-2011* comes at an opportune point in DCU's key mission to equip the students of the university with the skills necessary to fulfil their potential in the knowledge society. This activity becomes more critical as the university responds to meet the changing economic environment and play its part in the sustainable economic, social and environmental renewal of the country.

Among the recent national and international initiatives which have informed the current strategy are:

- OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education¹
- Bologna process²
- National Development Plan 2007-2013³
- HEA's Strategic Plan 2008-2010⁴
- HEA's National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013⁵
- Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (IT; Financial and Medical Devices⁶)
- Building Ireland's Smart Economy⁷

Among the trends identified by the OECD in its recent review of tertiary education are:

- **Expansion** of tertiary education systems
- **Diversification** of provision
- More **heterogeneous** students
- New **funding** arrangements
- Focus on **accountability** and **performance**
- New forms of institutional **governance**
- Global **networking**, mobility and collaboration.

This review also identified a number of policy challenges facing tertiary education:

- Ensuring **equity of opportunities**
- Ensuring funding models don't harm **equity of access**
- Improving **participation** of least represented groups
- Raising the profile of equity within national HE **policy agendas** to:
 - identify **barriers & constraints**
 - **inform policy** with collection of socioeconomic data
 - develop alternative provision, including **distance learning**.

The Bologna process is ongoing since 1999 with the ultimate aim of establishing a **European Higher Education Area** by 2010 in which staff and students can move with ease throughout Europe and have their qualifications recognised in other

¹ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/4/40345176.pdf>

² <http://www.bologna.ie/>

³ <http://www.ndp.ie/documents/ndp2007-2013/NDP-2007-2013-English.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.heai.ie/files/files/file/HEA%20Strategic%20Plan%202008%20-%202010%20En%20Final%20June.pdf>

⁵ [http://www.heai.ie/files/files/file/New_pdf/National_Access_Plan_2008-2013_\(English\).pdf](http://www.heai.ie/files/files/file/New_pdf/National_Access_Plan_2008-2013_(English).pdf)

⁶ <http://www.skillsireland.ie/press/reports/index.html>

⁷ <http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/index.asp?locID=601&docID=4147>

countries. Under the Bologna process, the key challenge for universities across Europe is to adopt a system of **easily comparable qualifications**. The main method for meeting this challenge will be aligning awards with sets of recognised learning outcomes. As will be seen below, this process is well advanced in DCU.

On a national level, the National Development Plan outlines key drivers for the on-going strategic investment in higher education. These include:

- Increased participation and **improved access**;
- Encourage a **greater flexibility of course offerings** to meet diverse student population needs in a **lifelong learning** context;
- Promote the quality of teaching and learning (NDP 2007 p. 201)

These developments were elaborated in the Higher Education Authority's *Strategic Plan 2008-2010* which challenges higher education in Ireland to put the student at the centre of higher education and states that high quality teaching and learning is the core of the mission of the higher education institutions in Ireland. It places particular emphasis on the needs of **mature students**: "The scale of higher education graduates that Ireland requires for achieving OECD front rank graduation levels and further social and economic progress cannot be sourced from the school leaving population alone. There is a need for significant and sustained increases in the numbers of mature students in order to upskill our adult population." (HEA 2008, p.23). The HEA's strategy goes on to state that Irish higher education should be recognised for:

- **a vibrant research and innovation culture** that is quality driven, addresses a broad spectrum of disciplines and is closely connected to **teaching and learning**
- its contribution to social inclusion by providing **the opportunity for all to participate** to their full potential
- the provision of **innovative and creative graduates** equipped with the skills needed to perform successfully in a competitive environment and contribute to fostering an enterprise culture and nurturing entrepreneurs
- **flexibility** in provision, offering multiple opportunities for educational progress through mechanisms such as **modularisation, part-time study, distance learning, and e-learning**, thereby bringing reality to the concept of lifelong learning, and
- **a spirit of enquiry** as a source of independent insight into matters that impact on our society.

The theme of providing the opportunity for all to participate in higher education is taken up in the HEA's *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013*. This plan sets ambitious targets for increasing the participation in higher education by groups such as students from **economically disadvantaged backgrounds, mature students and students with a disability**. In addition, targets are set for increasing the provision of **flexible/part-time programmes**; non-standard entry routes and opportunities to participate in **lifelong learning**. This plan also aims at reforms of the HEA's recurrent funding model to ensure that higher education institutions are innovative and responsive to national development goals and the needs of an increasingly diverse student body.

The Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (EGFSN) has produced a number of sector reports recently on the future skills needs of a number of areas (including the ICT sector, the medical device sector and financial services). Of even more relevance to the *Enhancement of Learning Strategy* is the fact that it recently conducted a survey

of the perceptions of employers of graduates of Irish higher education⁸. This survey indicated that Irish graduates compare well, in most respects, with their international counterparts. However, a number of recommendations arose from the survey, including:

- introduction of more **work placements** into third-level courses in Ireland
- better communication to Irish students of **the reality of the workplace**, and
- more use of continuous assessment to build **team skills** and confidence.

DCU was at the forefront of introducing work placements as part of its degree programmes, and the present strategy envisages a deepening of this process. In addition, the move to a learning outcomes-based approach for DCU's programmes will lead to the more systematic assessment of team skills, communication skills and other skills relevant to the workplace.

Finally, the Government's *Building Ireland's Smart Economy* envisages a restructuring of the Irish higher education system. Of particular importance to DCU's *Enhancement of Learning Strategy* is the fact that this framework for sustainable economic renewal states that the new Higher Education Strategy will address the challenges of "**improving effectiveness and quality across the wider remit for teaching and learning**" (p. 75). It also states that "**priority will be given to flexible learning initiatives that can be targeted at up-skilling people in the workforce**" (p. 76).

It can be expected that, as the current economic crisis develops, a number of initiatives will emerge from governmental and other sources which will aim at up-skilling both those members of the workforce who are made redundant as a result of the economic decline and those still in employment. DCU intends to be at the forefront of these initiatives, and its *Enhancement of Learning Strategy* aims to place it in a position to respond flexibly and responsively to the emerging needs, particularly for those who wish to adapt their participation in DCU programmes to suit their individual circumstances.

As can be seen from the above review of the policy environment for Irish higher education, a number of common policy drivers are emerging which directly relate to the enhancement of learning agenda in Irish higher education. These include the need to:

- foster **innovative and creative graduates** who can operate flexibly in the workplace
- develop **flexible provision** including part-time, online and distance learning and the encouragement of lifelong learning
- ensure **equity of access** and opportunity
- use a range of assessments to ensure that a **wide range of learning outcomes** are achieved
- deepen the range and **quality of learning outcomes** and
- align **teaching and research**.

These drivers, along with drivers more specific to DCU, are addressed in this strategic plan. In addition, this plan aims to take into account the **recent deterioration in the economic environment** both nationally and internationally and to position DCU to respond to this changing environment both through internal reform and to place it at the forefront of the changing higher education needs of Ireland's citizens.

⁸ The report on the EGFSN survey is available at:
<http://www.skillsireland.ie/publication/egfsnSearch.jsp?ft=/publications/2007/title,2941.en.php>

2.0 The DCU Context

This strategic plan builds on the previous *Learning Innovation Strategic Plan (2006-2008)*. The latter was the first major strategic plan specifically for the development of DCU's teaching and learning activities. Its inclusion as one of the three component plans of DCU's overall strategic plan *Leadership Through Foresight 2006-2008* reflects the value the university places on strategic innovation in teaching and learning.

In preparation for the current plan, a detailed audit of achievements under the Learning Innovation Plan (2006-2008) was carried out to inform the development of the present plan. While the *Learning Innovation Strategic Plan (2006-2008)* was considered ambitious, especially in a three-year planning context, significant activity was commenced and advanced. Any education strategy is organic, aiming to continually support the development and improvement of teaching and learning policies and practices. The Learning Innovation Strategy was primarily about cultural change – developing the flexible and responsive university, enhancing learner achievement and developing lifelong learning opportunities. Informing these objectives was feedback from our learners and growth in education research.

