

# Teaching and Learning Centre

## Newsletter | October 2021



### “What’s next” on our academic journey?

A (wise!) colleague commented recently that students’ return to campus was marked by a collective attitude of acknowledging a difficult year passed, but eager to move on, ready for what’s next. While campus is thankfully getting busy again and we cautiously return to some normalcy, it’s certain that “what’s next?” will be impacted by the collective experience of the COVID year. So what can be next?

The affordances and limitations of technology in teaching and learning were undoubtedly a feature of the past 18 months. Our future directions can capitalise on lessons learned, especially those relating to student engagement and flexibility in delivery. But reducing lessons learned to technical merits alone omits the major lesson we have (re)learned and reaffirmed: teaching and learning is fundamentally a human endeavour.

The human experiences of learning – focussing on dialogue, on personal growth, on empathy and kindness – can be usefully considered under an umbrella of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is focussed on the student and their sense of

capacity to achieve. In a recent workshop (p.8) we discussed how this very human need can couple with technological considerations.

Self-efficacy is influenced by performance issues, obviously: nothing like a grade for a reality check about how we are getting on! But it is also influenced by our sense of place in a learning environment – connection with peers, and connection with teacher who provides signposts through useful feedback. This sense of place is easier in physical environments, but there are different and often complementary ways to do it in virtual settings.

We pick up many of these themes around dialogue and feedback, and the supporting of students’ connection and their growing independence in this month’s *Newsletter*. It’s clear from the perspectives shared here that there is already a lot of activity in ensuring the human connection in our teaching is a core part of our considerations of “what’s next?”.

**Dr Michael Seery**  
*Teaching and Learning Centre*  
Institute of Technology Carlow



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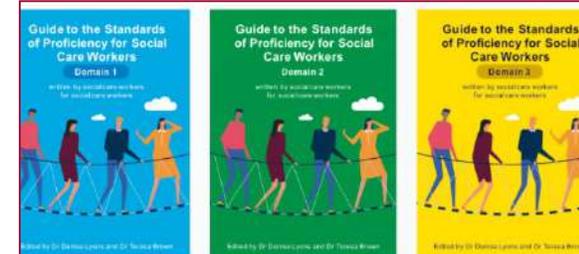
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### Introduction to the PACE Programme



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# Teaching and Learning Centre

## Spotlight: Academic Writing

## Dr Eva Burke introduces herself and the academic writing support available to all students



### Tell us a little bit about yourself

I am a recently graduated PhD student from Trinity College Dublin and I'm the new academic writing tutor here at IT Carlow! My field of study was English literature so I've always been interested in language, writing, and the effective communication of ideas.

### What is "academic writing"?

I think the key to effective and well-written academic work is understanding what it is you want to communicate and making sure that you've done it as clearly as possible. One of the problems we all encounter when starting out with academic writing is understanding precisely what we're being asked to do when we're given an essay title or a learning outcome. **It's important to break that question or prompt down and ask yourself: are you being asked to review, assess, or analyse?** How should you approach this topic? Another key aspect of writing successfully is ensuring that you have considered and explored the research that has already been done on this topic. Being able to integrate and interrogate secondary sources in your own work is a really valuable skill.

### What kinds of strategies do you like to use?

I find that 'free writing' can be a really useful way of getting past your initial doubts or concerns about academic writing. It just

involves sitting down for 10-15 minutes with your laptop or piece of paper and writing freely, with no concern for referencing or structure. This helps you to realise how much you already know about the topic and perhaps see gaps in your knowledge that you can work on. It can be a really good starting point for generating ideas and questions that you might then go on to build on within your essay or project.

I'm hoping to set up a weekly writing group session this year where we can meet to practice things like free writing. I also hold one-to-one sessions during the week, and students can book 15-minute slots to talk about concerns or issues they're having with writing or projects. I like these sessions to be quite collaborative rather than prescriptive – it's a conversation rather than a lecture!

### Any new plans on the horizon?

We are currently finishing up a new resource as part of the PACE suite of modules which will guide students through the process of carrying out a literature review! It can be a daunting prospect and it's easy to feel overwhelmed when asked to give a critical survey of the existing literature on a subject, so we're hoping our guide will demystify the process and provide a helpful 'road map' to completing their literature review.

