



# Learning Innovation Network *Newsletter*

## ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (APD)

The Learning Innovation Network subgroup for the development of shared Academic Professional Development Programmes (APDs) has continued to progress with the development of the seven level 9, 10 ECTS short courses.

In January and February, two of the seven modules were validated: Athlone Institute of Technology validated an APD Certificate in Learning, Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education whilst Sligo Institute of Technology validated an APD in Educational Research and Practice. All of the remaining commissioned modules are now close to or in the process of being validated.

It is also hoped that some of the current programmes of LIN sponsored workshops (<http://www.lin-ireland.com/index.php?title=Workshops>) could eventually, be incorporated as part of the Academic Professional Development process as accredited components within the APD programmes.

The APD subgroup will be meeting again at the beginning of March to tie down some of the processes and procedures involved in the pilot roll out of these programmes.

Some the APD subgroup were present at the reusable learning objects (RLOs) workshop in IT Tallaght, which was facilitated by Dawn Leeder. Liam Boyle, Attracta Brennan, Margaret Phelan and Damien Raftery used this session to develop an RLO relating to podcasting. It was felt that this could also be used as a good online activity for participants on the Technology Enhanced Learning APD.

The Assessment and Formative Assessment APD group used the session to work on the development of an RLO focusing upon the provision of constructive feedback within first year modules. This resource would enable learners to receive online feedback and to evaluate the differences between online feedback and face to face feedback.

- The results of the workshop are available through;
- o [http://www.lin-ireland.com/index.php?title=Developing\\_Blended\\_Learning\\_Modules](http://www.lin-ireland.com/index.php?title=Developing_Blended_Learning_Modules) and
  - o <http://www.ucel.ac.uk/workshop>.

It is envisaged that the creation of these RLOs could become part of the Technology Enhanced Learning APD. In addition, links with/into NDLR workshops on the creation of RLOs are currently being explored.

If you have any questions about the development of shared academic development programmes please do not hesitate to contact; Dr. Noel Fitzpatrick ([noel.fitzpatrick@dit.ie](mailto:noel.fitzpatrick@dit.ie)).

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## LIN PORTAL

The plan for the LIN portal is to create a LIN Personalized Start Page.

So what is a Personalised Start Page?

A Personalised Start Page is really a homepage for Web information, gadgets and widgets.

The differences from old-style web portals are that;

- o users can personalize them much more (with RSS, inline email, etc),
- o the content is more interactive and potentially much more useful (i.e. gadgets, widgets),
- o they can be collaborative, and
- o the moveable windows make it more of a desktop-like experience.

Plus, tabs can be created, renamed, deleted and/or moved.

A personalised start page means that you can start your day each morning with your own personalized start page. Get the following;

- o the most recent education news,
- o upcoming workshops,
- o national and international conferences,
- o access to free lecture notes & assessments,
- o e-assessment tools,
- o access to email,
- o access to facebook, myspace,
- o document storage etc.

all in one place, when you open your browser.

For more information on the portal, please contact [attracta.brennan@gmit.ie](mailto:attracta.brennan@gmit.ie)



## RECOMMENDED READ

*“Beyond Bullet Points”* by Cliff Atkinson

Recommended by Attracta Brennan

Whilst *Beyond Bullet Points* is directed towards business presentations that aim to persuade an audience, the content of this book does provide pointers and tips on how to make powerpoint presentations less dull – from an educational perspective.

W: <http://www.beyondbullets.com/>



## RECOMMENDED READ

*“The Lecturer’s Toolkit : A Practical Guide to Learning, Teaching and Assessment”* by Phil Race and Sally Brown

Recommended by Anne Carpenter, IT Carlow

*“The Lecturer’s Toolkit* is the primary resource for all teachers in higher education, whatever their experience, who are seeking to improve their teaching skills. Developed around detailed, practical guidance on the core elements of effective teaching in HE, it is packed full of accessible advice and helpful tips. This fully updated edition covers key topics including:

- learning styles
- assessment
- lecturing
- personal management skills
- formative feedback
- large and small group teaching
- blended learning
- resource based and online learning
- peer observation of teaching.

*The Lecturer’s Toolkit* is essential for anyone working towards a professional qualification in teaching in higher education as well as for those who want to reflect on and develop existing skills

(<http://www.routledge.com/books/The-Lecturers-Toolkit-isbn9780415403825>)”

W: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



# 'EYE' on CIT

## TEACHING AND LEARNING UNIT (TLU)

In September 2008, the Teaching & Learning Unit (TLU) at CIT was formed. The TLU is responsible for managing, facilitating and monitoring the following activities within CIT:

- Development of an Effective Learning Environment
- Development Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies
- Development Teaching and Learning with Technology (TLT)
- Promotion of Excellence and Innovation in Teaching and Learning
- Research in the areas of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Support of the Design & Development of Programmes and Curricula

Membership of the TLU is drawn from each Faculty within the Institute with additional members bringing expertise in areas of e-learning and teaching with technology.