Major initiatives carried out during the period of the Learning Innovation Strategy included:

- Academic Framework for Innovation (AFI)
- Organisational Change
- Mainstreaming of the Learning Innovation Unit (LIU)
- Developing an eLearning Strategy
- First Year Experience
- Dublin Regional Higher Education Alliance

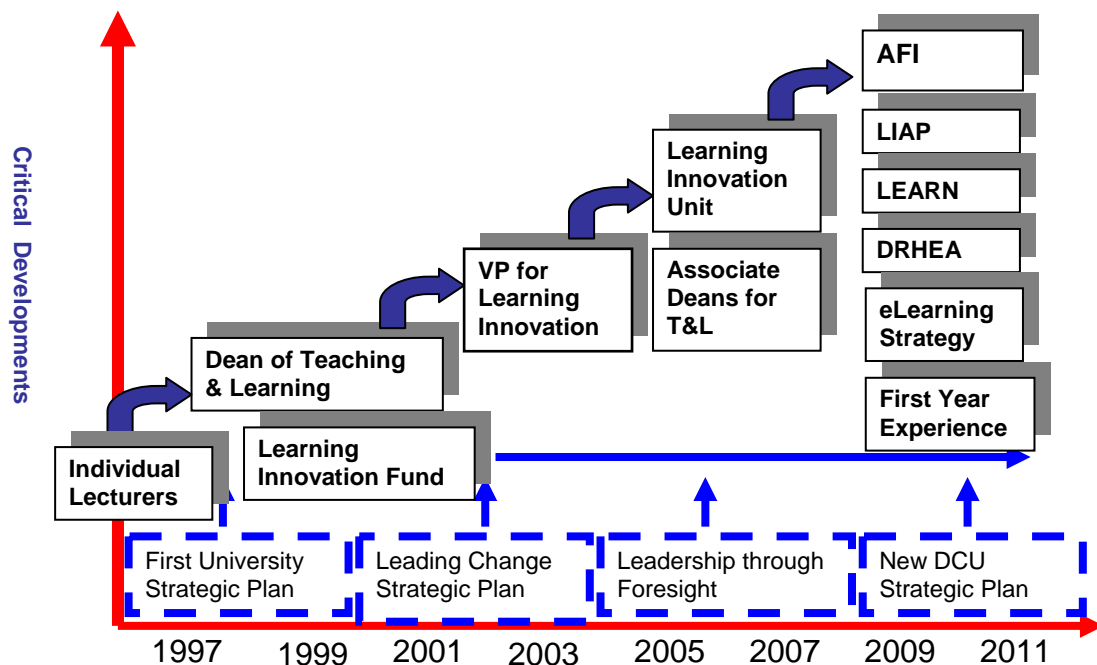


Figure 1: Development of Teaching and Learning Support in DCU

2.1 Academic Framework for Innovation

A number of the major objectives of the Learning Innovation Strategy were and, continue to be, addressed in a systematic fashion under DCU's **Academic Framework for Innovation (AFI)**. AFI was approved by Academic Council in June 2007. AFI is designed to achieve a number of objectives but is concerned, in particular, with a major curriculum reform process, providing flexible academic structures and routes to accommodate a diverse student body. Special importance is attached in AFI to ensuring that DCU awards are consistent with the National Framework of Qualifications and are aligned to the requirements of the Bologna agreement. The aim is to facilitate greater levels of transfer into the university by students with qualifications from other educational sectors in Ireland, and to allow DCU students to carry their accumulated credits to other institutions. Lastly, international recognition of DCU credits through Bologna compliance will facilitate greater levels of student mobility within the EHEA and improve the already strong international profile of the DCU student population.

2.2 Organisational Change

In addition to AFI, a number of critical university structures were also put in place to advance learning innovation in DCU, including:

- the appointment of an Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning in each four Faculties of the university
- the secondment of a senior academic to progress AFI
- the setting up of the Learning Innovation Advisory Panel (LIAP) as a sub-committee of Academic Council
- the setting up of the Learning, Education and Academic Research Network (LEARN) to bring together the many pedagogic and educational policy research activities being carried out in the university and its linked colleges and
- the decision by Executive to create a new institute building on the Learning Innovation Unit (LIU) and Oscail (distance education unit)

2.3 Mainstreaming the Learning Innovation Unit

The mainstreaming of the Learning Innovation Unit (LIU) has resulted in the provision of a wide range of courses, seminars and workshops covering areas such as the use of learning technology, how to develop a teaching portfolio and special courses for new lecturers. Information on the courses provided by LIU in the last year (2008) indicates the scale of this work (see Appendix 2).

Another key area of activity of the LIU involves the management of the Learning Innovation Fund (LIF) project scheme. The LIF scheme provides seed funding to support projects aimed at enhancing teaching and learning activities in DCU. The scheme has been in place since 1999. A wide range of projects have been funded. Some aimed to systematise current good practice; many projects aimed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning while a few were experimental in nature. A crucial outcome of the LIF scheme has been the

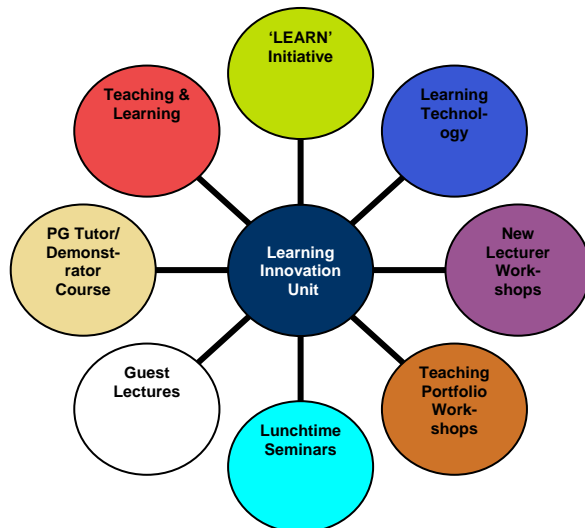


Figure 2: LIU Programme

building up of capacity of DCU staff, particularly in the use of learning technologies. Over 140 projects have been funded to date, amounting to approximately €1,250,000 in total. Figure 3 gives the distribution of LIF projects by DCU's Schools. As can be seen, there has been widespread take-up of LIF projects across the university. The range of innovative work involved is shown in the list of LIF projects awarded since 1999 given in Appendix 3.