### How do Academic Writing support sessions operate?

As I mentioned above, you can book a one-to-one session to chat about your work with me – these are held over Microsoft Teams or in person, whichever suits. I am also running themed group

sessions on Blackboard, and you should see these advertised through the Teaching and Learning Centre. These sessions will focus on things like note-taking, critical thinking, essay writing, academic integrity, and procrastination. Students can drop in during the sessions if they think the topic of the week will be useful!

## Academic writing support

All students are welcome to book a one-to-one session with an Academic Writing tutor. The weekly schedule of available times is available on TLC Student Hub in the Announcements area.

Some sessions will be on-site in room A204 (glass-walled room near main stairway on middle floor of the LRC) and some will be online sessions through MS Teams. Students can request a 15-minute slot, and should use their student email when booking, giving an indication of the type of support needed (for example referencing, critical writing, summarising, etc.).

There are also ongoing **themed sessions** which are open and do not need to be booked. The recent talk '*Essay Writing and Critical Thinking*' from mid-October will be added to the TLC Student Hub.

For further details or queries, please contact: [tlc@itcarlow.ie](mailto:tlc@itcarlow.ie) and/or see the Academic Writing area on TLC Student Hub.

# Teaching and Learning Centre

## PACE information literacy resources

## Designing PACE Resources

*Breda Connell, Lifelong Learning & Research Services, Assistant Librarian shares some reflections on the creation of new PACE resources.*

The initial idea for the PACE tutorials came about because of my early experiences of face-to-face information literacy sessions & workshops on using the online library resources with IT Carlow off campus Lifelong Learning (LLL) students. I began meeting these students in September and October 2019 shortly after I started at IT Carlow as the LLL & Research Services Assistant Librarian. From the questions raised during the library classes, it was clear that students wanted to know how best to find their way around the online library. They also wanted to be able to quickly obtain the information literacy skills and competencies that they needed to find, evaluate, and use the information

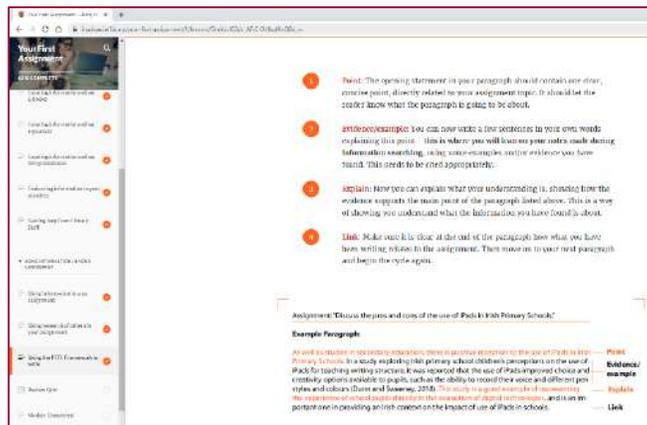
required for assignments and learning.

Combining the technical and design expertise of a Learning Technologist and the information literacy knowledge of a librarian, the project was a collaboration between the IT Carlow library and the Teaching & Learning Centre. Together we decided to create a series of self-directed modules which would allow learners of all levels to quickly become familiar with the resources available in the online library and to clearly see which ones best suit the information required at a particular time. The modules can be used in a sequential way, where the students progresses through each section in the order presented. Alternatively, learners can select videos or templates according to their need.

Following the move to fully online learning in March 2020 the scope of the project was broadened to include the needs of all IT Carlow students and a series of videos was created to showcase how the library space operates and how students can, for example, find library materials using the online catalogue.

The modules are available on the library homepage, on the TLC website and the Blackboard Student Hub. They are being promoted with all students in library induction sessions. LLL lecturers who would like more information on how these modules can be used in the classroom can contact me directly.

Funding for the project was provided by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education.



Screenshot from the "Your First Assignment" module

## Accessing PACE

PACE resources are available on the Library website and TLC Student Hub. Three resources are available with more planned. You can direct students to PACE resources, or if you wish, embed them directly into your module.

