**Peer Review Group Report for the Thematic Review of Digital Learning**

**Date: 8th-11th December, 2020**

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# 1 Introduction and Context

The broad approach to quality assurance and enhancement in DCU aims to promote and develop a culture of quality throughout all aspects of the University. The framework derives from the spirit of Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement enshrined in the Universities Act (1997), which is the legislative basis for quality throughout the Irish University sector, and the Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012.

The DCU processes for quality reviews at DCU are further aligned to the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the published guidelines of Qualifications and Quality Ireland (QQI).

This Report presents the findings of a thematic quality review of **Digital Learning** throughout DCU, following a virtual visit by the Peer Review Group undertaken on **8th-11th December, 2020**.

## 1.1 Overview of the Objectives of the DCU Thematic Review

In undertaking this thematic review, DCU has adopted a broad and inclusive approach to considering the perspectives and understanding of key stakeholders. This approach recognises the importance of formal, non-formal and informal digital learning experiences, and is inclusive of hybrid and blended models of delivery for DCU's on-campus students along with fully online models for students studying off-campus through distance education. DCU has a long history of online distance education, initially through the distance learning unit Oscail (now Open Education), and now also in a number of academic Schools in the University.

Consistent with an inclusive approach, the review chose not to limit its scope to particular units, services or particular student cohorts, but rather reflect on the digital learning experience for both staff and students across the entire institution. Accordingly, in undertaking a cross institutional self-assessment, this review seeks to consider,

- To what extent are DCU delivering on their strategic intent in relation to Digital Learning, as envisaged in the 2012-2017 and 2017-2022 strategies?
- How is (and how can) digital learning contribute to transforming both formal and informal learning at DCU?
- To what extent are DCU staff and students prepared to embrace digital approaches to learning, and to what extent are these approaches effective as part of the DCU learning experience?
- How is DCU's approach to supporting and developing digital learning aligned to national and international best practice and research?
- What aspirations should the University have for digital learning over the next 5 years?

# 2 Approach to Self-Assessment

## 2.1 Digital Learning Steering Group

The self-assessment phase of the Quality Review was led by an internal Digital Learning Steering Group. Steering group membership was as follows:

| Area | Member |
|---|---|
| Deputy Registrar/Dean of Teaching & Learning (Chair) | Mr. Billy Kelly |
| Director, National Institute for Digital Learning | Prof. Mark Brown |
| Director, Quality Promotion and Institutional Research | Ms. Aisling McKenna |
| Head, Teaching Enhancement Unit | Dr. Mark Glynn |
| Head, Open Education Unit | Dr. Eamon Costello |
| Head, The Ideas Lab | Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl |
| Academic Faculty Representatives (One Representative from Each Faculty) | Dr Blanaid White (FSH) |
| | Dr Monica Ward (FEC) |
| | Dr Ken McDonagh (FHSS) |
| | Dr Enda Donlon (IoE) |
| | Dr Robert Gillanders (DCUBS) |
| Central Professional Support Areas | Mr. Justin Doyle (ISS) |
| | Ms Orla Nic Aodha (Library, Public Services and Outreach) |
| | Ms Ellen Breen (Library, Research and Teaching) |
| | Ms. Helena McCanney (HR) |
| Student Representation (2) | Mr. Lucien Waugh Daly, DCUSU VP Academic Affairs |
| | Mr. Dylan Mangan, DCUSU VP Engagement and Development |
| Quality Promotion Officer | Ms. Celine Heffernan |
| Student Support and Development | Mr Cillian Murphy |
| Registry | Ms Niamh McMahon |
| Recording Secretary | Ms. Fiona Dywer |

## 2.2    The Self-Assessment Report

The Peer Review Group (PRG) highly commends the attention to detail and commitment to evaluation that is evident in the Self-Assessment Report. This is particularly significant in the context of the period that the review covers and the severe impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on both staff and students.
The cross-institutional steering group led a thorough self-evaluation that used multiple tools to elicit feedback from both staff and students thereby shining light on the extremely complex and multi-faceted theme of Digital Learning. The PRG found the resulting report to be both comprehensive and insightful, drawing from a commendable breadth of high-quality data.

The Self-Assessment Report includes findings from a high-level benchmarking exercise, using the ACODE benchmarking tool, which was completed through a series of workshops with a number of academic and professional staff. This activity took place during a highly challenging time for the university when all activities were impacted by restrictions arising from the necessary response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and is further evidence of the commitment of the Steering Group to engaging in a thorough and authentic assessment.

Complementing the data collected specifically for the Digital Learning Self-Assessment Report, the steering group drew from a broad portfolio of relevant information, including strategic planning documentation, existing student and staff survey results, Loop usage data, analytics from FutureLearn, and information contained in National Institution for Digital Learning (NIDL) reports. Overall, the high quality of the Self-Assessment Report prepared the PRG well for their role in the Quality Review of Digital Learning in DCU. We recommend that DCU produce a template for thematic self-assessment that incorporates both the Self-Assessment Report and Peer Review site visit. We believe that such a template would be a very valuable tool for other institutions in seeking to review their practice.

# 3  Approach Taken by the Peer Review Group

## 3.1    Peer Review Group Members

Membership of the Peer Review Group for the Quality Review was,

- Dr. Maren Deepwell, Chief Executive, Association for Learning Technology (ALT) (Chair)
- Dr Aisling Twohill, Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education, DCU (Rapporteur)
- Mr. Andy Jaffrey, Head of the Office for Digital Learning, Ulster University
- Ms. Amber Thomas, Head of Academic Technology and Digital Transformation, University of Warwick
- Prof. PJ Byrne, Professor of Operations Management, DCU Business School

## 3.2    Overview of Approach Taken by Peer Review Group

Following an opportunity to engage with the Self-Assessment Report, the PRG met with the Director of Quality Promotion on the afternoon of 8 December. This meeting outlined the format of the visit, along with an overview of the aims and objectives of the review process. After this meeting the PRG met privately and Maren Deepwell was identified to chair the PRG. Following a general discussion of the SAR, the Initial Impressions document (previously completed by PRG members) was discussed with several themes emerging as areas for consideration over the course of the Quality Review. (See Appendix 1 for details of the main meetings, parallel sessions and an overview of attendees.). The PRG decided to accept the offer of support from the Quality Promotion Office in providing a note-taker at all sessions, including the private meetings of the PRG. These notes were available immediately following each meeting, supporting reflection on both private PRG discussions and responses to questions of the PRG. We found them to be an invaluable record that greatly supported us in completing the evaluation presented in this report.

Reflecting on the work achieved, the PRG considered that the overall review process undertaken by the Steering Group had been thorough and that the PRG had full access to all appropriate stakeholders – staff (academic and professional) and students, the President, Deputy President and Senior

Management Group. Overall, engagement with the PRG was extremely positive and participants engaged conscientiously with the process, giving honest and valuable comments and feedback on a wide range of issues. Building on the work that had already underpinned the SAR, engagement with QPO staff throughout the review was professional and accommodating.