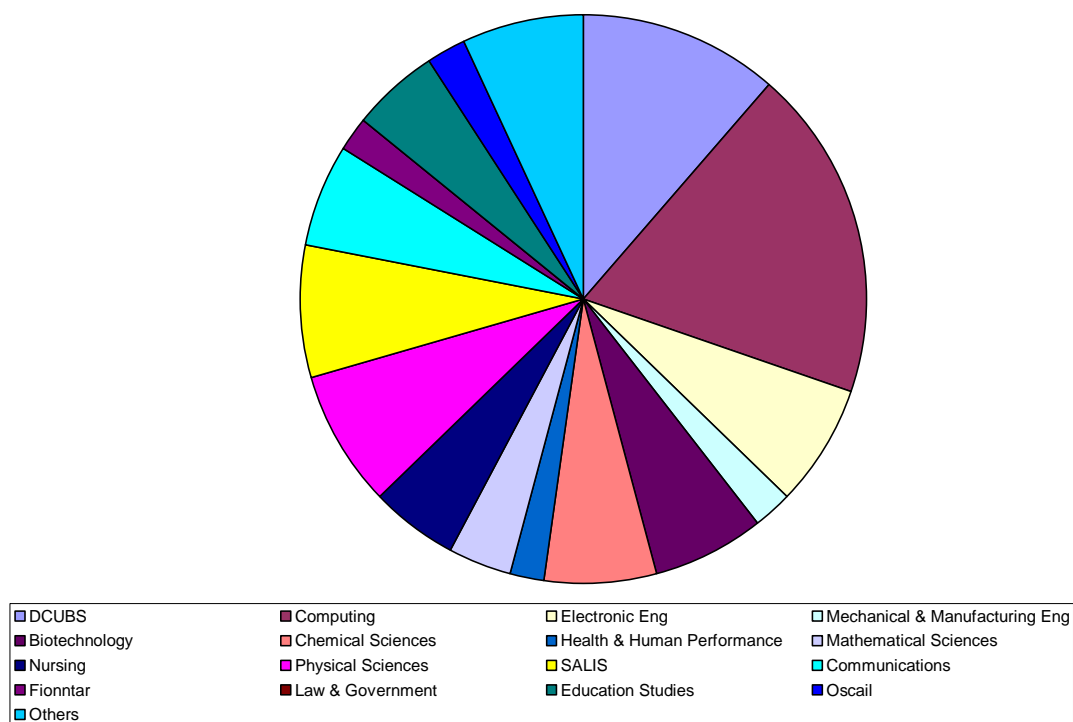


Figure 3: LIF Projects by DCU Schools (1999-2007)

2.4 Development of an eLearning Strategy

A two-person team was appointed to develop an **eLearning Strategy** for DCU. The team carried out extensive consultation, surveys and research. A detailed report on the potential of the eLearning in DCU was produced and circulated by the President to all staff⁹ for consultation purposes.. Subsequently, DCU Executive decided that elements of the eLearning Strategy should be incorporated into the current Enhancement of Learning Strategy.

2.5 First Year Experience

A thematic quality review was carried out on the **First Year Experience** of DCU students. This work was at the request of DCU and was the first thematic review of its kind to be conducted under the IUQB (Irish Universities Quality Board) framework. It was designed to focus on the voice of DCU students, especially those just embarking on their studies. It also enabled an in-depth investigation of the interrelations between academic support and administrative issues in the student experience. The recently-established **Student Experience Steering Group** will build on the outcomes of this review.

⁹ The DCU eLearning Strategy consultation document is available here:
<http://www.dcu.ie/~foxs/elearning/ELearning%20Consultation%20Final%2016%20September%202008.pdf>

2.6 Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance

The Learning Innovation Plan formed the framework for DCU's successful bid in 2007/8 for HEA funding under SIF Cycle II. This bid was developed in partnership with three other universities, DIT and three Institutes of Technology. It focused on strategic teaching and learning developments under the four strands of *Enhancement of Learning, Graduate Education, Internationalisation* and *Widening Participation* and provided a welcome, much needed, mechanism to advance a range of teaching innovations. While the Higher Education Authority (HEA) has been forced to reschedule funding due to the exceptional budgetary circumstances, the creation of the **Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance** (DRHEA), a major collaboration of the Dublin region universities and Institutes of Technology, will assist DCU to deliver on key national educational objectives while achieving economies of scale and sharing of expertise in the Dublin region. DCU is the convening institution for the largest of the four strands relating to the Enhancement of Learning (EOL). DCU will work closely with others in the development of the Dublin Centre for Academic Development (DCAD) an initiative aimed at collaboratively addressing a range of teaching, learning and academic development issues across the Dublin HEIs, sharing expertise, resources and practice.

3.0 Development of the Enhancement of Learning Strategy

The progress achieved under the last plan is viewed as a signpost for future direction, signaling priority areas for continued or new development. The crucial lesson learnt from the previous plan was that the objectives frequently require long term planning and that each strategic plan should, in part, be seen as a series of milestones on the way to the achievement of our long term goals. This new plan has been developed to extend the activities commenced under the *Learning Innovation Strategic Plan* while taking account of new strategic developments, a radically changed economic environment and the lessons learnt from the experience of the previous plan.

In preparing the current plan, external and internal advisory panels were put in place. Governing Authority also set up an Education Working Group. The membership of the two panels and the Education Working Group is given in Appendix 1. The external advisory panel met in September 2008. The internal advisory panel met on seven occasions on the following dates:

- 7th August 2008
- 29th September 2008
- 5th November 2008
- 4th December 2008
- 15th January 2009
- 11th February 2009 and
- 11th March 2009

In addition, the Enhancement of Learning Strategy was addressed at the regular meetings of DCU's Learning Innovation Advisory Panel (LIAP) on the 16th October 2008; 18th December 2008 and 19th February 2009.

Much valuable advice was given by the two advisory panels, the Working Group and the members of LIAP. This advice was incorporated into this strategy. Updates on the progress of the development of the strategy were given to DCU's Education Committee at meetings on the 1st October 2008; 3rd December 2008 and 14th January 2009. The university's overall strategy group were also kept updated on the development of the strategy.

At the beginning of the strategy development process, two key inputs to the advisory panels were the audit of the Learning Innovation Strategy (noted above) and the outcomes of DCU's Foresight Exercise.

3.1 DCU's Foresight Exercise

As part of the *Leadership through Foresight* strategic plan, DCU put in place a Foresight Exercise designed to look at the future out to 2028 and specifically to:

- consider the options and strategies for DCU to remain successful and innovative in the future
- develop a long-term vision for the university and
- plot a roadmap to deliver this vision¹⁰

Among the recommendations directly related to the planning horizon of the *Enhancement of Learning Strategy* are:

- develop a far greater **range of options** of



¹⁰ The DCU Foresight Report is available here: <http://www.dcu.ie/themes/foresight/index.shtml>

variable length and format of programmes/delivery mechanisms within a single programme as well as across the offer

- **involve industry more closely** with the university, not just for funding purposes but as a wider resource
- promote the development of **hard and soft skills** (i.e. develop technical knowledge as well as softer employability skills)
- use and **build on existing resources and distance learning capabilities** more effectively
- develop innovative and **flexible programme structures** to meet the needs of **part-time** as well as full-time learning and
- adapt lifelong learning to the needs of a wide range of **mature students**, with different – or few formal – previous qualifications but with a wide variety of life and work experiences.

4. The DCU Response

Even in advance of the current economic crisis, Irish higher education was facing serious challenges with respect to rapid increase in student numbers, under-funding, global competition and a continually changing and increasingly diverse student population. While posing challenges for sustainability and engagement, DCU also views these as a source of opportunities to do what we do best – innovate in the face of adversity. Having been established (as NIHED) in the 1970s and having developed and grown during the depressed 1980s, we are aware that a key DCU strength is our ability to flourish in trying times.

4.1 Opportunities

DCU prepares graduates to be active citizens of a global, knowledge economy, with the ability to prosper in a slow as well as a buoyant economy. As well as excellent disciplinary skills and specialist knowledge in emerging, high-potential areas, graduates need higher-order skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and research methodologies, as well as skills applicable in a more general, societal context such as civic engagement and global awareness.

The External Advisory Group on the Enhancement of Learning Strategy indicated that DCU is known for its:

- flexibility
- ambition
- commitment to innovation
- willingness to take risks
- willingness to embrace change, and
- commitment to engagement with the local and wider communities.

As a flexible and ambitious institution, DCU has always been responsive and proactive and able to successfully effect large-scale change. While its relatively small size could be seen as an inhibitor in certain contexts, for example achievement of economies of scale, it is frequently cited as an advantage by students and it does enable the possibility of engaging with change more readily. The AFI process provides a mechanism to include changes to the curriculum as it undergoes deep reform. In particular, the full implementation of AFI will allow the incorporation of flexible learning pathways, increased choice, a broader range of graduate attributes and more diverse pedagogical approaches.

