

## **A Dozen Possible Topic Areas to Enhance the Student Experience and Include in the TU4Dublin Learning Teaching and Assessment (LTA) Strategy**

There is much overlap and synergies between each of the following suggested topic areas. It is not an exhaustive list, but one which should stimulate an interesting discussion about enhancing the quality of the student experience and the nature of a distinctive LTA Strategy for TU4Dublin.

### **1. Assessment for Learning**

“Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there” (Assessment Reform Group 2002). Assessment for Learning is also known as formative assessment.

[http://www.assessmentforlearning.edu.au/professional\\_learning/intro\\_to\\_afl/introduction\\_key\\_questions.html](http://www.assessmentforlearning.edu.au/professional_learning/intro_to_afl/introduction_key_questions.html)

### **2. Widening Participation, Retention and Developing an Inclusive Curriculum**

“Inclusive learning and teaching can be thought of as forward looking and responsive. It aims to meet the interests, needs and preferences of all students, rather than creating specialist provision for specific groups of learners. It also means institutions are better placed to comply with equality legislation, and can help to create the most effective kinds of learning environments. This in turn results in increased levels of student engagement, and will improve retention and success – and thus ultimately student satisfaction.” ([http://www.lizthomasassociates.co.uk/inclusive\\_learning.html](http://www.lizthomasassociates.co.uk/inclusive_learning.html))

### **3. Enhancing Graduate Attributes, Employability and Entrepreneurship**

“To maximize the opportunities for undergraduates to develop attributes relevant after university, academics, educational developers, administrators and employability coordinators (or their equivalent) have to collaborate at both a strategic institutional level and local disciplinary level. This requires effective inter-professional working.” (Gunn et al 2010) <http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/publications/thinking-strategically-about-employability-and-graduate-attributes.pdf>

### **4. Building Digital Capacity, Flexible or Blended Learning and the Flipped Classroom**

“digital capacity is defined as a concept that refers generally to the skills, competencies, attitudes, infrastructure and resources that enable people to work, live and learn in a world that is increasingly digital.” (Moore 2015, iv)

<http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/a-roadmap-for-enhancement-in-a-digital-world-2015-2017/>

Flexible or blended learning “means evidence-based, technology-enabled teaching methods that improve the learning experience for a broader student community.” (<http://flexible.learning.ubc.ca/>).

The inverse or flipped classroom is “where students obtain the material traditionally covered in lectures prior to, as well as following, the class. This is through, for example, readings and videos and sometimes using open educational resources, such as MOOCs, and then spend the time in class in discussion, problem solving and on other experiential activities.” (Healey et al., 2014, 39) <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/engagement-through-partnership-students-partners-learning-and-teaching-higher-education>

### **5. Student Engagement and Students as Partners**

“Student engagement represents both the time and energy students invest in educationally purposeful activities and the effort institutions devote to using effective educational practices” (Kuh et al 2008 p. 542).

“There is a subtle, but extremely important, difference between an institution that ‘listens’ to students and responds accordingly, and an institution that gives students the opportunity to explore areas that they believe to be significant, to recommend solutions and to bring about the required changes. The concept of ‘listening to the student voice’ – implicitly if not deliberately – supports the perspective of student as ‘consumer’, whereas ‘students as change agents’ explicitly supports a view of the student as ‘active collaborator’ and ‘co-producer’, with the potential for transformation” (Dunne in Dunne and Zandstra 2011, 4). <http://escalate.ac.uk/8064>

**6. Developing Professional Learning Environments through Engaging Students in Research, Consultancy and Inquiry**  
“All undergraduate students in all higher education institutions should experience learning through, and about, research and inquiry” (Healey and Jenkins 2009, 3)  
[http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/publications/DevelopingUndergraduate\\_Final.pdf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/publications/DevelopingUndergraduate_Final.pdf)

**7. Internationalization, Community and Global Engagement and Learning**  
“The internationalization of higher education institutions is the process of integrating the institution and its key stakeholders – its students, faculty, and staff – into a globalizing world ... [including] initiatives such as the internationalization of the curriculum [and] the creation of student and faculty exchange programs” (Hawawini 2011, 2, 5).

“The Academy for Community-Based Learning is a workshop designed to assist faculty and/ or departments and interdisciplinary programs in developing and enhancing core competencies of effective community-engaged teaching, service, and scholarship. More specifically, the 2014 workshop seeks to expand and deepen our understanding of the ways in which community engagement can be more global and global learning can be more community based.”  
<https://gustavus.edu/servantleadership/communityservice/files/2014%20ACBL.pdf>

**8. Embedding Environmental Sustainable Development (ESD) in the Student Experience**  
“The United Nations describes ESD as a means of ‘enabling students to develop the attributes, behaviours and skills needed to work and live in a way that safeguards ecological, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations’. ... Student learning about sustainable development is as much about the informal curriculum, or the ‘university experience’, as it is the formal assessment-led curriculum. When students are immersed in their experience, they can provide a fresh approach to formal and informal education for sustainable development (ESD)” (HE Academy nd) <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/workstreams-research/themes/education-sustainable-development>

**9. Developing Lifelong and Lifewide Learning**  
“Lifelong learning and lifewide learning describes the concept of learning in which individuals learn throughout the life-span from formal, non-formal, and informal sources” (Skolverket 2000). See also:  
[http://www.llcq.org.au/01\\_cms/details.asp?ID=12](http://www.llcq.org.au/01_cms/details.asp?ID=12)

**10. Giving Students a Multidisciplinary / Interdisciplinary Experience**  
“**Multi-disciplinary** analysis – examines an issue from multiple perspectives, without making a concerted effort to systemically integrate disciplinary perspectives.  
**Inter-disciplinary** analysis – examines an issue from multiple perspectives, leading to a systematic effort to integrate the alternative perspectives into a unified or coherent framework of analysis.”  
<http://serc.carleton.edu/sp/library/interdisciplinary/what.html>

**11. Continuing Professional Development for Staff for Supporting Learning and Teaching in Higher Education**  
CPD ‘nurtures the expert within’ rather than filling ‘empty vessels’ by transmitting knowledge about teaching (Dadds 1997). “ ... when we talk about CPD in teaching we are also talking about staff’s digital literacies, and when we talk about supporting excellent teaching we must listen to what students value.” (Moore 2015, 1, Chair and Director’s Preface  
<http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/towards-national-professional-development-framework-teach-higher-education/>)

**12. Promoting Evidence Based Practice and the Development of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)**  
“The scholarship of teaching involves three essential and integrated elements: engagement with the scholarly contributions of others on teaching and learning; reflection on one’s own teaching practice and the learning of students within the context of a particular discipline; and communication and dissemination of aspects of practice and theoretical ideas about teaching and learning in general and teaching and learning within the discipline” (Martin *et al.* 1998). The LTA Strategy should itself be based on evidence and scholarship and its development and impact should be researched.