We note the additional efforts made by all concerned in order to facilitate and support all activities online.

# 4 Findings of the Peer Review Group

## 4.1 DCU Strategy and Digital Learning

There is much to be commended in the strategic approach to Digital Learning at DCU, and the PRG learnt much during the visit. We would like to particularly **commend**:

- Commitment to this process and the institution wide approach taken, in particular during this difficult year and the Steering Group's scope, ambition and active involvement;
- Passion and authenticity of everyone who contributed to the exercise, the initial report and the field visit;
- The FUSE initiative in particular and its impact for engagement across stakeholders.

We are mindful that this is a particularly challenging year in which to reflect on Digital Learning across the institution and we highly commend the passion and commitment as well as the sheer hard work which we have seen from staff, senior management and also from students across the institution. From the ambitious strategic direction set out and the varied portfolio of projects and initiatives included in the report, it is clear the term Digital Learning encompasses many different elements in practice, from fully online learning provision to blended emergency solutions and more.

**Recommendation**: Explore the question 'What does Digital Learning mean to DCU?' within strategic planning, in order to establish a shared understanding across the institution. In particular, that understanding should encompass online courses, on-campus blended courses, and all other teaching programmes so that there is a coherent support model.

## 4.2 Investment in Digital Learning

Investment in classroom technology infrastructure and the NIDL media studio is noted and welcomed. The approach of multiple tools making up the Loop platform allows for platform growth and tool swapping: this is good practice and should be **commended**. The concept of Loop is perhaps not as well understood and staff and students use the term Moodle and Loop interchangeably. There is perhaps some work to better communicate this good practice to stakeholders.

The open source development work of the Teaching Enhancment Unit (TEU) is clearly part of the ethos of the team and other Moodle-using institutions benefit from that expertise. There is support for this approach to senior management team level, which is commendable.

The relationship between TEU and Information Systems Services is very important to the development of the Loop infrastructure. The panel noted the unfortunate Moodle outage at the start of term and the severe impact of that: this emphasises the importance of the platform to teaching. The sample of student voices that the panel took suggested that some staff were successful in mitigating the impact of the outage by having a "Plan B" and this should be acknowledged as reflecting a preparedness. It was unclear to the panel whether stakeholders feel there is an appropriate balance between customised in-house development and enterprise-level resilience. The increased use of Loop during the Covid pandemic was noted, and therefore the increased support load.

**Recommendation**: Review the oversight of Loop with a view to ensuring its status as a strategically important platform in the light of Covid to enable effective prioritisation of the underpinning tools and IT support, and potential increased investment.

The SAR identifies an imbalance between investment in physical infrastructure and mainstream investment in human capital to support digital learning ambitions. Based on the staffing profiles within NIDL it is arguably difficult to justify further investment (in staffing or technical infrastructure), particularly following the strategic investment in the Digital Learning Design Unit (DLDU).

**Recommendation**: It may be prudent to consider the balance between external project funding and core activity to ensure there is sufficient capacity to support the growth ambitions in blended learning.

## 4.3   Partnerships in Digital Learning

It is evident from the SAR and has been further articulated with meetings with staff that over the period of the last two strategic plans, DCU has leveraged external partnerships to extend digital learning provision and capacity enhancement in an innovative way. The breadth of activity is to be commended and has been enormously beneficial in elevating DCU's reputation for innovation in Digital Learning. The peer review team considered whether the extensive range of partnership activity increases the risk of overly relying on external funding opportunities. The precarious nature of this funding may contribute to the high turnover of staff due to fixed-term and temporary contracts. A telling observation was that DCU is a training ground for learning technologists who go on to bigger and better things which is frustrating from a strategic point of view in the long term.

While recognising that the range of partnerships is commendable the peer review team also raised concerns around the discrete nature of many of the partnership projects and explored whether these projects act as catalysts for internal transformation. It could be argued that the current approach may result in a perception that digital is an add-on rather than embedded and interwoven within all teaching, learning and assessment activity at DCU.

The panel recognised the constraints that leadership had around workload models and funding alongside concerns expressed by stakeholders that the 4-year timeframe for DCU Futures encourages external project based thinking rather than sustainable institutional change.

It is recognised that DCU will continue to evolve partnerships in this space and this should be encouraged. However, it is also important to communicate the value of these initiatives and a common theme that emerged over the course of the visit was the absence of knowledge across a range of activities by the general population of DCU.

Post Covid, many stakeholders are likely to be more engaged with digital learning, so it could be timely to think about how practice is shared and communicated across DCU.

**Commendation:**
The extent to which DCU has built and developed digital learning partnerships in an internal, national and international landscape is commendable. The learning associated with these practices is evident right across the organisation and will prepare the university well for the next wave of digital learning development and strategies.

**Recommendation**:
Take a more active approach to communicate and disseminate partnership activity through both formal and informal mechanisms to better articulate its benefits and model effective sharing of practice across the institution.

## 4.4   Research, Innovation and Thought Leadership in Digital Learning

There is clear evidence of significant achievements across all three dimensions of research, innovation and thought leadership in digital learning in DCU. The success of NIDL in particular is exemplified by the range of international networks it is involved in, the research projects that it has successfully attracted, the journal publications that it is achieving and the leadership roles its members are undertaking both internal and external to DCU. The expertise and innovation that underpins the work of the TEU is significant and of great value to DCU. Generally, at all levels in the university, the significant value and

contribution of the TEU is spoken about consistently. The term 'magic dust' was used on a number of occasions by the panel chair in echoing the sentiments both in the SAR and on the ground.

Research, innovation and thought leadership in Digital Learning is predominantly homed within the National Institute of Digital Learning (NIDL). DCU, in the context of digital learning, should be commended on the early recognition of the importance of bringing structure and agency to the digital learning domain. The foresight to establish a digital learning institute and the creation and appointment of Ireland's first chair of Digital Learning show clear strategic leadership. There is compelling evidence that this decision has paid dividends and it is accepted by the panel that DCU is nationally and internationally recognised as a leading figure in this domain. While the NIDL is central to digital learning in research, innovation and thought leadership the panel was encouraged to hear about the many internal collaborations that are occurring in what appears to be an organic way. Internal outreach in a multi-faceted way from the NIDL is seen by the panel as an essential dimension for continued growth and evolution of digital learning capabilities in DCU.

While recognising that there are many linkages with individuals and groups of individuals across faculties, in speaking with staff over the peer review visit it has been noted by the panel that there appears to be a significant lack of understanding among many DCU staff represented in the meetings, up to the level of ADTL as to the function and role of the NIDL. One comment that resonated with the panel was that the TEU is visible to the general DCU community and little else of the NIDL. In following this statement it was suggested that it is not really clear how it fits into DCU, the charts of the structure are available but it is not clear how it benefits DCU.