4.2 Challenges

Global economic turmoil shapes the backdrop of this strategic plan and, added to significant historical under-funding of Irish higher education, makes for a challenging horizon in the short to medium term. For these reasons, initiatives envisaged under this plan have not only to be strategically focused but also to ensure a maximum return on resources expended. They are also designed to put in place building blocks on which future developments, beyond the timeframe of the current plan, can be constructed.

4.3 Strategic Intent

In its strategic plan for (2001-2005) ‘**Leading Change**’ the University established the following Academic Themes to shape and guide its research and teaching and learning strategies.

DCU Academic Themes

1. Science, Discovery and Technological Innovation
2. Life Sciences and Health in Society
3. Information Technology and the Knowledge Society
4. Internationalisation, Interculturalism and Social Development
5. Education and learning
6. Business and Innovation

The Enhancement of Learning Strategy is a component strategy of the DCU institutional strategy. The institutional strategy is composed of a number of critical component strategies which were developed in parallel with, and designed to be complementary to, the university strategy. The component strategies are:

1. Enhancement of Learning
2. Research
3. Knowledge Transfer and Innovation
4. Civic Engagement
5. Internationalisation
6. Internal communications

The Enhancement of Learning Strategy should therefore be read in conjunction with the other university component strategies with particular reference to the Research and Civic Engagement strategies.

Excellence underpins all DCU's activities, and excellence in teaching, learning, and curriculum reform is a core tenet of this strategic plan. In the short term, DCU will continue to embed deep curriculum reform through the AFI process. It will engage proactively with the DRHEA project, in particular through its leadership on the projects in the Enhancement of Learning stream. It will also grow in areas in which it is already strong – interdisciplinary learning, technology-enhanced learning and educational innovation.

Education has long-term goals, and educators must take a long-term perspective. The Foresight Exercise has provided DCU with an outline of possible future scenarios and this plan aims, in a preliminary way, to create the foundations for that future. It also aims to build on the recent past, consolidate current activity and blueprint future needs. Building on its distinctiveness and its successful innovation in pedagogy, technology, access and participation, DCU will continue to lead the way in Irish higher education in modularisation, advancing the Bologna process and re-inventing our educational practices. It is our intention that these initiatives will strengthen the distinctiveness of DCU graduates as employment-ready, innovative, research-informed and active global citizens.

5.0 Guiding Principles and Values

The guiding principles and values underpinning the current strategy are:

- Commitment to a learner-centred approach which emphasises research-informed teaching and learning which works towards the integration of research and teaching
- Support for students to integrate into the university community and assistance for students to develop the understanding and range of skills they will need to succeed in their studies and chosen careers
- An emphasis on lifelong learning for all through designing flexible learning pathways responsive to student needs and circumstances
- Improved access for currently under-represented groups
- Provision of a welcoming, intercultural campus to students from all backgrounds reflecting and supporting the diversity of Irish society
- Interdisciplinary opportunities for all students
- Creation of a learning environment where all students can access a range of pedagogical and technological innovations appropriate to their needs.
- Commitment to on-going quality improvement in teaching and learning based on an active dialogue between staff, students, graduates, employers and other stakeholders
- Commitment to valuing the expertise of teaching staff by ensuring they have opportunities to develop their skills and that excellence in teaching is recognised towards professional and academic advancement.

6. Objectives

Arising out of these guiding principles, four overall objectives have been developed:

- **Strengthening the Distinctive DCU Learning Experience**
- **Advancing the Flexible, Responsive and Accessible University**
- **Enhancing the Quality of Teaching and Learning**
- **Ensuring the Integration of Teaching and Research**

Objective 1. Strengthening the Distinctive DCU Learning Experience

DCU is known for its compact, vibrant campus with an active social life and excellent sports facilities. DCU will continue to work on ensuring that its students successfully make the transition to studying at third level. Graduates in the 21st century require skills and knowledge beyond their core discipline. DCU students have distinctive opportunities within their programmes of study to gain these skills, including work integrated learning, civic engagement and other contextual learning activities. DCU will expand its provision in this area to include opportunities for community-based learning and development of competences in areas such as globalisation, sustainability and ethics.

Objective 1.1 Facilitating the Transition to Higher Education

Moving from second- to third-level education is exciting and challenging, but for many students it can also be daunting. DCU has been active in easing the transition to higher education with initiatives such as the DCUBS induction programme (BEST), and university-wide orientation activities including staggered orientation programmes running throughout first year.

DCU recognises that students can have difficulty with the demands of becoming more independent learners and taking responsibility for their own learning, and will continue to provide and enhance the opportunities for all students to develop the essential learning management, study and critical thinking skills as well as the ability to contextualise their learning.

A successful pilot of Student Learning Agreements, run under the last plan, to assist students in understanding the requirements of their programme and the resources available to them, will be extended across the university during the next three years.

Initiatives

- The Student Experience Steering Group will address issues of student engagement and retention across the university, building on the knowledge gained from the successful First Year Experience project.
- All programmes will be audited to identify good practice in easing the transition to higher education.
- All students will have opportunities, in their first semester, to achieve stated learning outcomes in disciplinary- appropriate study skills.
- A Student Charter will be drawn up covering what DCU expects from its students and what the students can expect from DCU.
- All programmes will be audited to ensure that all relevant information is being made available to students in a readily accessible format, and guidelines on good practice in this matter will be developed for adoption across the university.

- All schools will pilot an appropriate Student Learning Agreement building on their current structures (personal tutor systems, induction programmes, mentoring etc).

Objective 1.2 Achieving Distinctive Learning Outcomes

As well as professional knowledge, universities must prepare students to be active citizens in a global, knowledge-intensive society and to demonstrate ethical, environmental and intercultural awareness. DCU has long recognised the importance of this, with many students having had a period of work integrated learning (INTRA) as an essential, assessed component of their programme since the early 1980s. This approach has been expanded to include Study Abroad, Teaching Practice and Clinical Placement for appropriate programmes.

The extra-curricular *Uaneen* Module, unique in Ireland, provides final-year students with an opportunity to earn academic or extracurricular credit for engagement in extracurricular activities and demonstrating the learning that arises from this.

Through the Internationalisation Strategy, globalisation will be integrated into the curriculum and this will be expanded to include the areas of Sustainability, Ethics and Active Citizenship. In addition, DCU actively promotes Community-based Learning through integration of active citizenship opportunities in the Community.

Initiatives

- All programmes will be audited to evaluate the use of appropriate alternative pedagogical approaches such as e-learning, collaborative learning, independent study and community engagement to ensure a variety of learning opportunities and assessment methods appropriate to the learning outcomes of the programme
- All programmes will provide appropriate opportunities to contextualise learning, including INTRA, Clinical Placement or Period Abroad, and disciplinary-appropriate mechanisms to assess contextual learning will be identified.
- New opportunities for interdisciplinary study will be developed, and barriers to such developments will be identified and removed.
- All programmes will include learning outcomes enabling the acquisition of intercultural, social and ethical competences¹¹.
- The integration of student research with community-based research will be piloted¹²
- A model for programmatic review developed based on Bologna Quality Assurance Directives

¹¹ See also Internationalisation of the Curriculum in the DCU's Internationalisation Strategy.

¹² See also Objectives 1 and 6 of DCU's Civic Engagement Strategy

Objective 2. Advancing the Flexible, Responsive and Accessible University

Embracing the opportunities presented by the Bologna Agreement and the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) as well as a modularised curriculum, DCU has embarked on a major curriculum reform process – the Academic Framework for Innovation (AFI). As well as aligning with the NFQ and developing more student-centred learning outcomes-based programmes, DCU will redesign its progression structures with the aim of building in increased flexibility on progression pathways for full-time students, and opening up new routes for part-time and distance education students.