## CURRENT WORK AT THE TLU

The TLU disseminates its work primarily via workshops and courses. This month, the TLU is offering the following workshops and courses:

### (A) COGNITIVE INFORMATION PROCESSING: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DESIGN OF E-LEARNING MATERIALS

*Description:* Cognitive Information Processing (CIP) Theory provides a model of human learning which involves the processing of information through three different kinds of memory: sensory memory, working memory and long-term memory. This workshop provides a generalised account of this model, addressing, along the way, some important research into, for example, selective attention, working memory duration, memory retrieval, dual encoding etc. The primary focus of the workshop is practical with participants being provided with clear advice regarding the implications of CIP theory for the design of e-learning materials.

### (B) FOSTERING ACADEMIC HONESTY

*Description:* This presentation aims to assist lecturers in developing strategies to foster academic honesty in their learners. A key requirement for innovative and emerging assessment methodologies is that the reliability of the results obtained is equivalent to more traditional methods of assessment. Thus there must be a high degree of confidence that the work provided is the learner's own work. This workshop focuses in particular on strategies for the prevention and detection of plagiarism. Finally an overview of plagiarism detection software TURNITIN is given.

### (C) STRATEGIES TO FOSTER CREATIVITY

*Description:* This presentation introduces participants to a range of techniques to foster Creative Thinking. The presentation seeks to define the nature of creativity in a variety of contexts or discipline areas. Related areas such as ideas generation, lateral thinking and divergent thinking are explored. These areas are seen to be fundamental to fields such as design; product design; problem solving and projects. Techniques explored in this workshop to facilitate creativity include Mind Mapping ; Storyboarding; Brainstorming; Problem Reversal; etc.

### (D) PROBLEM BASED LEARNING COURSE

*Description:* A course for those academic staff interested in using problem based learning and related techniques as part of their teaching and assessment of learners. This course consists of five one hour lectures/workshops and is practical and interactive in nature with participants formed into groups and given sample problems to work through. The course commences with active learning techniques that may easily be incorporated into traditional lectures and proceeds to focus on alternatives such as problem and enquiry based learning.



# 'EYE' on CIT

## (E) CLASSROOM 2.0 COURSE

Description: This course on Web 2.0 focuses on the implications of this technology for educators. This session will be followed one week later by a workshop that will examine the following web applications:

**Blogs** – these can be used to develop writing, share ideas, brainstorm, generate discussion and reflect on work undertaken in the classroom. A micro-blogging service can be used to send short messages to your students or to follow the activities of fellow researchers.

**Wikis** - a wiki can be used for group projects, to build knowledge and share information.

**RSS** - keep up with the latest research in your area or direct students to rich Internet resources.

Both sessions explore ways of integrating this technology into the classroom and examine methods of engaging students in new and interesting ways of learning.

## (F) BLACKBOARD LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COURSE

Description: This course is aimed at those academic staff wishing to incorporate the Blackboard LMS in the teaching and assessment of learners. The course itself is delivered in a blended learning fashion with the participant enrolling in Blackboard and experiencing the teaching/learning paradigm from the viewpoint of a learner.

The TLU also offers courses in areas such as curriculum design, assessment strategies and serious games.

## CREATIVITY, INNOVATION & TEAMWORK MODULE

The objectives of this module are to introduce the learner to his/her field of study and to facilitate the transition of the learner to higher education. This module is designed to:

- o excite the learner about their chosen field of study
- o reinforce and develop key academic skills such as creativity, innovation and team work which the learner will require both in their academic life in CIT and subsequently in the world of work;

- o prepare and motivate them for a lifetime of independent and reflective learning.

The learning outcomes of the module are that the learner will;

1. Demonstrate that problem solving is fun, educational, rewarding and helpful to society
2. Display creativity and problem solving skills
3. Plan and execute a project as part of a team
4. Communicate ideas effectively by written/visual/oral means in a manner intended to the appropriate audience
5. Develop a learning plan for his/her future academic and professional career