The resourcing model used within the NIDL is seen as a cause for concern for the continued viability of the unit and has been highlighted by management and individuals across a number of the review meetings with DCU staff during the visit. The panel echos this concern with a particular issue surrounding the contrast between professional service contracts and academic contracts. The turnover of staff in these critical units will have negative consequences for all three dimensions of research, innovation and thought leadership over a period of time if not addressed. As evidenced in the SAR and also confirmed during the visit significant funding and effort to date has gone into infrastructural investments - for example the notion of the 'Digital Campus'. The SAR has already identified the need for investment in the more 'softer' dimensions of digital learning capacity building and this is echoed by the panel.

**Commendations**:
DCU in the context of digital learning should be commended on the early recognition of the importance of bringing structure and agency to the digital learning domain. The foresight to establish a digital learning institute and the creation and appointment of Ireland's first chair of Digital Learning show clear strategic leadership.

**Recommendations**:
Consider the role of the NIDL and its constituent components in future digital learning strategies, taking into account the changing nature of digital learning. The Digital Learning Design Unit's support model for module-level content development might have sustainability challenges and should be reviewed to maximise the reach of the support offer from central teams.

Consider how the strategic plan for digital learning could create more sustainable models for pursuing strategic research priorities, placing less emphasis on individual research funding opportunities. It may be prudent to consider the balance between external project funding and core activity to ensure there is sufficient capacity to support the growth ambitions in blended learning.


## 4.5   Staff Development and Digital Learning

There is an impressive list of national and European projects where NIDL staff have led and contributed to staff development initiatives. The panel noted the particular expertise in Moodle, Mahara, Assessment and Academic Integrity. The Teaching Enhancement Unit staff gave a reflective and empathetic account of their role in supporting staff. The TEU should be **commended** for its grounded and mature approach

to staff development. The pathway for the AdvanceHE Fellowship scheme is a worthwhile investment in raising the esteem and capability of digital learning and should be **commended**.

Whilst the AdvanceHE fellowship scheme is included in external partnerships, the panel encourages consideration of this programme as a Staff Development strand. There is an opportunity, through AdvanceHE, to scale academic development.

During the pandemic, the Digital Learning Design Unit was established as a new team with a distinct support model of wrapping around selected modules chosen by the Associate Deans of Teaching and Learning of each Faculty. The investment in that resource-intensive support model was clearly strategically driven and welcome. The panel **recommends** that the Digital Learning Design Unit's support model for module-level content development might have sustainability challenges and should be reviewed to maximise the reach of the support offer from central teams.

The TEU team noted the importance of working with academic teams as well as individuals. There was an appetite for using learning design as a collaborative method, and also with enabling Faculties to pursue their distinct "signature pedagogies". The panel sensed that engagement with innovators and early adopters is mostly good, that the early majority have been well supported, but perhaps the challenge now is supporting the late majority. Post-covid there may need to be some honest conversations about targeting those academic areas where practices fall short of effective digital learning. Whether conceived as about individual skills or organisational capability, there may need to be some prioritisation.

Another theme of the interviews with staff was the devolved nature of good practices, with the potential to network together pockets of innovation and specialism. The Learn and Grow network proposal is very welcome and should be pursued.

**Recommendations**:
Explore expectations around organisational capability: which skills and specialisms should be where, between central teams, faculties and programme teams? What baseline skills should all academics and administrators have, and what would maturity look like in different areas? Alignment of central staff development activities with faculty strategic plans is identified by staff as an area for improvement and the panel would endorse this.

Provide opportunities for staff to explore different ways of working for the design and delivery of digital learning in order to find the most effective approaches in their context. Digital Learning is different, often involves a wider range of specialists, may require more front-loaded design time, and there is an organisational learning curve as well as an individual one. It would be a big step forward for DCU to acknowledge that.

## 4.6    Student Learning Resources and Supports

Significant developments have been undertaken to provide digital supports for students since March 2020 when the university was required to move to online provision. A suite of digital resources is available to students that include the FutureLearn course, *Essentials for the online Learner* and orientation support for incoming students, among others. The review group commends the DCU staff who are working to support students in successfully navigating their modules and programmes through this challenging time. Their transition to digital provision of a broad range of vital supports has resulted in a valuable reserve of digital resources that should be maintained and built upon into the future. These resources will prove particularly valuable to providing access to services to online students, for example from Open Education, that is equitable in quality to the services available to students who attend on campus.

The review team were surprised to encounter concern among students in relation to their personal proficiency in using digital tools, and navigating platforms such as the VLE. This concern emerged both during conversations with students and in the findings from data collection. It is pertinent to highlight that staff familiarity with online platforms and digital tools may reduce their awareness of challenges that students are experiencing. We recommend therefore, that attention to the need for student upskilling with new technologies be included among the responsibilities of the ADTLs, and that teaching staff are

routinely encouraged to take into account students' need to learn how to use tools and how to navigate platforms while also learning their course content. The need to remain mindful of supporting students with problematic digital proficiency is particularly important given the motivation to adopt a "digital first" approach to provision of support services.

It was challenging to gauge the presence and implementation of digital resources before the impact of the Covid pandemic. However, the student representatives were highly satisfied with how their lecturers and support staff transitioned from on-campus delivery to online delivery. We heard of multiple solutions across a range of apps and platforms, and the student representatives lauded the increased quality of the academic work undertaken. They did mention that some of this was due to the absence, or reduced impact, of disengaged students. Consideration is required as to how student engagement can be both enhanced and measured to reduce the risk of students dropping out from programmes, or failing modules due to poor attendance during online synchronous classes. Our review encountered a willingness to consider digital delivery in place of large lectures on campus which the review team considers logical and practical in light of the evidence relating to the student experience. However due care will be required to reduce the impact of this move on less engaged students.

The review team encountered evidence relating to the consistency of student experience in digital support for their learning.

Overall, DCU students seem to both be well supported, and feel well supported by digital technologies in their academic studies. Feedback indicated that the digital tools in use are of high quality and reliable.

**Commendation**:
Dedicated supports for digital learning that are of very high quality are in place for students when they first enrol in the university. The suite of digital resources that has been developed is comprehensive and care is evident in anticipating students' needs. The timing of this review after an intense period of dependence on digital provision of services presents an ideal opportunity to build on Covid developments in order to provide equitable access to support for online only students.

**Recommendation**:
Enhance and deepen the support and up-skilling resources to students to ensure that they have appropriate support in their digital learning, drawing on the expertise that informs similar support for staff. We commend and support the plans identified in the staff-student forum wherein the students will have an opportunity to explore with ISS and the TEU how to provide appropriate support via methods that maximise accessibility.