With the solid academic base provided by AFI, DCU will increasingly make itself more accessible to part-time and off-campus students through its increased use of learning technology and online delivery, DCU already actively recruits mature students, international students, students from disadvantaged backgrounds and students with disabilities and will continue to increase the participation of these groups through increased flexibility of provision, new forms of programme delivery and adaptable learning pathways. Organisationally, this will be spearheaded by a new institute which will bring together Oscail, the Learning Innovation Unit and the education element of DCU in the Community. It is envisaged that combining the skill sets in flexible delivery and learning innovation within these units will give rise to a wider range of flexible high-quality programmes by the university.

Objective 2.1 Implementing the Academic Framework for Innovation

In the last university strategic plan, *Leadership through Foresight*, DCU committed to a complete review and reform of its entire portfolio in order to provide the underpinning structures to allow for the maximum flexibility in the delivery of its programmes.

This process is continuing under the Academic Framework for Innovation (AFI) process. Having already redesigned all programmes to align with the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and meet the requirements of the Bologna Agreement, DCU will continue this transformation process to achieve deep reform in teaching, learning and assessment. All DCU modules will be redesigned according to the Learning Outcomes paradigm and will be evaluated to ensure alignment of teaching, learning and assessment. A novel award-to-module mapping process will be developed with the aim of ensuring cohesion between awards, module learning outcomes and assessment.

Initiatives

- All modules will be audited and revised to ensure alignment of teaching, learning and assessment practices.
- An award-to-module mapping process will be developed – opening up the possibility of greater flexibility, choice and tailored pathways for students.
- New Marks and Standards will be developed and adapted to support increased flexibility in terms of pathways, progression and duration of studies.

Objective 2.2 Achieving Flexible Learning

The university must play its full part in upskilling the Irish workforce and, in particular, to address the skills needs of workers affected by the current economic crisis. DCU must move as quickly as possible to maximise the flexibility with which it offers its programmes so that they can be undertaken by students who are either fully or substantially off-campus for the duration of their studies.

In addition, the modern student can no longer be assumed to be in attendance on a campus Monday-Friday, 9am to 5pm. Increased participation by mature students, and competing demands on traditional full-time school-leavers, mean that universities must provide increased levels of flexibility in their provision which will allow students to undertake a workload which suits their needs and circumstances. Also, in recognition of the variety of purposes in participating in higher education, including lifelong learning, professional development, and up-skilling, it is also necessary to offer students more choice to allow tailoring of programmes to meet individual needs.

Initiatives

- A SWOT analysis will be carried out on all Oscail programmes to inform future academic integration into the Schools/Faculties of DCU and Linked Colleges of St Patricks College Drumcra, Mater Dei and All Hallows, with a view to providing a critical mass of flexible programmes delivered online and aimed at off-campus students.
- Student lifecycle processes will be re-engineered to underpin non-standard progression within programmes and greater choice of programmes/modules (for both on- and off-campus students) and the process of adapting the underlying IT systems will be substantially progressed.
- Building on Oscail, the Learning Innovation Unit and the education element of *DCU in the Community*, the new institute will work in close collaboration with Faculties and linked colleges, spearheading the provision of flexible and technology enhanced courses for both on- and off-campus students

Objective 2.3: Targeting Greater Access and Participation of Under-Represented Groups

DCU's highly successful Access Programme enables students from under-represented groups to attend higher education. DCU will continue to increase participation from these groups.

DCU also recognises that increased flexibility within existing academic structures can increase participation rates for students who have many demands on their time. As noted above, DCU will provide more flexible modes of delivery and variety in participation and progression paths to realise the benefits of modularisation and address the individual needs and circumstances of students.

Initiatives

- DCU will achieve the following target participation rates: mature students: 10%; socio-economically disadvantaged students: 10%; students with a disability: 5%
- A comprehensive review of teaching spaces will inform the creation of flexible learning spaces, both physical and virtual.

Objective 3. Enhancing the Quality of Teaching and Learning

The quality of programmes, teaching quality and the student experience are consistently rated very highly by students, graduates, alumni and employers, both through formal surveys and through qualitative feedback. Increasingly it is necessary to formally demonstrate the quality in these areas, and DCU will extend its current quality procedures to capture and demonstrate the quality of its teaching and learning activities.

Objective 3.1 Enhancing Teaching Excellence

DCU has a long tradition of teaching excellence, with positive feedback coming from students, alumni and employers. The annual President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching continually highlight the high standard of teaching provision in the university.

Building on current activities—including institutional and academic department quality reviews and student surveys of teaching—DCU will continue to develop a structured approach to gathering, analysing and evaluating sources of evidence of teaching excellence.

In collaboration with the DRHEA, teaching, learning and assessment practices will be benchmarked against international standards. Mechanisms to inform teaching improvement through closed-loop feedback systems, incorporating student evaluation of teaching, peer observation and self-evaluation, will be enhanced.

In addition, programme reviews will be introduced in accord with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) which state that “formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring” of programmes and awards should be in place.

Initiatives

- A mechanism for benchmarking teaching excellence against international standards will be piloted.
- Teaching quality instruments commensurate with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG) will be evaluated, and appropriate ones selected.
- A closed-loop feedback system will be developed for student feedback with appropriate mechanisms such as student evaluation of teaching, peer observation, focus groups, self-evaluation and other innovative ways of eliciting student feedback on teaching.
- Mechanisms to ensure all feedback on teaching systematically informs practice and curriculum improvement will be developed.
- A system to ensure students know that their feedback continually informs change will be developed.
- Mechanisms to systematically gather feedback from employers and graduates will be developed.
- Mechanisms to ensure the spreading of good practice in quality improvement across campus will be developed.

Objective 4. Ensuring the integration of Teaching and Research

Research-informed and research-led teaching are critical to the success of graduates for both fourth level study and direct employment in the 'smart' economy upon graduation from third level. The integration of disciplinary research findings and the development of research methodologies at undergraduate level will be a strategic priority during the term of this current plan. Concurrently, DCU will seek to ensure that staff are exposed to the outcomes of the rigorous pedagogic research into teaching and learning, and have the opportunities and incentives to continually upgrade their teaching and assessing.

Objective 4.1 Research-informed Teaching

DCU considers meaningful integration of research and teaching a fundamental success factor in preparing undergraduates to be effective in a knowledge economy as well as preparing them for fourth-level study. For this reason, greater integration of teaching and disciplinary research will be prioritised across the university.

It is considered critical that all undergraduate students experience research-informed, discovery-centred and translational learning opportunities. Critical to this development will be integration of DCU's Research Centres into the teaching and learning mission of the university.

Initiatives

- Undergraduate students will engage in a variety of research-based/research-oriented learning activities and assessment appropriate to the discipline areas they are studying¹³. In particular, students will be appraised of the ethical issues arising from research in their disciplines.
- DCU's Research Centres will provide undergraduate students with opportunities to participate in their activities.
- Research Centres will provide opportunities for non-Research Centre academic staff to participate in the centre activities.
- Research Centres will contribute to curriculum design and programme development.
- Schools and Faculties will provide doctoral and postdoctoral students working in Research Centres with opportunities to contribute to teaching activities and develop their teaching competencies.
- Synergies between units, committees and structures for teaching and research will continue to be developed. In particular, there will be bi-annual joint meetings of the Learning Innovation Advisory Panel and the Research Advisory Panel.

¹³ See also Objective 2.4 of DCU's Research Strategy and Objective 1 of DCU's Community Engagement Strategy

Objective 4.2 Integrating Research on Teaching and Learning

As well as general disciplinary-based research, pedagogic research on teaching and learning has a particular role in supporting high-quality teaching and learning. DCU has a strong reputation in research on teaching and learning. In addition to the School of Education Studies and individual researchers in the area such as CASTEL (the Centre for Advanced Science Teaching and Learning), CREST (the Centre for Research on Student Learning and Teaching) and LInK (Learning Innovation and Knowledge Research Centre) are well established university Research Centres. In 2007, DCU launched LEARN (the Learning, Education and Academic Research Network) to bring together the various education research activities across the university and the linked colleges.

DCU will continue to inform its education activities through education and pedagogic research.