The flyer features the PACE logo at the top, which stands for Plan, Access, Critique, Evaluate. Below the logo, three modules are listed in colored boxes: Module 1 (pink), Module 2 (orange), and Module 3 (green). At the bottom, there is a call to action: 'PACE supports your studies. See Library webpages and TLC Student Hub' with a starburst icon. The footer includes the Teaching & Learning Centre logo and the Institute of Technology Carlow logo.

PACE promotion flyer for students

## Feedback cover sheets (Arts *et al.*, 2021)

*This simple idea demonstrates how cover sheets led to an increased use of feed-up, feed forward, and feedback compared to annotations alone.*

Cover sheet had prompts for tutors to include comments under the following headings, which looked at **task**, **process**, and **self-regulation**.

- Comments on **task** focusses on specific instances of correction to the student work. This might be “*add citation in the text*” or content corrections relating to the discipline.
- Comments on **process** refer to aspects of how the assignment is prepared; for example “*interlink the insights from the literature instead of just summarising each one*”.
- Comments on **self-regulation** prompts students to consider their work more broadly in terms of thinking about how they might structure their approaches in future. An example comment could be “*can you think of reasons why your data may not match the literature?*”.

### Full details

J.G. Arts, M. Jaspers & D. Joosten-ten Brinke (2021). Enhancing written feedback: The use of a cover sheet influences feedback quality, *Cogent Education*, 8(1), DOI: 10.1080/2331186X.2021.1901641.

FEEDBACK COVER SHEET TEMPLATE	
<b>General Impression</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name noteworthy aspects, using motivational language</li></ul>
<b>Feedback on task and process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What was done well, explaining why it was done well?</li><li>• What needs improvement, and why?</li></ul>
<b>Feed up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are essential improvements in order to reach goals?</li><li>• Which aspects don't yet meet assessment criteria, and why?</li></ul>
<b>Feed forward</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What considerations should students take on board to work on in future assignments?</li></ul>

## Using Collaborate for Guest Speakers

*Dr Andrea McNamara, Lecturer in Accounting, on using Collaborate for guest speakers*

In preparation for Work Placement, a virtual session via Collaborate was held for the Year 3 Bachelor of Business students on CV preparation with Career Consultant, Ms Judy Murphy. The session, which was facilitated by a guest link access worked extremely well, affording Judy the opportunity to present remotely to the students. Setting up the guest link access was very straight forward and guidance was given by the Teaching and Learning Centre on any questions that arose.

Judy was able to interact with students via the ‘chat’ option or ‘raise the hand’ option and the platform facilitated a very valuable Q & A session after the presentation which everyone could participate in. Another key advantage of Collaborate was the ability to record the session which is now currently available to students and will facilitate them in their preparation of their CV.

## Shared documents for discussion (Morse, 2021)

*A comparison of using a traditional discussion board and Google Docs for identical discussion assignments found that the Google Docs platform had 68% more posts.*

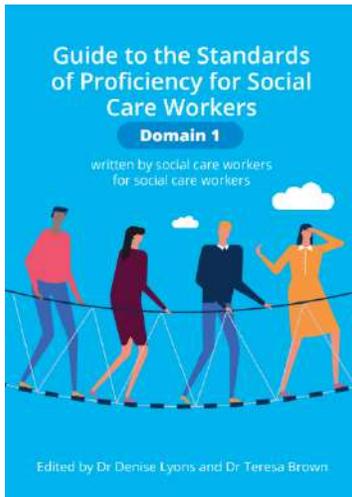
This study explored the use of prompts in both traditional LMS discussion boards, as well as shared Google Docs, and found consistently higher levels of discussion on Google Docs. One reason suggested is that unlike discussion boards, Google Docs are one continuous conversation, without the need to open individual posts, giving a sense of contributing to a “whole document” when participating in discussion. The paper notes some useful ideas and approaches for those interested in fostering online discussion.

[A guide on using Google Docs by Dr Chris Meudec is available in the eLearning area of TLC Staff Hub.](#)

Morse, M. L. (2021). Increase Engaged Student Learning Using Google Docs as a Discussion Platform. *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*, 9(2), doi: 10.20343/teachlearninq.9.2.20

## A new series of e-books on Social Care

Dr Denise Lyons (IT Carlow) and Dr Teresa Brown (TUS Athlone Campus) edited a series of new free e-books for Social Care.