## 4.7   Implementation of Digital Learning at DCU

This was a particularly important and richly flavoured aspect of the Review. The panel had been provided with highlights from different faculties and it is clear there is a diverse portfolio of developments across the institution. The discipline-specific nature of these deeper investments is very much acknowledged and to be **commended**.

During the review visit there were various discussions about overarching frameworks that might serve as a conceptual representation of the diverse work happening around digital learning. There seemed to be a range of responses to that idea: some stakeholders are keen to see an overarching framework, others worried that such a framework would reduce distinctiveness, or increase prescriptiveness. A common comment was "I didn't know so much has been happening, I didn't know all of this". That could be a simple communications issue that staff had just not been aware of work underway. It may have deeper roots in a lack of coherence, so that there is no straightforward point of access to updates and plans. Some level of organic messiness is acceptable. There is however an argument that for a sustainable and transparent investment in supporting infrastructure (human and technical) there is a need for that holistic picture to be articulated.

Reflecting on the review document and input from staff during the visit, the panel clearly sees significant benefit from the NIDL. The panel further reflected that whilst the NIDL has established itself as a digital learning leader, it could be more clearly articulated how its constituent components fit into the overall digital learning strategy in DCU and what role they play within the institution. While individually, the elements fit neatly into a Venn diagram the review team struggled to understand the overarching dimensions, the governance structures associated with the different dimensions and the overall collective alignment to digital learning strategy. This was somewhat compounded with the inclusion of the new Digital Learning Design Unit (DLDU), which appears to be under a slightly different governance structure, reporting to the Dean of Teaching and Learning and appears to be separate to the Teaching Enhancement Unit (TEU).

Generally at all levels in the university, the significant value and contribution of the TEU is spoken about consistently. The term 'magic dust' was used on a number of occasions by the panel chair in echoing the sentiments both in the SAR and on the ground. While recognising that the DLDU was set up during the pandemic and is staffed by short term contracts, the panel members have struggled to fully understand its positioning in relation to the NIDL structures. As with the TEU, the development of the DLDU is seen as a positive strategic development in the enhancement of digital learning capacity in DCU. However, some staff have reported non-engagement with it due the stress associated with managing current workloads. Recognising that the DLDU was set up during a crisis, it is perhaps timely now to critically reflect on this positive development for the next chapter in the digital learning journey.

**Recommendation**:
Create an overarching framework that gives space for devolved strategic developments within faculties and gives visibility to work happening across the University as a next step in the maturity of DCU's digital learning journey.

## 4.8 Staff Perspectives of Digital Learning at DCU

In meetings with staff and represented in the SAR there is clear evidence that there are many staff members in DCU advancing the digital learning agenda on both a research and teaching front. However, it appears as though there is divergence between those that push forward on the digital learning agenda and those that don't. There is general recognition that DCU staff are satisfied with the overall digital provision, with 77% rating the institution as good or better in this regard in the 2019/20 INDEx survey. In addition, 64% of staff surveyed in June 2020 agreed that they were confident in their ability to use digital technology in lecturing.

It is also noted in this same INDEx survey that of the total respondents, 65% regarded themselves as early adopters of digital technology, but only 22% agreed that they had time and support to innovate, 16% that they were rewarded or recognised when they develop digital aspects of their role and only 14% agreed that they had an opportunity to be involved in decisions about digital services. Based on the survey these early adapters and users of digital technologies seem to be indicating that efforts in this regard are under recognised and time to engage is not sufficient. In meeting with lecturing staff and ADTLs over the course of the panel visit these points were reiterated by some staff. The recognition and the opportunity to be involved in digital developments warrant deeper assessment at management level in the university. These messages were coming across in both the SAR, through surveys and focus groups and the review panel's meeting with academics. The PRG acknowledges that under Dimension 2 "Innovation & Creativity" in the Academic Development and Promotion Framework that advances to curriculum design and delivery is included and is strategically important for those academics pursuing promotion. In addition, the PRG would suggest that more localised recognition initiatives would be a useful operational support as part of the evolution of DCU towards a more comprehensive digital learning culture. These might for example, be embedded in workload allocation mechanisms.

There were mixed views from the faculty representatives about where digital learning gets discussed in their representative faculties, and from the panel's perspective this seems to coincide with the level of maturity of digital learning across the faculties. Both digital learning activity and the conversation around digital learning appears varied with a lack of consistency both across and within faculties. It is noted by the panel that there is not a one size fits all model that will cover all academics and programme types,

however guiding principles and an overarching framework would be advantageous to try and achieve coherence of approach across the university. The panel is encouraged and supportive of the proposed review into the role of programme chairs at university level and the responsibility they could have in ensuring that broader programme teams are engaged actively in programme development and ensuring the quality of digital learning provision across all students.

There was broad consensus that there are workload implications for the development of digital learning approaches but that for the most part this is not recognised across the university. There were some examples of innovative practices being used in a small number of schools. An example was given where one school with a longer history of digital learning provided workload time up front to develop and deploy new digital learning solutions. One other school is actively looking at a new workload metric that would take into account the time required to design assessment, assess, and interaction with students, as well as the actual time for workload for the development of learning resources. However, it is also recognised that this does require a new mindset for academics, who have to think differently about how they design and develop modules.

**Commendations**:
The enthusiasm and innovation shown across university staff for digital learning is a strength that DCU has built upon and exploited well during the Covid crisis.
The staff in DCU's digital learning support units have been highly commended for their dedication to advancing digital learning proficiency across the wider DCU community.

**Recommendation**:
Review workload modelling and the development of an overarching framework in the context of digital learning developments and the altering nature of design, delivery and assessment. Current workload models consider mainly traditional module development & delivery and do not adequately reflect the overhead of focused time of academics and other specialists required to develop a module for online or blended delivery.

## 4.9    Student Perspectives of Digital Learning at DCU

Overall, the PRG encountered evidence of very positive perspectives towards digital learning among the student body. It continued to be challenging to differentiate between Covid-era experience and the student experience of digital learning before the pandemic. In this section, we have distinguished between our findings of each.

**The transition to online teaching due to Covid 19**: The review group encountered evidence of very high levels of commitment to maximising the quality of teaching during the transition to online provision. We commend the work of teaching staff in protecting the academic quality of content through the rapid and unexpected transition to the online space. Equally, the review group commends the adoption of alternative approaches of assessments that facilitate creativity and demonstrate an appropriate use of the potential of digital platforms. The review group commends the response of the teaching staff to the 5 days of downtime that occurred in October 2020. Evidence from student representatives informed our understanding of a conscientious and diligent response on the part of teaching and support staff that led to a sheltering of students from the impact of the shutdown.

Transition to the online space has also resulted in some positive outcomes that may not have been anticipated. For example, students reported that break-out rooms facilitated their engagement with peers from outside of their social circle, and also made it easier for students to contribute to in-class discussions in ways that they had not in on-campus activities.