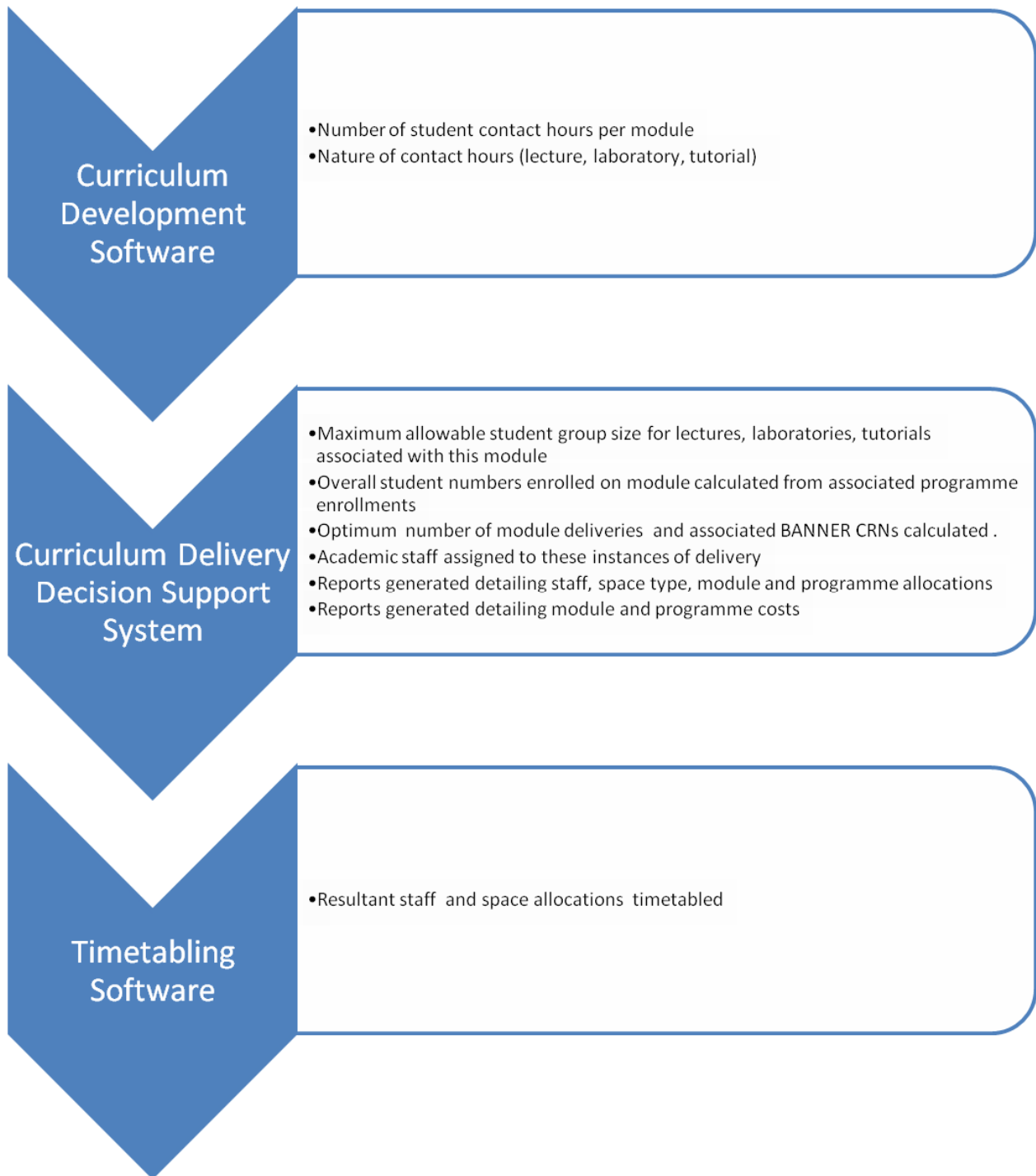
The principal learning strategy is a team project. Learners, over the course of the semester, are required to research, plan and execute a project in their chosen area. As they undertake their projects, they develop their expertise in areas such as: basic research (library, Internet etc); independent thinking; risk taking; problem-solving; time management; participating in and leading teams; and communication. Projects are diverse, innovative, challenging and interesting to the learner. The host department of each programme selects appropriate projects for their fields of study. Examples include : Lego Mindstorm robot; spaghetti bridge; solar powered vehicle; musical instrument made from recycled material; concert/recital cd; original composition; sculpture; tourism product website.

In the academic year 2007-2008, approximately 2000 first year learners from 47 programmes enrolled in the CIT module. These learners, both full-time and part-time, came from all Faculties and Constituent Colleges of the Institute. A survey of lecturers delivering the module revealed their overall satisfaction with the design of the module. They felt that this module helped to develop the team work, communication and problem solving skills of their learners and therefore supported overall programme learning outcomes in these core areas.

## CURRICULUM DELIVERY DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM

Supported under the Strategic Innovation Fund, CIT, in collaboration with a local software company, are currently developing an academic resource allocation model and associated decision support system.