Wednesday the 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2017 was a landmark date. On that day CORU launched the Standards of Proficiency for Social Care Workers and started the clock ticking towards statutory registration. CORU was assigned the task, under the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005, of establishing the criteria for all twelve professions included in the legislation. **This is the first book written by social care workers for social care workers, which aims to explain the standards, through a social care lens.**

The eighty standards of proficiency for social care work are discussed and interpreted through the personal narratives and **professional experiences of 75 social care workers in practice, management, and education.** The standards of proficiency are portrayed as a threshold framework for creative and informed practice, that views services users as central to social care work. Here the worlds of practice, policy, research and regulation are brought into much closer proximity, presented as an integrated practice-informed body of knowledge with the relationship at the core.

The broad aim of this text is **to illuminate the regulatory led path ahead** for workers, students and lecturers and help shape future of social care work.

### This book includes:

- ✓ A separate **chapter on each of the eighty proficiencies**, viewed through the lens of social care work, written as a guide to best practice.
- ✓ Within each chapter proficiencies are **linked to practice examples**, supported by theory and policy when relevant, and aided through the inclusion of summary points, key learning themes, case studies and infographics.
- ✓ **'Tips for Practice Educators'** is the concluding section of each chapter which provides tasks and exercises to help qualified social care workers prepare for CPD and the supervision of students on placement.
- ✓ 'Social Care Is', a small addition to each chapter, which enables the author to **define what social care means to them**, from their context specific experience, which aims to capture the diversity within this profession and support the development of a social care identity.

We received a grant from the National Forum for copyediting and engaged the expertise of Jane Rogers (ex Gill & Macmillan), so the text is edited to a publishable standard.

The e-publishing was funded by the Irish Association of Social Care Educators, The Health and Social Care Professionals Office of the HSE, and the Irish Association of Social Care Managers (Special Interest Group) of Social Care Ireland. All five e-books are available to download from the Social Care Ireland website: <https://socialcareireland.ie/guide-to-the-standards-of-proficiency-for-social-care-workers/>.



Domain 1 Standard of Proficiency 19 Chapter 19

### Chapter 19 - Mark Smith

Domain 1 Standard of Proficiency 19

Understand the principles of professional decision-making and be able to make informed decisions within the context of competing demands including those relating to ethical conflicts and available resources.

#### KEY TERMS

Principles  
Context  
Leading decision-making  
Social care staff team  
Risk-averse culture

Social care is ... about keeping the service user at the centre of all decisions made, and achieving a balance between care, the environment, the context in which the decision is being made, and the resources available.

#### TASK 1

Reflect on a decision you found difficult to make, reflect on factors that shaped the decision. Were you satisfied with the outcome? If you had to make the same decision today, what would you do differently and why?

*A separate chapter on each of the eighty proficiencies*



Always remember: think before you speak. For example, Do I need to pass on this information? Does passing it on benefit the service user or is it for my benefit?

*'Tips for Practice Educators' at the conclusion of each chapter*

### Library E-book Resources

Records for all ebooks purchased by the library are held in the Koha Library system and can be located by searching the **Library Search : Print Resources**, or the **Search and Find : Online Resources** services, (both accessible on the [library website home page](#)). In addition to purchased ebooks, the library offers access to over 180,000 subscribed ebooks on a wide range of topics via the **Ebook Central** database, (accessible via the [Quick Links](#) page on the library website). As well as purchased and subscribed ebook collections, the library also provides access to open access ebooks through the Library from Springer, University College London Press, and Cambridge University Press.

A keyword search of the **Library Search : Print Resources** service for 'ebook teaching and learning' will retrieve ebooks and some other e-resources related to Teaching and Learning. Example of recent ebooks added to IT Carlow library catalogue are:

- *Universities and Entrepreneurship: Meeting the Educational and Social Challenges* [[Proquest link](#)]
- *Reflect, Expect, Check, Explain: Sequences and Behaviour to Enable Mathematical Thinking in the Classroom* [[Proquest link](#)]
- *The Manifesto for Teaching Online* [[Proquest link](#)]
- *Science Teaching Essentials: Short Guides to Good Practice* [[Proquest link](#)]

If you require assistance with using ebooks or other online resources please [contact your subject librarian/LLL librarian](#).