**Digital learning beyond the impact of Covid-19.** Feedback, through data collection, the self-assessment and live discussions focused on the core technological options of Loop, Zoom and Vevox during online delivery due to Covid and primarily Loop during on campus delivery. Ongoing and enhanced attention is merited to support students in maximising their successful use of these technologies as core pillars of their academic experience. Given the range and productivity of the NIDL and the Ideas Lab, we see potential for further reach into on-campus learning for digital learning innovations, beyond Loop,

Zoom and Vevox. A tighter DCU-specific definition and vision for Digital Learning (as highlighted above) might provide greater focus to support clearer channels that allow for innovations to have a real impact in the experience of DCU teaching staff and students.

As highlighted above, we were surprised to encounter evidence of student under-confidence and apprehension in the use of the digital tools that they encountered as part of their studies, including Loop. We are recommending that programme chairs collate information from module coordinators with regard to the digital tools in use within a programme. Regular audits of this nature should facilitate the organisation of appropriate support for students and thereby remove the need for students to navigate unfamiliar digital tools. During the meetings with academic staff, there appeared to be limited awareness of cross university guidelines or principles for online or hybrid delivery. Where online teaching continues within programmes, we recommend that the communication of guidelines relating to online and hybrid delivery are widely circulated and promoted with within Schools and Faculties, to support teaching staff in structuring lectures and seminars in a manner that maximises engagement and supports well-being. One practical example would be to advocate against elongated plenary style delivery whereby students sit passively watching a lecture without any opportunity to process the content through discussion or an alternative activity. Guidelines circulated through programme chairs should also include structures for sharing of logistical information. Our findings indicate that students' time is wasted in scrolling through emails to find, for example Zoom links, or passwords, when such information would be easily accessed through Loop, the DCU calendar, or the students' timetable.

**Recommendations**:
Develop guidelines relating to online delivery of content for circulation by Associate Deans of Teaching and Learning based on identified good practice.

Programme Chairs to collate information from module coordinators with regard to the digital tools in use within a programme. Regular audits of this nature should facilitate the organisation of appropriate support for students and thereby remove the need for students to navigate unfamiliar digital tools.

## 4.10   DCU Response to Learning During Covid 19

DCU responded to the COVID 19 crisis rapidly, and the establishment of the DLDU is to be commended. Whilst it was understandable that the DLDU was established as a standalone unit some members of the panel felt that the investment should have been better connected to TEU which may have resulted in a more coherent service delivery model for academic staff.

'Loop' has been instrumental in supporting the Pandemic teaching response, and this is clearly evidenced in the usage data. Those most close to the system described it as critical and felt that the service was under-resourced. The panel had some sympathy with this position and felt empathy for the staff who described the summer pressures of trying to identify windows for upgrades. A recommendation would be to reflect on the service model of the VLE; it is currently managed hosting, rather than a Software as a Service solution, and as such results in disruption when upgrades or updates are applied. Due to the open source culture within DCU, it is clear that the Loop environment has been enhanced with custom plugins and integrations, it is important that future releases are coordinated and planned to ensure stability of the production environment. The panel was reassured to hear that this is within scope of a governance group that has been established.

The panel was sympathetic to the challenges the organisation faced at the beginning of term, particularly with the five-day outage. It is clear that the professionalism of TEU and ISS had positioned the University very well and this preparedness was not luck and was only possible due to a sustained commitment to build trusted relationships with academic teams. The ISS and TEU teams are to be commended for their efforts to restore the system. The panel was however surprised that the outage was described as not having a significant impact and staff are to be commended for their ingenuity in delivering curriculum without a core system. If we were to consider this with a critical lens, the outage may have caused wider disruption in an organisation with a standardised approach to blended learning.

The panel commends DCU's approach to assessment changes during this period. There seemed to be agility within the system to make changes and provide alternative, and creative, approaches best suited to fully online delivery. This creativity, in assessment approaches, was broadly welcomed by students and there is a great opportunity to use this change to challenge exam inertia that may be within the system.

The panel was pleased to hear about the evolution of the creative use of technology within the curriculum. The SAR outlined some of this activity and it was pleasing to hear students talk so highly about innovative approaches within their studies. Many students commented that the pandemic teaching experience was positive and there were excellent case studies where staff had evolved their practice as a result of student feedback and self-reflection specifically with creativity in assessment design, sequenced/chunked learning and the balance between asynchronous and synchronous.

The Self-Assessment Report of Digital Learning contained a summary of staff experiences and demonstrated a wealth of opportunities to improve staff perceptions of technology and their digital capacity and capability. Student feedback was much more positive which is arguably a good thing.

The panel commends DCU's use of open resources and Future Learn as a mechanism for scaling support during the Pandemic teaching response. However, there was concern from some academic staff of feeling overwhelmed by support opportunities and not knowing where to start. The panel felt that this was in line with the sector and an inevitable outcome from commitment within NIDL to help wherever they can. While many staff stakeholders were engaged with the TEU for staff support, and aware of the development of the new DLDU, there was also some confusion among stakeholders of the respective functions of these two units. This confusion was sometimes expressed as frustration particularly when staff were seeking support during the pandemic teaching response and did not know who did what

Overall, the panel was impressed with DCU's agility and responsiveness and encourage a refocus on sustainable, longer-term support. There is an opportunity to adjust the configuration of aspects of NIDL to better embed service delivery within Faculty structures. TEU's Buddy system is a great example of the benefits of building sustainable and productive relationships and the panel feels that this model should be sustained or further developed. The hub and spoke model is working in the Business School and local learning technologist support is highly valued, there may be an opportunity to further develop this approach.

## 4.11   External Engagement and Digital Learning

External engagement, through the leadership of NIDL, is exemplary and the panel was impressed with the breadth of activity and willingness of DCU to actively pursue external activity.  There is an inherent tension between this external activity and resulting impact on workloads when external engagement becomes project work. This was evident in some discussion with academic colleagues however there is good alignment between the external activity and the strategic positioning of DCU.

DCU has an admirable commitment to institutional membership of relevant professional bodies and NIDL has influenced this commitment. The panel was impressed with DCU's vision to expand networks through partnerships such as AdvanceHE and ALT. The panel felt that DCU's AdvanceHE commitment has the potential to be transformational and adequately resourcing workstreams aligned to this activity could help embed digital practice across the University.

The panel was impressed by the TEU's ability to bootstrap the AdvanceHE fellowship initiative. If further development of this initiative is envisaged, there may be a need to develop the long term management of this process. If there is an ambition to embed this activity within an academic programme TEU may need support to do so to provide a sustainable home for this work.

Many stakeholders commented on NIDL's focus on external partnerships perhaps detracting from internal work. NIDL delivered on the expectations of DCU's strategy when it was established. If this

strategic direction is adjusted it would seem sensible to consider the impact of external engagement on workloads more aligned to a new strategic direction.

