



## GUIDE TO DEVELOPING ENABLING POLICIES FOR DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING



**NATIONAL FORUM**  
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING  
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION



## **Guide to Developing Enabling Policies for Digital Teaching and Learning**

This guide to developing enabling policies for digital teaching and learning aims to assist Irish higher education institutions (HEIs) in examining their existing and upcoming policies and reflecting on whether they address the digital dimension of teaching and learning.

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## What are Enabling Polices?

Prefacing policies with the word enabling suggests that there are aspects of a policy which make it either enabling or non-enabling. A definition of what constitutes an enabling policy was constructed through interviews with experts and staff across the Irish higher education sector as part of the National Forum's Enabling Policies for Teaching and Learning in a Digital World project. Enabling policies are defined as those which are implementable, situated in practice and reflective of the higher education institution (HEI). Table 1 outlines the criteria which determine whether a policy can be considered enabling.

**Table 1 Criteria for determining if a policy is enabling**

In order for a policy to be deemed <b>implementable</b> it needs to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearly define the HEI's commitment to the policy area</li> <li>• have an implementation plan</li> <li>• be accompanied by policy instruments such as procedures, and clearly defined areas of responsibility</li> </ul>
In order for a policy to be deemed <b>situated in practice</b> it needs to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be based on consultation</li> <li>• have been tested at operational level</li> <li>• facilitate innovation</li> <li>• be routinely monitored and reviewed for effectiveness</li> </ul>
In order for a policy to be deemed <b>reflective of the HEI's priorities</b> it needs to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be guided by the HEI's vision</li> <li>• be in line with the HEI's strategic objectives</li> <li>• allow the HEI to meet its legal obligations</li> </ul>

## This Guide

This guide outlines eight steps involved in developing an enabling policy for digital teaching and learning. The guide was developed following consultation with staff across the sector and a review of policies in Ireland and abroad.

The group of sectoral representatives who scoped the Enabling Policies project identified five topics which represent emergent policy areas for digital teaching and learning approaches as they are characterised as having wide pedagogical, institutional, legal, ethical and regulatory implications. These topics, listed below, were seen as best addressed through a sectoral-level perspective, which collaboratively identifies, collates and develops the relevant policy framework, guidance and resources to enhance the use of digital technology in supporting institutions' teaching and learning initiatives and strategies.

- Technology-enabled Assessment
- Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
- Curriculum Design
- Managing Artefacts on a virtual learning environment
- Student Digital Footprint and Digital Wellbeing

The second part of the guide provides examples of questions suggested by the sector to be asked when developing enabling policies in the five topics related to digital teaching and learning. Examples of how existing policies have responded to such questions are also provided.

This Guide is published as a supplement to the Review of the Existing Higher Education Policy Landscape for Digital Teaching and Learning in Ireland, available at [www.teachingandlearning.ie](http://www.teachingandlearning.ie)

Please note: Policy examples included in this guide were extracted in spring 2017 and such policies may have been updated since that time.

# Steps in Developing an Enabling Policy

## Step 1:

### Review current policy and practice within your institution

The starting point in developing enabling policies is to review existing policies, review existing practice in the policy area and consider future expectations. This information gathering step needs to be done in a systematic way and may include consultation with staff and students, and desk research of policies and existing institutional and national data in the policy area. The review should allow you to have a catalogue of existing policies and practices and an understanding of what staff and students expect for the future.

## Step 2:

### Identify gaps in current provision

The next step is to identify any gaps in current provision using your gathered data as a guide. The following are some questions to consider when reviewing the data gathered:

- Are there current practices that are outside the remit of existing policy?
- What is the gap between existing policy and expectations for this policy area?
- What is the gap between existing resources and expectations for this policy area?
- Do existing policies need to be amended or is a new policy required?
- To what extent are existing policies enabling?

## Step 3:

### Consultation

This consultation process should incorporate opportunities for discussion and debate with all stakeholders around different aspects of the topic within the institution that need to be agreed, developed and addressed to formulate an enabling policy. Stakeholders may include students, academic staff, educational technologists, senior and middle management, technical services, and administration staff. Issues to be considered include developing a clear vision for the institution's practice and future, what the HEI is capable of supporting, how innovative practice in this area can be protected, to what extent this policy area is a collaborative exercise and the need to ensure that the HEI is upholding its legal obligations in this area.

## Step 4:

### Drafting an Enabling Policy

The drafting of an enabling policy is guided by answering a series of questions that address the issues and concerns of stakeholders in any given area. The detail of this step will be different for different policy topics. This guide focuses on the five topic areas identified by the project scoping group.

Examples of questions suggested by the sector to be asked when developing enabling policies in topics related to digital teaching and learning are provided later in this guide. Examples of how existing policies have responded to such questions are also provided.