### Supporting online and blended approaches

The Teaching & Learning Centre continue to develop resources and support materials for staff engaged in online and blended teaching. Some new and updated resources include the following:

#### MS Teams Resources

We are continuing to grow our library of support resources for MS Teams. Teams is a useful platform for mediating calls and other online groupings with students and colleagues, and can act as a useful complement to the role of Blackboard as Learning Management System. Our new Teams resources include some videos for those new to Teams on making calls, communication within Teams meetings, and sharing content with others.

#### TLC Student Hub Updates

As we continue with some blended teaching this year, Blackboard and associated resources retain high prominence in students' study and engagement with course work. TLC Student Hub acts as a useful portal for a range of resources for students' engagement with courses, support of their academic work, and involvement with teaching and learning developments.

As such the TLC Student Hub has been updated to help students navigate the range of supports and engagements possible. We have included some induction materials for those new to TLC Student Hub, and as part of the induction process this semester will be sharing an overview of TLC Hub with students. For an introductory video on TLC Student Hub, see: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tz\\_4RzbXB3Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tz_4RzbXB3Q).



MS Teams Resources available in TLC Staff & TLC Student Hubs



An interactive resource all about TLC Student Hub

### NAIN - National Academic Integrity Network launches new guide

The National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) has launched a new guide to support staff and students. A working group of NAIN chaired by Dr Yvonne Kavanagh at IT Carlow led the project on *Common Definitions and National Good Practice Guidelines*.

These are hosted by QQI, and offer institutions guidance on:

1. Upholding academic integrity
2. Preventing academic misconduct
3. Detecting academic misconduct
4. Dealing with academic misconduct

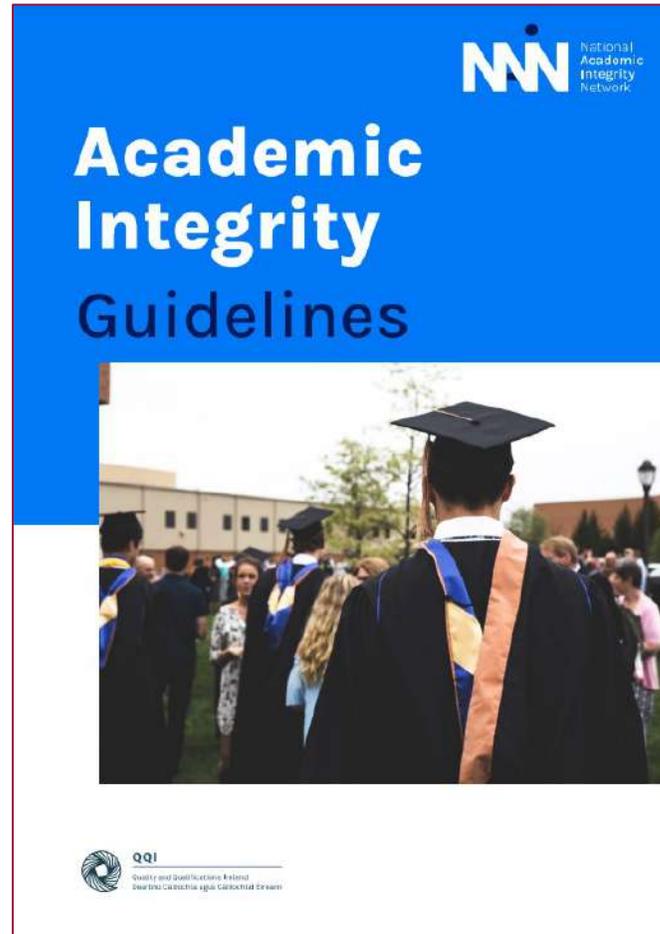
Working on a definition of academic integrity that is grounded in a value system of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage, the guidelines advocate a focus on counteracting academic misconduct by developing, promoting, and applying institution-wide strategies and procedures that promote a culture of academic integrity.