This curriculum delivery decision support system is fully integrated with curriculum development software to provide detailed staff and space resource allocations to be timetabled using Syllabus Plus. With increased sharing of modules across programmes, this DSS will allow the Institute to optimize its delivery regime to continue to deliver its diverse programme portfolio.



## FOR YOUR DIARY

### LIN

9th March - LIT

Problem Based Learning by Brian Bowe, DIT

9th March - IT Blanchardstown

Introduction to Podcasting by Paul Gormley, NUIG

12th March - IT Carlow

Approaches to Learning by Anne Jordan and Orison Carlile, WIT

(please email tcl@itcarlow.ie to book your place)

18th March – IADT - Dunlaoghaire

Communicate with Conviction, Commitment and Control : Learn to use your voice effectively for teaching purposes by Carmel O'Sullivan, TCD

(please email MaryAnne.OCarroll@iadt.ie to book your place)

19th March – CIT

Communicate with Conviction, Commitment and Control : Learn to use your voice effectively for teaching purposes by Carmel O'Sullivan, TCD

20th March - ITT Dublin

Introduction to Podcasting by Paul Gormley, NUIG

23rd March - CIT

Problem Based Learning by Brian Bowe, DIT

24th March - IT Carlow

Teaching in a cross-cultural environment: Skills for working with International Students by Paul O'Keeffe, ICOS (Irish Council for International Students)

(please email tcl@itcarlow.ie to book your place)

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For more information or to book any of the above workshops (if not otherwise indicated), please contact Attracta Brennan (attracta.brennan@gmit.ie). Attendance is free but places are limited.

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### OTHER

10th March – WIT (7:30pm, Main Auditorium, WIT Cork Rd Campus)

In an emotional state: the dangers of therapeutic education

Speaker : Professor Kathryn Ecclestone - Professor of Post – Compulsory Education, Oxford Brookes University UK. co author (with Dennis Hayes) of 'The Dangerous Rise of Therapeutic Education' (2008)

The idea that educational institutions should foster the emotional well-being, emotional literacy and self-esteem of children, young people and adults has become an unchallenged orthodoxy. There are calls to make emotional well-being an accountability measure for schools, and to harness the teaching of subjects to address the affective or emotional aspects of learning.

In this lecture, Kathryn Ecclestone will summarise the main characteristics of therapeutic education and the claims made by supporters, offer some examples of interventions and raise some challenging questions about their serious and dangerous implications for education.

20th April – WIT (7:30pm, Main Auditorium, WIT Cork Rd Campus)

Socialisation in reverse and the erosion of adult authority

Speaker : Professor Frank Furedi, Professor of Sociology, School of Social Policy and Social Research, University of Kent. Author of Where Have All the Intellectuals Gone? (2006) & Paranoid Parenting (2008)

This lecture discusses the problems that schools (along with other adults) have in socialising young people, and how educators/experts attempt to get around the problem by encouraging young people to socialise their parents.

### NOTE :

WIT Lecture fee: €10.00 per lecture. Pay at door

Reduced fee: concessions available

E-mail : mobrien@wit.ie or tel. 051 302040



## QUOTABLE QUOTES



You've heard I suppose, long ago,  
How the snakes, in a manner most antic,  
He marched to the county Mayo,  
And trundled them into the Atlantic – **William Maginn**

Many an opportunity is lost because a man is out  
looking for four-leaf clovers – **Author unknown**

## LIN PICKS

### LYNDA

Brilliant website for tutorials and movies on Adobe, CAD, ASP, CSS, ColdFusion, After Effects, Databases and lots more

W:

Sent by : Damien Raftery, IT Carlow

### OPEN LEARNING INITIATIVE

Using intelligent tutoring systems, virtual laboratories, simulations, and frequent opportunities for assessment and feedback, OLI builds courses that are intended to enact instruction – or, more precisely, to enact the kind of dynamic, flexible, and responsive instruction that fosters learning.

W: <http://www.cmu.edu/oli/index.shtml>

### IDEAS FOR LIVELY ELEARNING

The “Dump the Drone” slideshow presents quick ideas that can perk up your elearning.

W: [http://www.cathy-moore.com/courses/dump\\_drone.html](http://www.cathy-moore.com/courses/dump_drone.html)

## CONTACT US

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## JOKE OF THE DAY!

An aging man lived alone in Ireland. His only son was in Prison, and he didn't know anyone who would dig up his potato garden. The old man wrote to his son about it, and received this reply, "For HEAVENS SAKE, don't dig up that garden, that's where I buried the GUNS!!!!!"

At 4 A.M. the next morning, a dozen British soldiers showed up and dug up the entire garden, but didn't find any guns. Confused, the man wrote to his son telling him what happened and asking him what to do next.

His son's reply was: "Just plant your potatoes."