## Step 5:

### (Re-)Evaluate – (Re-)Draft Policy

Effective enabling policies are situated in practice. This step offers the opportunity to evaluate the extent to which the draft policy is situated in practice. Consultation with relevant stakeholders is again important at this stage. The evaluation process, however, should go beyond consultation and cover scenario-based testing, to determine whether the draft policy is sufficient to respond to the expectations of stakeholders identified in Step 1, and a content analysis of the draft policy, to determine whether it reflects the language of digital teaching and learning. The evaluation process also offers the opportunity to draw up policy instruments, such as procedures, and accompanying documentation. The evaluation of policy in practice will likely require re-drafting of the policy.

**Step 6:****Policy Approval**

The approval process for teaching and learning policies differs between HEIs, although most involve being approved by academic sub-committees before being submitted for approval by a Senate or Academic Council. HEIs will also consider different criteria for a policy to be approved. HEIs often provide a template for the policy that must be adhered to for approval. Some HEIs will stipulate that the policy include aspects such as policy instruments, the procedure for non-compliance, an implementation plan, a review period and a specified owner, responsible for implementation and review.

**Example of the sections to be filled out in a policy template**

1. Purpose of policy
2. Policy scope
3. Impact of policy
4. Resource needs
5. Compliance with national legislation, University statutes and policies
6. Supporting documents
7. Communication and training needs

*From University College Dublin Policy Management Framework*

**Example of mandatory and optional sections in a policy template**

Purpose:  
 Policy:  
 Definitions:  
 (Optional)  
 Audience:  
 Relevant legislation:  
 Legal compliance:  
 Related policies and procedures

*From University of Massey Council Statute On Policy Development and Review*

**Step 7:****Implementing Policy**

An effective enabling policy is one that can be implemented. In order for a policy to be implementable, it requires an implementation plan and policy implementation tools, including procedures. The dissemination of the policy and accompanying documents will likely require awareness raising or training sessions with training material. Identifying and managing the impact of the new or updated policy on existing operational and information management systems should also be covered by the implementation plan.

**Example of a policy development template, including an implementation plan**

Indicate broadly what actions are needed to implement the policy, who is responsible and the timeline for completion.

Measures required may include:

- Development of guidelines and forms
- Administrative arrangements and appropriate operational documentation and know-how
- Systems requirements and when and how these will be delivered
- Training requirements and how and by whom it will be delivered
- Resources (for staff, equipment, systems etc) and whether they have been allocated
- Communication with staff, students and others to whom the policy applies (for example, memos, flyers/posters, seminars/roadshows, web-based Q&A, and notification in Staff News). Note that publication on the web-based Policy Directory is the responsibility of the Council Secretariat.

*From University of Adelaide Communication and Implementation Plan Template*

**Step 8:****Monitoring and Reviewing for Effectiveness**

Monitoring can be achieved by offering a communication channel for reporting policy problems or issues, such as an online policy log. Monitoring can also be achieved by assigning responsibility for discovering policy problems to the policy owner.

**Example of policy monitoring and reviewing using a policy issues log**

The Policy Issues Log should be maintained by the Policy Custodian throughout implementation and use of the policy. The log will record feedback regarding the policy and will be used to inform further reviews of the policy.

*From University of Wollongong Policy Development and Review*

An alternative approach is to adopt an indicator system to measure the policy's effectiveness against a set of criteria. Policy performance indicators can be generic or policy specific. All policies should be reviewed within a stated period of time. The conditions under which a policy can be updated should also be clarified.

**Example of policy monitoring using generic indicators**

- Input indicators, which measure the resources (financial and human) allocated to the policy.
- Output indicators, which measure what the policy produced
- Outcome indicators, which measure what results the policy achieved

*From Schumann (2016)*



## **HELPFUL QUESTIONS AND EXAMPLES FOR STEP 4 : DRAFTING ENABLING POLICIES FOR SPECIFIC DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING TOPICS**

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The following pages provide examples of questions suggested by the sector to be asked when developing enabling policies in five topics related to digital teaching and learning. Examples of how existing policies from Irish and international HEIs have responded to such questions are also provided.



# Technology-Enabled Assessment

Technology-enabled assessment (TEA) is the use of technology to conduct assessment OF/FOR/AS learning or for the management and administration of such assessments. As many institutions are now harnessing the potential of technology to support teaching and learning, there is a concomitant increase in TEA.

## Defining the HEI commitment to the topic

### Key questions

- Why is the HEI committed to TEA?
- How will staff and students be supported with TEA?
- What level of competence should staff attain before they can engage in TEAs?
- How can the HEI commitment to TEA align with its obligations regarding data protection legislation?
- What type of TEAs is the HEI capable of supporting?
- Under what conditions can staff engage with third-party vendors for assessments?
- Is the HEI's commitment to accessible TEAs legally compliant?