*“Since the National Academic Integrity Network (NAIN) represents the Higher Education Institutions in Ireland and USI, it is a very constructive, collaborative and forward thinking platform. Working together on the Academic Integrity Principles and Lexicon and the Academic Integrity Guidelines nationally, we take a proactive approach, to encourage the courageous conversations we need to have around academic integrity and to support our students to be proud of their own achievements.”*

*Dr Yvonne Kavanagh, Assistant Registrar*

### Academic Integrity Week

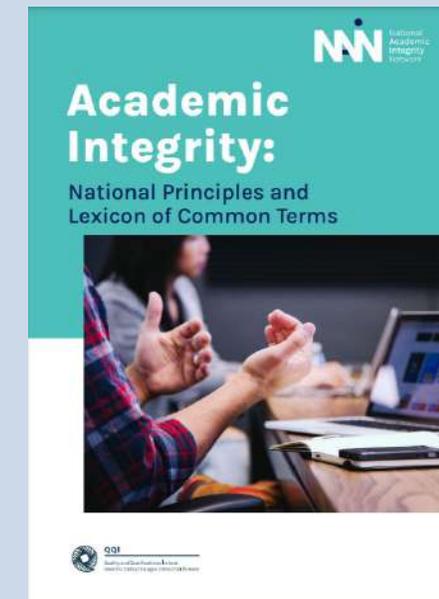
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> – Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021.



### Also launched: Lexicon

The purpose of these Principles and Lexicon is to provide support for institutions in developing their approach to academic integrity, and to enable the use of a common terminology when talking or writing about academic integrity in the context of Irish higher education.

For more information on NAIN, see their website on QQI pages:  
<https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Academic-Integrity-Network.aspx>



## Getting ready for the academic year: considerations for blended and online learning

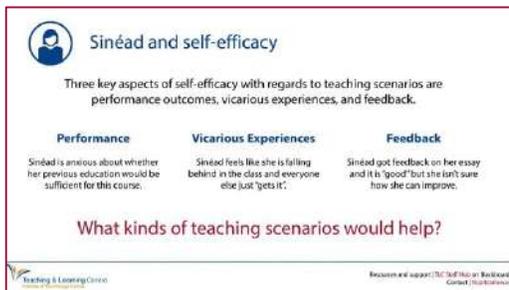
**A recent series of workshops with Lifelong Learning and Extended Campus staff explored various considerations for blended and online learning. A synopsis and resources for review are provided below.**

### Session 1: How could we design our online teaching approaches?

This first session of three explored some ways of conceptualising online and blended teaching approaches. We sought to think about what we know about theories of learning and how this can inform our practice. We considered one particular framework – **self-efficacy** – and demonstrated how tangible examples in practice can be grounded in this theory.

The session concluded with some strategies for organisation of the virtual learning environment to impose headline navigation structure. A key comment from student surveys is desire for consistent design of virtual learning environments.

The recording from the session is available to IT Carlow community at the link below.



- [Link to recording for Session 1](#) (via IT Carlow login)

### Session 2: Tools for engagement in online teaching

Our second session explored some approaches that can be useful in online settings. We looked at some tools native to Blackboard including use of polls, use of whiteboard, and breakout groups.

We also explored third party tools, including Slido for polling (similar to Mentimeter), Google Jamboard for shared collaborative space. A particular emphasis on all activities was thinking about the incorporation of **generative learning strategies**; getting students to make something with their knowledge (Brod, 2020). Some resources of use:

- [Using polls and emoticons in Collaborate](#)
- [Using and managing Breakout Groups](#)
- Our eLearning folder in TLC Staff Hub lists several resources for engagement including a link to the [telu.me](#) resource portal, and a range of third party tools in the folder **TLC Staff Hub > eLearning > Apps for in-class assessment and feedback**
- A useful paper on generative learning in higher education is: Brod, G. (2020). Generative learning: Which strategies for what age? *Educational Psychology Review*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10648-020-09571-9> (open access)

### Session 3: Engagement in Blackboard using quiz feature

This final session in our trio focussed on practical solutions for **engagement and formative assessment**, covering a range of question types that can be created in Blackboard Quiz tool. The process for creation and modification of questions is outlined, along with the integration of quizzes within your module. Some specific question types covered included:

- Multiple choice questions
- Multiple answer, including partial credit
- Fill in the blank and Matching blocks
- Ordering questions



- [Link to recording for Session 3](#) (via IT Carlow login)

In addition, a series of resources on creating and using online quizzes in Blackboard are available on **TLC Staff Hub > Blackboard Support > Assessment > Blackboard Test** ([Direct link](#)).