## 4.12   Alignment to National and International Standards and Best Practice

DCU have demonstrable commitment to delivering high quality, online distance education which has resulted in a mature and thoughtful approach to quality, standards and best practice within the Open Education unit. There is less evidence that this is informing practice more widely.

NIDL is a research vehicle and as such has an academic view of this space which influences activity. The self-reflection report articulates a position that you cannot just take one framework and implement it across the University because it looks good. This position is research evidenced but arguably could restrict consistency of approach across Programmes/Schools and Faculty. There is an opportunity to challenge this apparent reluctance to consider standardised approaches to blended learning provision.

The self-reflection report describes using FutureLearn partnerships as an opportunity to enhance conversations about quality across the organisation. The common language, templates, QA and explicit design principles were considered attractive and there is an opportunity to consider how this experience could inform a more consistent approach in the blended learning space as well as in fully online delivery. It was clear from student consultation that some consistency would be helpful in improving their experience.

The ABC framework was mentioned by a number of stakeholders as being a valuable tool for supporting Learning Design and there is an opportunity to further embed the use of this approach in programme curriculum review and redesign processes.

The panel felt that the use of frameworks and tools to improve conversation, and critical reflection, was valuable and commendable. The summary of this section, in the SAR, already describes an ambition to use the Pandemic teaching response as an accelerator for reviewing a consistent approach to Quality, perhaps through Quality Matters, the panel feel that this would be worthwhile activity.

The simplicity of the approach undertaken by TEU, using checklists, standardised templates and UDL is commendable and the panel recommends introducing these in a phased capacity to help provide a consistent approach across modules.

# 5 SWOC Analysis and Plans for Improvement

## 5.1 SWOC Analysis for Digital Learning

The self-assessment report for Digital Learning included a proposed summary SWOC analysis of the Area. As a result of the Peer Review Group's analysis of the self-assessment report and findings from the peer review visit, we propose the following to be a true reflection of the capabilities and opportunities, and identified weakness and threats to future success.

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Digital learning as an overarching theme of the University's institutional level, and Teaching and Learning strategies</li><li>A strong culture of openness and willingness among staff to engage with digital technologies for the enhancement of learning at DCU</li><li>Vast majority of both students and staff consider the quality of digital provision to be "good, or better"</li><li>The creation of the National Institute for Digital Learning(NIDL) at DCU, contributing to internal development, and national and international research, innovation and thought leadership</li><li>Significant research strength, both within the NIDL, DCU Institute of Education and other Faculties on approaches to blended, online and digital learning</li><li>The development of a number of significant national and international strategic partnerships, which contribute to DCU's strong reputation across digital learning teaching, learning and engagement</li><li>Clear and well-established structures and processes to oversee the development and maintenance of technology enhanced learning</li><li>Leadership in national and international projects on digital learning and micro-credentialing</li><li>Strong alignment with national and international policy evidenced by our approach to microcredential development and the recent European Digital Action Plan</li><li>**Sustainable and valued support structure in the TEU developed over many years**</li></ul> | <ul><li>Current funding structures for sectorally leading practice in digital learning is externally funded and focused on specific projects, **not necessarily developing sustained embedded change**</li><li>There is no explicit inclusion of the effectiveness of digital learning within current module evaluations or programmatic quality review processes</li><li>Limited availability of data (and application of data analytics) to identify and actively use key performance indicators to support decision-making in digital learning</li><li>No well-established and widely accepted set of common principles to support consistency in the design and development of Loop and related learning resources</li><li>Current workload models consider mainly traditional module development & delivery and do not adequately reflect the overhead of focused time **of academics and other specialists** required to develop a module for online or blended delivery</li><li>Limited central capacity within central units, to meet both the growth in demand for digital learning, and the increasingly wide-ranging support and development needs of the DCU community</li><li>Heavy reliance on a relatively low number of staff to provide digital learning leadership **at all levels including centre, faculty and programmes**, creating issues in relation to succession planning and sustainability</li></ul> |

| Opportunities | Challenges |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Continue to leverage significant national and international leadership in digital learning policy development, quality, learning design and research and innovation</li><li>Take advantage of the opportunities presented through DCU Futures, MC2 and the ECIU European University projects to further establish DCU's national leadership in high quality and effective digital learning</li><li>Expand DCU's partnership with FutureLearn and other collaborative partners to take advantage of the global online learning market</li></ul> | <ul><li>Early strong investment in infrastructure, now needs to be met with core investment in people and resources- aligning and balancing these investments</li><li>Creating an overarching learning framework through which we better understand what digital and online learning means to different constituencies, with underpinning principles aligned to strategy</li><li>Securing long-term, mainstream funding for current initiative-based projects in current constrained short-term focused funding environment</li></ul> |

| | |
|---|---|
| ● Exploit and expand the expertise of existing groups to create a best-in-class model of knowledge and expertise to meet current and emerging digital learning needs<br><br>● Expand disciplinary-based research onto the effectiveness of approaches to digital learning<br><br>● Formalise structures and dialogue to more effectively coordinate staff and student support identification and development<br><br>● Build on the work of Discover DCU to embed a student life-cycle approach to building digital literacies and skills to learn online among all students (taught and research)<br><br>● Develop improved opportunities for staff and students to contribute to decision-making for new digital learning developments<br><br>● Take advantage of existing growing open education resource movement to improve the effectiveness of digital learning<br><br>● Harness the competitive and operational advantage of DCU to become both a national and an international leader in the development and delivery to global learners of micro-credentials in key and niche disciplinary areas along with a range of industry and stakeholders | ● Continuing to invest in digital learning tools and platforms as part of DCU's commitment to a rich digital campus which meets the growing expectations of staff and students<br><br>● Meeting the wide-ranging needs of staff and students in digital learning skills development within the current funding envelope<br><br>● Continuing to meet the expectations of support on current core and "business as usual" services in light of new ambitions, emerging projects and initiatives (e.g. DCU Futures, MC2 ECIU University)<br><br>● Balancing the externally-driven demands on the work of the NIDL, with internally focused projects on digital learning enhancements in DCU<br><br>● Identifying a business model and related structures that manage and support DCU Connected fully online programmes with strong faculty engagement but which is financially viable<br><br>● Ensuring that our operational processes are sufficiently agile to support new approaches to programme design and development, academic administration, programme delivery and assessment<br><br>● Institutional capacity to support digital learning due to commitments to already planned infrastructural development, e.g. multi-year new Student Information System implementation<br><br>● **Shift to deeper digital practices in teaching, both on campus blended and online, may require a culture change that will need managing carefully** |

## 5.2    Plans for Improvement Identified by Steering Group

The PRG welcomed the Areas for Improvement already identified in the SAR. In particular, we noted the intention to:

develop an overarching framework, to provide clarity on what digital learning means for DCU, sensitive to its multiple contexts across the institution. Such a framework would provide clarity on how digital learning aligns to our strategic priorities, provide visibility of practice across the institution, and support improved coordination across academic and professional support units.
place greater emphasis on "soft" investments in resources and capacity to meet the current and emerging digital learning needs of staff and students.
enhance ongoing evaluation of the impact of both hard and soft investments in digital learning aligned with the proposed new framework. This will be enabled through improved systems and infrastructures to capture, store, and deliver analysis based on key performance indicators to support future decision-making.