Initiatives

- Education research in DCU will continue to be supported and resourced. In particular, the current weekly writer's groups which support academics will be extended.
- The LEARN initiative will be expanded to provide peer support and a mechanism for sharing education research.
- In collaboration with the DRHEA, a seminar series delivered by high-profile Irish researchers will be provided for students.
- In collaboration with the DRHEA, a research study will be carried out to evaluate the impact of research-informed teaching approaches on student learning.

Objective 4.3 Supporting High-quality Teaching and Learning

It is recognised that high-quality teaching and learning needs to be supported by ongoing quality improvement mechanisms. As noted above, the standards of teaching in DCU will be evidenced, enhanced and rewarded through benchmarking against international standards.

Academic staff will be supported to improve their teaching and assessing skills through the provision of both formal and informal programmes. In addition, they will be enabled to become qualified in teaching and learning. Staff capacity to integrate research (both disciplinary and pedagogic) into their teaching will be central to recruitment, promotion and reward policies.

Initiatives

- Existing support and development structures for academic staff will be expanded, in particular through the DRHEA Dublin Centre for Academic Development, to provide opportunities for staff to undertake formal courses in teaching and learning.
- Specific programmes will be developed for academics early in their careers. In particular, DCU's successful Teaching Portfolio course will be expanded to involve larger numbers of academics.
- Training courses for postgraduate students and others who are working as tutors/demonstrators will be expanded to include larger numbers.

- Formal mechanisms to promote and reward teaching excellence and will be developed. In the academic promotions process, recognition will be given to the successful completion of formal teaching programmes. Also, the mandatory use of a teaching portfolio to demonstrate excellence will be investigated. These measures will, in particular, apply to early-career academic staff.
- Formal mechanisms will be put in place to promote and reward the integration of research and teaching in the academic promotions process. This will, in particular, apply to senior academic staff established in their careers.
- Formal mechanisms will be developed to measure the teaching workloads of academic staff¹⁴. In conjunction with the Irish Universities Association, a review will be carried out of the teaching workloads of academic staff with the aim of ensuring that:
 - (a) supports are in place for staff teaching large classes;
 - (b) curriculum design and course development, are incorporated into workload measures and
 - (c) workload allocation takes account of the learning outcomes/forms of assessment of modules being taught.

7.0 Implementation Plan

This *Enhancement of Learning* strategic plan will guide the actions of the university in the area of teaching and learning in the coming years. In order to ensure the achievement of the objectives, a detailed Implementation Plan has been devised.

The Implementation Plan will ensure that each of the initiatives associated with the objectives has a clear set of measurable outcomes and the timeframe that these outcomes will be achieved. It will also designate the units/staff responsible for the achievement of the outcomes.

¹⁴ See also Objective 3.3 of DCU's Research Strategy.

Appendix 1: Membership of Advisory Groups

Members of the External Advisory Panel

Marie Bourke, Department Manager, Forfas
Bernie Brady, Director, Aontas
Mary Canning, Higher Education Consultant
Graham Chesters, Consultant, University of Hull
Jim Dunne, Dublin Creative Alliance
Tom Healy, Government Statistics Office
Gerard Kiely, DCU Alumni Relations Representative
Gordon McConnell, Head of Strategy Planning and Administration, DCU
Louise McDermott, Assistant Registrar, DCU
Ronnie Munck, Theme Leader, Internationalisation & Social Development, DCU
Lewis Purser, Director of Academic Affairs, IUA
Gerard Walker, Senior Policy Advisor, Forfas

Governing Authority Education Working Group

An tUasal Dáithí ó Broin, Deputy Principal, Ard Scoil Rís (Chair)
Ms Susan Hurley, Student's Union Education and Welfare Officer
Professor Maria Slowey, Vice-President for Learning Innovation and Registrar