# Teaching and Learning Centre

## MA (Teaching & Learning) News



### MA Graduate Profile: Richie Ryan

**Richie Ryan, Lecturer in Carpentry and Joinery, shares some reflections on his MA.**

#### What does your role involve?

I currently provide training for carpentry & joinery students at phase 4 & 6 of their apprenticeship programme. These are scheduled intensive off-the-job periods of learning and assessment which must be successfully completed to progress to subsequent on-the-job training phases. Apprenticeships are generally based on a “learning by doing” approach which can be readily facilitated in the class allocations based on groups of 16 apprentices.

The carpentry & joinery curriculum includes theoretical, geometrical, mathematical, and practical aspects related to the craft along with common modules for communication and team leadership.

In my capacity as lecturer, I work within a team of experienced and skilled craftspeople to help facilitate apprenticeship learning related to all aspects of the curriculum and to help prepare apprentices for a career in carpentry & joinery. I am responsible for preparing teaching & learning resources based on the syllabus and try to facilitate student learning in interesting and engaging ways.

The off-the-job training phases are quite short (11-weeks) and with student contact time of 35 hr/week, the daily routine can be quite intensive. Planning and scheduling the delivery of the programme to coincide with practical elements and in-block

assessments is important while helping students to adopt effective learning and revision strategies is key to their success in end of term assessments.

#### Why did you decide to do the MA (Teaching & Learning)?

I have always had a healthy interest in trying to improve my teaching methods and strategies and in turn the learning experience of my students. I decided to undertake the MA as I viewed it as a good opportunity to openly critique the effectiveness of my approach and explore new ways of teaching. It also presented a really good opportunity to engage with the literature related to the current science of teaching and learning, participate in discussion among fellow participants, and receive supportive feedback on the effectiveness of different teaching strategies and their impact on student learning.

I was particularly interested in the use of technology to enhance my teaching and to provide additional and alternative learning opportunities for students. Most of all I was looking forward to the opportunity to analyse my current teaching practice and learn from the practice and experience of others.

#### What module(s) did you find valuable?

For me, the first 2 modules Teaching & Learning 1 & 2 were by far the most valuable and it was almost as if a switch was clicked in my head giving me a new love of teaching. Being new to IT Carlow at the time, it provided an opportunity to meet lots of new people. The conversational and activity-based format of the sessions was brilliant for sharing and discussing ideas/approaches (*continued overleaf*)

### About the MA (Teaching & Learning)

The Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning aims to provide participants with the skills, knowledge and competencies to design, teach, assess and evaluate educational programmes and to enable them to become professional, reflective practitioners. It will also equip graduates for roles in academic leadership and/or research supervision. The embedded Postgraduate Diploma comprises five mandatory modules and one elective module.

#### Individual stand-alone modules on the programme are also available:

- Teaching and Learning 1
- Teaching and Learning 2
- Assessment and Feedback
- Curriculum Design
- Technology-Enhanced Teaching & Learning
- Education Research Methods
- Masters Research Project

#### Elective Modules

- Coaching and Mentoring in Education
- Academic Leadership
- Research Supervision

For more information, see our website or contact [tlc@itcarlow.ie](mailto:tlc@itcarlow.ie).

<https://www.itcarlow.ie/study/teaching-learning-centre/masters-teaching-learning.htm>

### Richie Ryan MA Profile

*(continued from previous page)* without any fear of judgement. There was a tangible team feeling within the group which I found to be very supportive as well as pleasantly reassuring. I think I surprised myself at the level of interest I felt engaging with the topics/content/discussion/assignments. There was learning to be had everywhere... teaching techniques, module content, discussions, activities, and even the assignments. It never really felt like work – it was actually really interesting and very enjoyable.

#### Has completing the MA influenced your own practice?

The MA has had a very positive impact on me as an educator and my teaching practice. I feel more confident in my practice knowing that there is a wealth of research to support much of what I do in the classroom. I am not at all apprehensive in trying out new things and seeking feedback from students.