Aligned with these, the recommendations of this PRG report focus on the following areas:

- **strategy for Digital Learning**: explore the question 'What does Digital Learning mean to DCU?' within strategic planning, in order to establish a shared understanding across the institution. In particular, that understanding should encompass online courses, on-campus blended courses, and all other teaching programmes so that there is a coherent support model
- **students and staff**: Enhance and deepen the support and up-skilling resources to students to ensure that they have appropriate support in their digital learning, drawing on the expertise that informs similar support for staff.

- **delivery of digital learning**: Refresh the oversight of Loop as a strategically important platform in the light of Covid to enable effective prioritisation of the underpinning tools and IT support, and potential increased investment.

We hope that the full set of recommendations included below offer helpful input for future developments and the work of the Steering Group going forward.

Overall the PRG felt that the SAR was of great strategic value for the institution and we would like to encourage DCU to produce a template for thematic self-assessment that incorporates both the Self-Assessment Report and Peer Review site visit. We believe that such a template would be a very valuable tool for other institutions in seeking to review their practice.

# 6 Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

## 6.1 Commendations

1. We commend DCU's commitment to the process of thematic quality review of digital learning, and the institution wide approach taken, in particular during this difficult year. The Steering Group's scope, ambition and active involvement were impressive, as were the passion and authenticity of everyone who contributed to both the initial report and the field visit.
2. We commend DCU in undertaking the FUSE initiative, and its impact for engagement across stakeholders.
3. The approach of multiple tools making up the Loop platform allow for platform growth and tool swapping.
4. The extent to which DCU has built and developed digital learning partnerships in an internal, national and international landscape is commendable. The learning associated with these practices is evident right across the organisation and will prepare the university well for the next wave of digital learning development and strategies.
5. DCU in the context of digital learning should be commended on the early recognition of the importance of bringing structure and agency to the digital learning domain. The foresight to establish a digital learning institute and the creation and appointment of Ireland's first chair of Digital Learning show clear strategic leadership.
6. The TEU is commended for its grounded and mature approach to staff development. This commendation includes, but is not limited to, the pathway for the AdvanceHE Fellowship scheme, which is a worthwhile investment in raising the esteem and capability of digital learning.
7. Dedicated supports for digital learning that are of very high quality are in place for students when they first enrol in the university. The suite of digital resources that has been developed is comprehensive and care is evident in anticipating students' needs. The timing of this review after an intense period of dependence on digital provision of services presents an ideal opportunity to build on Covid developments in order to provide equitable access to support for online only students.
8. The panel had been provided with highlights from different faculties and it is clear there is a diverse portfolio of developments across the institution. The discipline-specific nature of these deeper investments is very much acknowledged and to be commended.
9. The enthusiasm and innovation shown across university staff for digital learning is a strength that DCU has built upon and harnessed well during the Covid crisis.
10. We commend the work of teaching staff in protecting the academic quality of content through the rapid and unexpected transition to the online space. The smooth pivot evidenced years of dedication to staff proficiency in digital provision.
11. In response to the Covid pandemic and the pivot to online provision, alternative approaches to assessments were adopted that facilitated creativity and demonstrated an appropriate use of the potential of digital platforms.
12. The review group commends the response of the teaching staff to the 5 days of downtime that occurred in October 2020. Evidence from student representatives informed our understanding of a conscientious and diligent response on the part of teaching and support staff that led to a sheltering of students from the impact of the shutdown.
13. TEU's Buddy system is a great example of the benefits of building sustainable and productive relationships and the panel feels that this model should be sustained or further developed.

## 6.2 Recommendations

**Strategy for Digital Learning**

1. Explore the question 'What does Digital Learning mean to DCU?' within strategic planning, in order to establish a shared understanding across the institution. In particular, that understanding

should encompass online courses, on-campus blended courses, and all other teaching programmes so that there is a coherent support model. (P1, U)

2. Create an overarching framework that gives space for devolved strategic developments within Faculties and gives visibility to work happening across the University as a next step in the maturity of DCU's digital learning journey. (P1, A)

3. Consider the role of NIDL and its constituent components in future digital learning strategies, taking into account the changing nature of digital learning. The Digital Learning Design Unit's support model for module-level content development might have sustainability challenges and should be reviewed to maximise the reach of the support offer from central teams. (P2, U)

4. Consider how the strategic plan for digital learning could create more sustainable models for pursuing strategic research priorities, placing less emphasis on individual research funding opportunities. It may be prudent to consider the balance between external project funding and core activity to ensure there is sufficient capacity to support the growth ambitions in blended learning. (P3, U)

## Students and Staff

5. Enhance and deepen the support and up-skilling resources to students to ensure that they have appropriate support in their digital learning, drawing on the expertise that informs similar support for staff. (P1, U)

6. Explore expectations around organisational capability: which skills and specialisms should be where, between central teams, faculties and programme teams. What baseline skills should all academics and administrators have, and what would maturity look like in different areas. Alignment of central staff development activities with faculty strategic plans is identified by staff as an area for improvement and the panel would endorse this. (P2, U)

7. Review workload modelling and development of an overarching framework in the context of digital learning developments and the altering nature of design, delivery and assessment. Current workload models consider mainly traditional module development & delivery and do not adequately reflect the overhead of focused time of academics and other specialists required to develop a module for online or blended delivery. (P2, A)

## Delivery of Digital Learning

8. Refresh the oversight of Loop as a strategically important platform in the light of Covid to enable effective prioritisation of the underpinning tools and IT support, and potential increased investment. (P2, U)

9. Provide opportunities for staff to explore different ways of working for the design and delivery of digital learning in order to find the most effective approaches in their context. (P2, U)

10. Take a more active approach to communicate and disseminate partnership activity through both formal and informal mechanisms to better articulate its benefits and model effective sharing of practice across the institution. (P2, U)

11. Develop guidelines relating to online delivery of content for circulation by Associate Deans of Teaching and Learning based on identified good practice. (P3, A)

12. Programme Chairs to collate information from module coordinators with regard to the digital tools in use within a programme. Regular audits of this nature should facilitate the organisation of appropriate support for students and thereby remove the need for students to navigate unfamiliar digital tools. (P3, A)

