



Re-imagining our curriculum
Consolidating the First Year Experience

Prototype Project Updates:

January 2016

General Details	
Project Title	Return to Education from Work After a period away (REWARD)
Name of Main Applicant	Dr. Avril Behan
Position Held	Programme Chair MSc in Applied Building Information Modelling & Management / Assistant Head of School of Multidisciplinary Technologies
College	Engineering & Built Environment
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Names of any co-applicants (& colleges they are based in):	DT9876/DT9775 Programme Team – including representatives from Schools of Architecture, Multidisciplinary Technologies, and Electrical & Electronic Engineering This resource also has the potential to be used by the DT093 MSc in Applied Computing for Technologists programme and liaison with that Programme Team is also ongoing.
Signed	
Date	2016.01.28
TU4D Theme (Please tick)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Induction/early orientation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> First 5,6 or 7 weeks; <input type="checkbox"/> Peer mentoring <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment and feedback; <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Attributes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students/ autonomous self-directed learners, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Learning spaces – virtual & physical <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Curriculum models	
Summary of Prototype project (max 200 words)	<p>To develop a pack of resources and a series of support workshop(s) to help individuals who have been out of education for 5 or more years transition back into education, particularly part-time education.</p> <p>Many students returning to education in CEBE do so at the instigation of their employers. This group does not have the opportunity to undertake a year-long Access Foundation programme and they have limited opportunities to engage with some of the existing mature student supports because those supports focus on full-time undergraduates.</p> <p>The resource pack will focus mainly on the issues of academic re-engagement but will also include integration with existing resources/supports available at DIT (e.g. www.dit.ie/mature, http://atpresentations.tumblr.com/, http://www.dit.ie/fyi/).</p> <p>The nature of higher education has changed significantly in recent years and students need support with transitioning from the old model of being taught what they needed to know to being guided in how to use learning outcomes to direct their acquisition of knowledge.</p> <p>This includes addressing issues of digital literacy, utilisation of new types of physical (room 380 – Big BIM Room) and virtual (Webcourses, Google Sites, VLAB, etc.) learning spaces.</p>

Project dates	<p>Materials in the form of printable and online resources to be available for accepted applicants by early summer 2016. Preparatory student survey to be piloted on existing students by May 2016. Full student survey to be circulated by end August 2016. Workshop content to be developed by mid September 2016.</p>
Main proposed original project outputs for the TU4D (max 100 words)	<p>The resource pack and associated workshop format can be tailored to each institution and programme. However, a standard set of content and templates will be produced. Feedback and evaluation will be included within the set up of the workshops thus identifying clearly the successes and failures of each element of the initiative.</p>
Project outputs including any evaluation data (max 300 words, data to be included in an appendix but can be summarised here)	<p><i>First 5,6 or 7 weeks; Students as autonomous self-directed learners; Learning Spaces</i></p> <p>Students who began on this academic year's part-time programme are due to complete a survey of their experience during the first number of week in order to identify how the new pack will address the particular problems that were encountered.</p> <p>In particular, students will be surveyed, and in some cases interviewed, on their experience in relation to the move towards more self-directed learning (rather than teaching) and the use of virtual learning spaces in support of the physical space.</p>
Lessons Learned (max 200 words)	<p>The project is allowing the Programme Team to comprehensively capture factual information in support of the anecdotal information that they previously had about difficulties for postgraduate students returning from a work environment after a number of years out of education. This data capture phase is currently ongoing and it not yet ready to present.</p>
Next stage (max (max 200 words)	<p>A student survey will be carried out using Survey Monkey and a number of semi-structured interviews will be conducted. The results will be collated and evaluated before production of the pack. The pack will be rolled out to the 2016-2017 cohort of incoming students and re-evaluated within 2 months. Results of this evaluation will allow adjustment of the pack and further roll out to other programmes.</p> <hr/> <p>How do you plan to develop /implement your project outputs/findings over the next months? (please reference possible future funding applications and/or change to your practice)</p> <p>We intend to make connections with other programmes of a similar nature across the full Technological University for Dublin to enable evaluation across programmes. Already we have engaged with the MSc in Applied Technology programme team and initial discussions have taken place with another TU Project, the MSc in IOT Technologies.</p>