I suppose my practice has become a lot more reflective and when adopting new/different approaches to teaching and learning, I try to ensure that there is evidence to suggest that the new approach will be more successful than what it is replacing.

One of my greatest learnings throughout the MA was realising the importance and impact of relationships in teaching and learning. I would normally have adopted a very business-like approach to teaching but since my experiences during the MA, I pay much more attention to developing positive teaching and learning relationships with students. I have been astounded at student responses when a small bit of time is given to getting to know learners.

#### What recommendation would you give to those joining?

Like anything in life – the more you put in the more you will get out. This is most certainly true of the MATL programme. I put in a lot of effort throughout the 2 years mainly because I found it very interesting, beneficial, and enjoyable... what I got out of it has changed me as a person – how I teach and how/why my students learn.

At the very least... If you're at all interested in how your students learn and want to improve your teaching practice, complete Teaching & Learning modules 1 & 2. As mentioned earlier, there is learning everywhere in the programme – soak it up.

#### Final comments?

I had been teaching for almost 25 years prior to undertaking the MA and I could count on one hand the amount of “educational” conversations I would have had with colleagues. For some strange reason, we do not seem to discuss the virtues of our teaching experiences and what happens behind the closed door of the classroom generally stays there.

For me now – I teach with the door open (metaphorically speaking and because of Covid), I am confident in my practice, I find it hugely rewarding and I'm happy to share my practice and my experience with anyone.

From the student perspective, based on their term feedback – its also effective, worthwhile and enjoyable!



## VIT&L Week, 8<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Nov

National Forum's VIT&L (Valuing Ireland's Teaching and Learning) Week is scheduled for 8-12 Nov. This will consist of a series of local and national events aimed at highlighting contributions to teaching and learning from across the sector.

Each day during that week, there will be a Scholarship Showcase, including a scholarship hour and an online poster gallery. The Showcase aims to illustrate the inextricable links between teaching and learning and research and provide an opportunity to highlight innovation and research on teaching and learning that is happening across the sector.

To celebrate VIT&L Week at IT Carlow, our November TLC Newsletter will compile many of the National Forum funded projects that have been underway over the past year. For full details of VIT&L Week and the various events underway, see: <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/VITAL/>.



## National Forum Series

03/11/2021

- **Supporting Academic Literacies Across the Curriculum.** Organiser: Lilian Byrne

01/12/2021

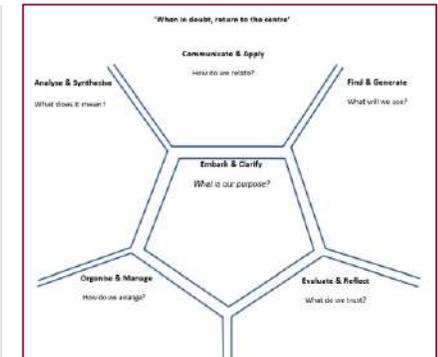
- **Exploring Gender Friendly Practices with Children and Young People.** Organiser: Mary Beare Aust

03/12/2021

- **Learning Analytics – A Critical Issue in Higher Education.** Organiser: Damien Raftery

## Report from “MELT” 1<sup>st</sup> Oct

MELT – **Models of Engaged Learning and Teaching** – is a framework used to conceive the planning and implementation of teaching approaches. It was devised by Dr John Willison, who presented a National Forum funded webinar on 1<sup>st</sup> October, hosted by Dr Dina Brazil.



John used his seminar to explain that MELT aimed to bring together existing paradigms, such as facets of thinking about learning and teaching (Bloom, SOLO, skills development etc) along with learning autonomy (construction of knowledge, inquiry, etc) or what he called “The ‘What’” and “The ‘How;’”. As such, he argues that MELT is a way of drawing together various educational theories into a practical, actionable framework.

After the seminar, John hosted a workshop where participants could plan out a teaching and learning activity of interest to them. This activity (and MELT framework) uses a pentagon approach with five aspects considered, such as thinking about sources of knowledge, evaluation and trust, organising, analysing, and communicating. All told, it was a very thought-provoking and worthwhile session. A recording of the seminar is available at the link: <https://youtu.be/0cXdJ5DgSFU>, and you can find out more about MELT at: <https://melteducation.wordpress.com/>.