# 7 Appendices

| Time | Peer Review Group (PRG) Activity/Meeting | Meeting No. |
|---|---|---|
| Day 1- Tuesday 8th December- Context Setting/ Preparation | | |
| 1400-1430 | Briefing with the Quality Promotion Office on process | Ms. Aisling McKenna, Director Quality Promotion Office |
| 1430-1545 | Private meeting of the Peer Review group to finalise themes to, <br> ● PRG Selects a Chair <br> ● PRG discusses key themes, areas for exploration based on the SAR <br> ● PRG assigns tasks and responsibilities amongst members | |
| 1545-1600 | Break | |
| 1600-1700 | **Opening Presentation by chair of Digital Learning Steering Group** <br> - Discussion of SAR process <br> - Identification of thematic areas for improvement | Small group from Steering Group Committee <br> 1. Mr. Billy Kelly, Deputy Registrar, Dean of Teaching and Learning <br> 2. Prof. Mark Brown, Director, NIDL <br> 3. Ms. Aisling McKenna, QPO |
| 1700 | Close of session | |
| Day 2- Wednesday 9th December- Institutional Level Developments | | |
| 0845-0915 | Private Meeting Time for PRG to plan morning meetings | |
| 0915-1015 | **Institutional Level Planning for Digital Learning and Key strategic initiatives and investments** <br> **Partnerships in Digital Learning** | 1. Mr. Billy Kelly, Deputy Registrar, Dean of Teaching and Learning <br> 2. Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl Associate Professor of Information Technology <br> 3. Dr. Blánaid White, Head of School of Chemical Sciences \| Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Science and Health <br> 4. Mr. Justin Doyle, IT Operations and Engineering Manager <br> 5. Mr. John McDonagh, University Librarian <br> 6. Prof Alan Smeaton, Director, Insight Centre for Data Analytics <br> 7. Mr. Anthony Feighan, DCU Management & Financial Planning (Acting Head) |
| 1015-1045 | Break/ PRG Meeting time | |

| 1015-1100 | **Research and innovation in digital learning and network and professional** | 1. Prof. Mark Brown, Director, National Institute for Digital Learning<br>2. Dr. Eamon Costello, Open Education Unit, National Institute for Digital Learning<br>3. Dr. Mairead Nic Giolla Mhichíl, Associate Professor of Information Technology<br>4. Dr Orna Farrell, Assistant Professor; Chair - DCU Connected Humanities<br>5. Dr. Enda Donlon, School of STEM Education, Innovation and Global Studies |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1100-1130 | Break/ PRG Meeting time | |
| 1130-1215 | **Approach to staff development in digital learning** | 1. Dr Mark Glynn, Head of the Teaching Enhancement Unit<br>2. Mr. Rob Lowney, Teaching Enhancement Unit<br>3. Ms. Ellen Breen, Associate Director, Research & Teaching<br>4. Ms. Helena McCanney, Learning and Development<br>5. Dr. Jennifer McManis, School of Electronic Engineering<br>6. Ms. Suzanne Stone, Teaching Enhancement Unit<br>7. Jennifer Bruton, Associate Professor and Head of School Electronic Engineering |
| 1215-1315 | PRG Private Meeting time<br>Consideration of findings | |
| **Day 3- Thursday 10th December- Staff and Student Level Experiences** | | |
| 0845-0900 | Private Meeting Time for PRG to plan morning meetings | |
| 0900-1000 | **Implementation of digital learning in Faculties** | 1. Dr Anna Logan, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning DCU Institute of Education<br>2. Prof. Françoise Blin, Associate Dean for Learning Innovation, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences<br>3. Dr. Monica Ward, School of Computing<br>4. Prof. Anne Matthews, School of Nursing, Psychotherapy and Community Health<br>5. Dr. Pierangelo Rosati, Assistant Professor in Business Analytics at DCU Business School<br>6. Dr Derek Molloy, Associate Professor, School of Electronic Engineering,<br>7. Dr Juliana Adelman, Assistant Professor, School of History and Geography<br>8. Dr Gary Sinclair, Programme Chair in Business Studies International<br>Lecturer in Marketing |

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|---|---|---|
| | | 9. Mr. Richard Bolger, Programme Chair , Open Education Unit, National Institute for Digital Learning |
| 1000-1030 | Break/ PRG Meeting time | |
| 1030-1100 | **Student Support and Student Learning Resources** | 1. Mr. Ian Spillane, ISS Manager, DCU St Patrick's Campus<br>2. Dr. James Brunton, Chair - Humanities ,Open Education Unit<br>3. Mr. Cillian Murphy, Student Learning Officer, Student Support & Development Service<br>4. Ms. Annabella Stover, Deputy Director, Student Support & Development<br>5. Ms. Lisa Callaghan, Information & Digital Literacy Coordinator/ Engineering & Computing Librarian<br>6. Dr Mark Glynn, Head of the Teaching Enhancement Unit |
| 1100-1130 | Private PRG Meeting Time | |
| 1130-1215 | **Student Experiences of Digital Learning** | Students UG/PGT/PGR- on-campus,<br>Open Education mix |
| 1215-1245 | Private PRG Meeting Time | |
| 1245-1330 | **Where next with Digital Learning- current and emerging opportunities** | 1. Mr. Billy Kelly, Deputy Registrar, Dean of Teaching and Learning<br>2. Prof. Mark Brown, Director, NIDL<br>3. Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl Associate Professor of Information Technology<br>4. Dr Yseult Freeney, Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, DCU Business School.<br>5. Prof. Lisa Looney (Vice-President Academic Affairs / Registrar) |
| 1315 | Close | |
| Day 4- Friday 11th December- SMG/ Discussion | | |
| 0845-0900 | PRG Meeting time | |
| 0900-1000 | Meeting with **DCU Senior Management** Team | 1. Prof. Daire Keogh (President, DCU)<br>2. Prof. Anne Sinnott (Deputy President)<br>3. Prof. Lisa Looney (Vice-President Academic Affairs / Registrar)<br>4. Prof. Greg Hughes (Vice-President, Research & Innovation)<br>5. Dr. Declan Raftery (Chief Operations Officer)<br>6. Prof. John Doyle (Executive Dean, Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences) |

| | | 7. Prof Barbara Flood (Acting Executive Dean, DCU Business School) |
| | | 8. Prof. Michelle Butler (Executive Dean, Faculty of Science & Health) |
| | | 9. Prof. Brian Corcoran (Acting Executive Dean, Faculty of Engineering & Computing) |
| | | 10. Mr. Ciaran McGivern (Director, Finance) |
| 1000-1045 | Follow meeting with Registrar, VP Academic Affairs | Prof Lisa Looney, Registrar, VP Academic Affairs, |
| 1045-1300 | Break/ PRG Meeting time | |
| 1100-1300 | PRG Meeting time- finalisation of findings | |
| 1300-1330 | Exit Presentation | All Staff involved in the Digital Quality Review |
| 1330 | Close | |