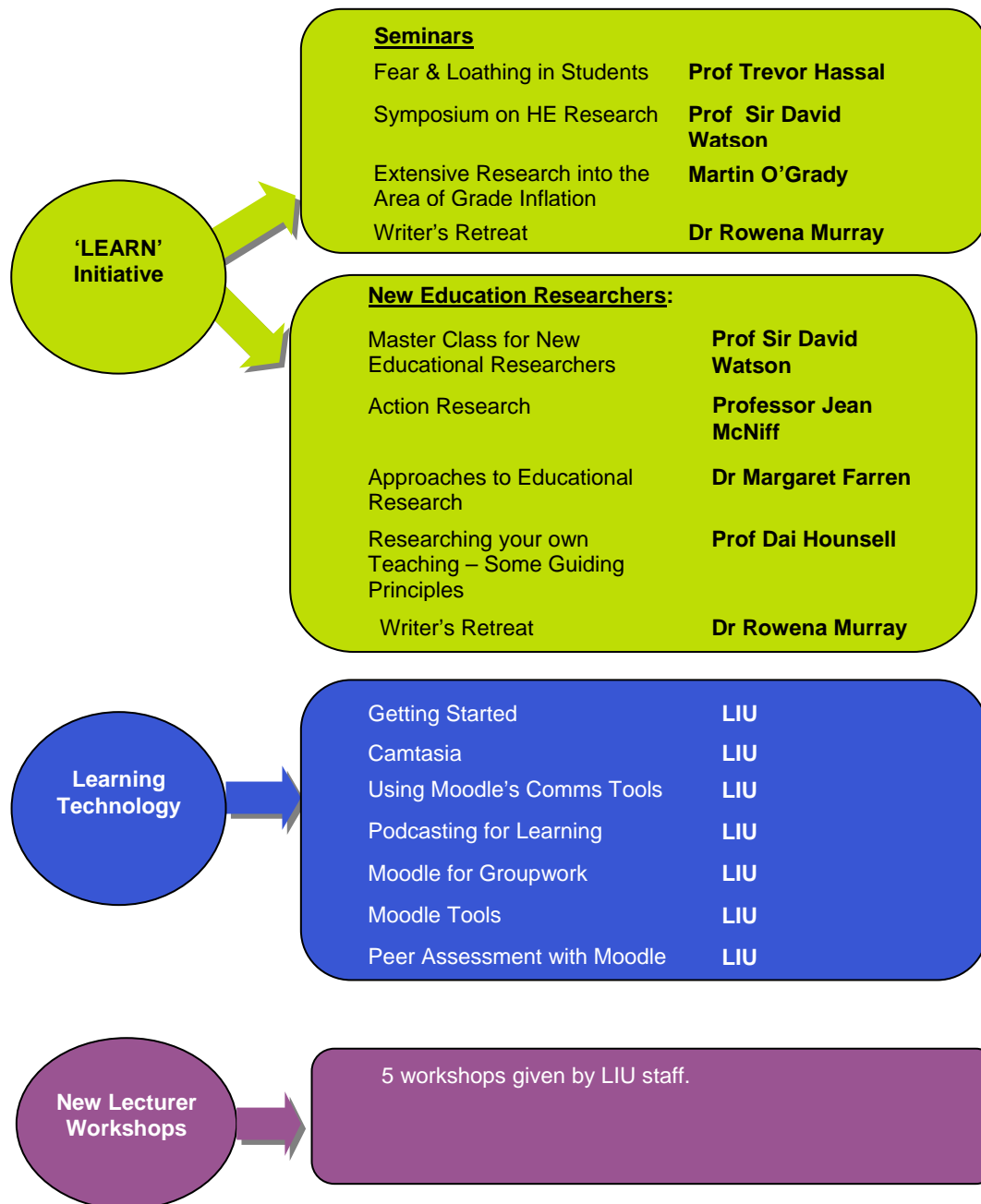
Members of Internal Advisory Panel

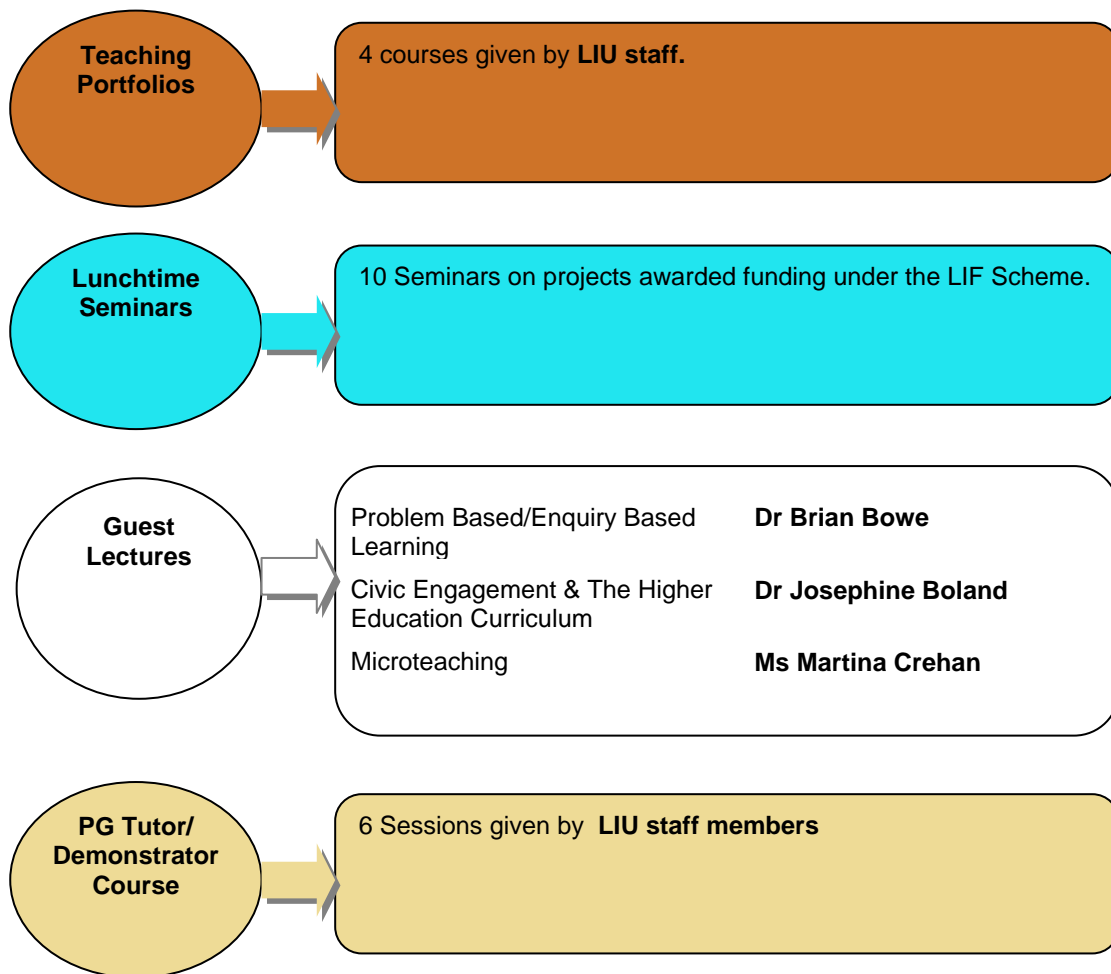
Dr Claire Bohan, Director, Student Support and Services
Dr Françoise Blin, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Dr Dermot Brabazon, School of Mechanical Engineering
Ms Jennifer Bruton, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Engineering & Computing
Mr Howard Duncan, School of Computing
Mr Seamus Fox, eLearning Strategy Team/Oscail
Professor Martin Henry, AFI Project Leader
Ms Jean Hughes, Director of SIF Programmes,
Ms Susan Hurley, Student's Union Education and Welfare Officer
Professor David Jacobson, DCU Business School
Dr Heinz Lechleiter, Director, Quality Promotion Unit
Dr Kay MacKeogh, eLearning Strategy Team/Oscail
Ms Barbara McConalogue, Director, Information Systems & Services
Dr Áine McGillicuddy, Applied Language & Intercultural Studies
Ms Phyl McMorrow, Director, Registry
Ms Morag Munro, Acting Head, Learning Innovation Unit
Mr Paul Sheehan, Director, Library
Dr Anne Sinnott, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, DCU Business School
Professor Maria Slowey, Vice-President for Learning Innovation and Registrar
Dr Sheelagh Wickham, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Science & Health

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Ms Jean Hughes and Ms Morag Munro for assistance with organisation of consultation process and Mr Seamus for work on collation of final document.
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Appendix 2: Courses, Workshops and Seminars provided by LIU in 2008





The courses, workshops and seminars provided by LIU can be broken down into the two broad categories of Thinking about Learning and Thinking about Assessment as illustrated by the following diagram:



Appendix 3: Projects Funded under the Learning Innovation Fund (LIF) Project Scheme 1999-2007 (with Sponsoring School)

1999/00

- **Chemical Sciences:** The Virtual Reality Chemistry Laboratory
- **DCUBS, Government Group:** Web-based teaching
- **Biotechnology:** Integrated Approach to Teaching Immunology
- **Computer Applications:** An Infrastructure for Integrated Learning Orientated Virtual Course Delivery
- **Chemical Sciences:** The Application of LabTutor & Cognitive Solutions
- **Library:** Project to Establish a Teaching & Learning materials collection in the Library
- **SALIS:** Internet based language teaching & learning
- **Computer Applications:** Training for Undergraduate Tutors
- **Chemical Sciences:** Microscale Synthesis: An Introduction to Low Waste Technologies
- **SALIS:** DEVELOP Workshop
- **Computer Applications:** Multimedia Development Facility
- **DCUBS:** Web-based learning package
- **Physics:** Teaching Innovations in Electricity & Electromagnetism
- **Electronic Engineering:** Computerising Educational Presentations
- **Electronic Engineering:** Demonstration programmes in Image & Video Compression
- **FIONTAR:** Staff training course in innovative assessment methodologies
- **Mathematical Science:** Staff training course on innovative approaches to teaching Mathematics at Third Level
- **Biotechnology:** A Pilot Scheme for Development of Autonomous Self-help groups using Peer Tutoring
- **SALIS:** Critical Reading and Multicultural Awareness in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning
- **Electronic Engineering:** Experimental Facilities in Programmable Logic
- **Communications:** Multimedia Development Facility
- **Computer Services:** Project to make past examination papers available on the Web
- **Computer Services:** Wireless LAN Technology Evaluation
- **Physics:** Web based Module in Plasma Science
- **Electronic Engineering:** Teaching Innovation in Engineering Computation and Simulation Module

2000/01

- **SALIS:** CALL Workshops: integration, design, implementation and evaluation of web-based language learning
- **Chemical Sciences:** Molecular Modelling Workshop
- **Communications:** Multimedia Web Design Gallery
- **Chemical Sciences:** Development of Problem-Solving Skills in Laboratory Teaching
- **Physics:** Workshop on "Project-based Teaching and Learning of Physics"
- **Education Studies:** Networking for Education and Teaching Development
- **Electronic Engineering:** XML Electronic Publishing for PDA's
- **DCUBS:** Review of all programmes within DCUBS

- **Electronic Engineering:** A Software tool-kit for understanding image and video comparison
- **Nursing:** Applied Physiology for Nursing Students
- **Computer Applications:** Usage Evaluation of web-based courses
- **Biotechnology:** Development of problem-based materials for biotechnologists for learning basic mathematics
- **Mathematics:** Development of Interactive Web Based materials
- **Computer Applications:** Using Fischlar for Access to an Archive of TV News from DCU Library
- **Physics:** Automated Data-taking in First and Second Year Physics Experiments
- **DCUBS:** e-Learning in DCUBS
- **DCUBS:** On-line teaching and learning resources in government and international relations
- **Computer Applications:** Roboprof 'estimates' chances of breaking new ground
- **Biotechnology:** Student-centered online learning of Biochemistry
- **Computer Applications:** Statistics Interactive
- **Communications:** Media Database
- **Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering:** Improving Practical learning in computer aided manufacture laboratories
- **Nursing:** The development of a portfolio of teaching and learning resources for psychology
- **Sports Science and Health:** Hands-on learning of biophysiological responses
- **Biotechnology:** On line provision of educational video content for biotechnology students
- **Mathematics:** Project-based approach to teaching mechanics
- **Sports Science and Health:** To set up a psychology teaching and learning lab
- **Computer Applications:** Integrated web-based tool suite for teaching linguistics and computational linguistics

2001/02

- **Chemical Sciences:** Development of simulated experiments/facility in analytical laboratory courses
- **Computer Applications:** Self-help Computer Programming
- **Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering:** On-line teaching and learning of Pneumatics and PLC's
- **Electronic Engineering:** New Adventures for Mobile Robots
- **Physical Sciences:** Project Based Learning in Physics
- **DCUBS:** Meta-competency development for post-experience learners
- **Computer Applications:** Interactivity for Web-based Courses
- **SALIS:** Training Seminar for Translation Teachers
- **Computer Applications:** Development of Lab Tutor Submission from System
- **Communications:** Digital Media Resources for the Web
- **DCUBS:** Interactive Introduction to Marketing
- **Electronic Engineering:** Fostering multi-skill development in final-year undergrads through inter-disciplinary project-based activities

- **Computer Applications:** Using the Fischlar system to provide local and off-campus access to digital video material as part of teaching and learning in the School of Nursing
- **DCUBS:** Group Process and Content
- **FIONTAR:** The use of the Internet and Intranet in enhancing course delivery
- **DCUBS:** On-line Resources in Cross Border Studies
- **DCUBS:** Developing a cross-border online learning environment and knowledge base
- **Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering:** E-resource for enhanced and accelerated learning
- **Computer Applications:** Developing multimedia material to enhance the lab experience for Computer Architecture Students
- **Oscail:** Online Resources - Mathematics & Statistics
- **Computer Services Department:** Introduction of Web-based Learning Tools & Equipment for traditional courses
- **Oscail:** Cognitive Psychology - conversion to e-learning
- **SALIS:** Ethnography for Language Learners
- **Education Studies:** Workshop: Responding to the challenges of interculturalism in education
- **Computer Applications:** Web-based Interactive Visualisation Tool for Probabilistic Models and Algorithms
- **SALIS:** Use of Dictaphones in Language-Learning
- **Biotechnology:** New Strategies for Teaching Immunology
- **SALIS:** Integrating DVD technology into Screen Translation modules

2002/03

- **Computer Applications:** Anonymous Project Submission
- **SALIS:** Focus on form and ICT in language learning and teaching - Staff development workshop
- **Sports Science and Health:** The use of multimedia in the teaching of the 'biomechanics of human movements in sport, exercise and clinical settings'
- **Computer Applications:** Individualised Feedback and Guidance for Web-based Courses
- **Computer Applications:** Lab feedback system - upgrade
- **Computer Applications:** Lectures On the Web
- **Communications:** Contending world views of our time - multimedia presentations and exhibition
- **Chemical Sciences:** Simulating industrial drug design in an undergraduate setting
- **Mechanical Engineering:** Web Based Interactive Learning Tool for Improving Technical Writing Skills
- **Chemical Sciences:** Setting up a laboratory facility to allow recording of laboratory exercises and to develop a data bank of instructional material on CD ROM for basic laboratory techniques
- **Nursing and Communications:** The development of video material demonstrating expert nursing practice to assist undergraduate nursing students with clinical skill acquisition
- **Biotechnology:** Development of computer-based simulations for teaching basic and practical immunology
- **Physical Sciences:** LabVIEW Training and Implementation into undergrad courses and postgraduate research across Science and Engineering.

2003/04

- **SALIS & Computing:** Development of a web-based European Language Portfolio
- **Electronic Engineering:** Moodle-based Teaching Resources for Image and Video Compression
- **Nursing & Library:** The Virtual Learning Hospital Project
- **Computing:** Integration of Educational Multimedia into Moodle
- **Computing:** Moodling The Lab Feedback System
- **DCUBS, Library & Student Services:** Personal Development Planning for First Year Undergraduates
- **Biotechnology:** Crime Resolution by Integrated Moodle E-learning (CRIME)
- **Computing:** Extending Scientific Educational Access to the Print Impaired
- **SALIS, Computing, Education Studies & Oscail:** Giving a voice to Moodle
- **Fiontar & Educational Services:** Delivery of Irish medium postgraduate programme via Moodle incorporating creation of digital library

2004/05

- **Biothechnology:** Development of a flexible learning strategy using problem-based learning
- **Nursing:** Creating a Clinical Legal Education Environment
- **Biotechnology:** Development of a thematic, cross-disciplinary module in creativity and discovery
- **Computing:** Rich Feedback in Moodle
- **Education Studies:** Workshops and manual aimed at the professional development of part-time and guest lecturers in relation to assessment and marking of education students
- **Education Studies:** The Development of an Enhanced Integrated Environment for e-learning within Moodle
- **Physics** - Teaching Physics by Inquiry
- **DCUBS:** Using ICT to Support Personal and Professional Development Planning at DCU
- **Mathematics:** Multi-Modal Mathematics: Listening to, and Feeling Equations

2005/06

- **Nursing:** Promoting student-managed learning of clinical nursing skills using online videos.
- **Computing:** A Multi-disciplinary Reusable Learning Objects Portfolio
- **Electronic Engineering:** Learning experience tailored to engineering students' learning preferences: a pilot initiative
- **Humanities Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee (FTLC) -** Humanities and Social Sciences Learning Innovation Forum
- **Mathematics Centre:** Mathtutor - a computer-based maths learning tool
- **Computing:** Development and pilot for a problem based course "Individualized Learning Scorecards"
- **Mathematics:** Developing Case Studies for Maths and Science Tutor/Demonstrator Training
- **Library:** The Design and Development of an Online Information Literacy Course/Tutorial
- **SALIS - Manga, Anime and Videogames:** an interdisciplinary initiative in Japanese studies, Multimedia and Translation
- **Chemical Sciences:** How do we tackle the inter-disciplinary nature of science?

- **Communications:** Finglas for Diversity - a collaborative action research project between DCU and the Finglas-Cabra Partnership
- **Physics:** Enhancing the learning environment using classroom response systems
- **DCUBS:** RATE - Reduced Attrition Through Engagement
- **Computing:** Integration of mathematics content into Moodle

2006/07

- **Education Studies:** E-Life Connecting People Project
- **Communications:** Curriculum Design and Implementation Project
- **Education Studies:** Using the De Bono Method to Develop Inquiry Based Learning Skills.
- **Physics:** Student-Centred Inquiry Led Firsts Year Physics Laboratories
- **Physics:** Investigating Inter-Disciplinary Science
- **Chemical Sciences:** Development of Interdisciplinary Physics and Chemistry Module for Non-Specialist Education Students
- **Nursing:** Music in the Classroom to Engage Students and Encourage Reflection on Ethics
- **Mathematics:** Training of Tutors/Demonstrators in the Faculty of Science & Health
- **Nursing:** Development, Implementation and Evaluation of a “Trigger” for an Enquiry Based Learning Module
- **Chemical Sciences:** Multidisciplinary Problems as a Way of Motivating First Year Students
- **Computing:** Audio-Haptic Access to Computing and Engineering Diagrams
- **Computing:** Programming Learning Centre
- **DCUBS:** SWIF (Student-Written, Instructor-Facilitated Learning)
- **DCUBS:** BEST Project
- **DCU in the Community:** E-Learning Support for DCU Ballymun