### Example of how a HEI can show commitment to TEA by stipulating the conditions required for integrating TEA into teaching

- Teachers and learners have to be digital literate.
- Teachers and learners have access to ICTs.
- Teachers have to be able to design Innovative Learning Environments and related assessment systems.
- Teachers can operate as designers in the school context
- Teachers have time to design and implement assessment tools.
- Methodologies, tools and products have to be available to support teachers in the design of technology enhanced assessment.

*From UNESCO Technology Enhanced Assessment in Education: Policy Brief*

### Example statement on a HEI commitment to TEA

- To ensure innovative, accessible and secure assessments
- There will be thorough testing and reviews
- Staff will be appropriately trained in the necessary skills
- Equality of opportunity for learners who are assessed and provide evidence using different media
- E-portfolio systems are secure, moveable and meet the evidence needs for a range of qualifications
- Disaster recovery plans are developed for all eAssessments, ePortfolios and eVerification processes

*From Agored Cymu E-assessment Policy*

# Clarifying areas of responsibility

## Key questions

There are a number of stakeholders who may be involved in the management of TEAs: lecturers, students, educational technologists, heads of department/school/faculty, heads of teaching and learning or online education unit, technical services staff, or administration staff. Policy development should ensure that responsibilities for tasks are clear by considering who in the HEI is responsible for:

- coordinating the TEA process
- providing administration
- providing technical support
- testing the systems being used
- ensuring staff and students are comfortable with the systems being used
- the induction and training of students
- invigilating
- verifying the TEA
- designing contingency plans for system failures
- determining access to the TEA
- managing the retention of TEAs

### Example from a TEA policy specifying roles and responsibilities with an accompanying responsibilities chart

- Co-ordination role (Exams Office)
- Administration (Exams Office)
- Curriculum Development and Delivery Role (Head of School)
- Technical Support (Information Services)
- Learning and Teaching Role (Head of School)
- Invigilating Role (Exams Office)

*From University of Nottingham Responsibilities chart from its e-Assessment Policy*

### Example of responsibilities being assigned in each section of a TEA policy

- That all the right information is communicated to the students beforehand (School)
- That students are aware of the type of material being used and that none of the material is offensive (Lecturer)
- That the correct steps are taken to ensure the assessment is accessible (Library and Learning Centre (LLC) staff)
- Testing for reliability of the systems used (LLC and Technical Services when using the central online assessment systems, the School when not using a central online assessment system)
- Training to use the online systems (LLC)
- Help with authoring eAssessments (LLC)

*From University of Dundee Online Assessment Policy and Pro*

# Establishing limits for TEA

## Key questions

- What limits should the HEI apply to the types of TEA that can and cannot be offered to students?
- What limits should the HEI apply regarding the applications that can and cannot be used for TEAs?
- Should the HEI specify the devices that can and cannot be used to set and complete TEAs?
- Are there any conditions under which a department/faculty or lecturer can use applications and platforms not supported by the HEI?
- What are the conditions under which new and innovative TEA practices can be tried and tested?
- If limits on type/applications/devices are in place, what is the approach to reviewing those limits?

### Example of how limits are applied to types of e-assessment based on the responsibilities of the module coordinator

With regard to the conduct of online formative assessment [...] Module Coordinators shall ensure that students have opportunities to self-monitor and/or learn from other students, receive automated or specific feedback online, practise and see examples of any unfamiliar task/software/VLE functionality prior to submission.

With regard to online summative, high stakes assessment, Module Coordinators shall ensure [...] that students are given clear comprehensive instructions on all aspects of the operation and completion of the assessment including such information as the required file formats and the number of attempts allowed for that assessment component for which they have the responsibility for submitting online.

*From University College Dublin Assessment Code of Practice*

### Example of allowing for innovative assessment practice while protecting students

1.7 Principle 5 Assessment design and practice should, where appropriate, encourage innovative approaches. The crucial aspect of this is to ensure that staff take managed "risks" with any new assessment method. Whatever is tried, ensure that background advice is sought and that some trial testing has been carried out prior to going "live" with students. Also make sure that the first time the method is carried out, a thorough evaluation is carried out to ensure it has enhanced learning and not disadvantaged students.

*From University of West of Scotland Assessment Handbook for Staff: Effective Practice in Assessment*

### Example of limits placed on types of TEA by the availability of resources

4.5 Online and technology-based assessment may be used and must be appropriately resourced. Subjects may involve assessment tasks that are completed online (for example, blogs, wikis, participation in online simulations, creation of digital works) or submitted online or make use of technological equipment. Appropriate resources to complete these activities must be available to students.

*From University of Technology Sydney Policy for the Assessment of Coursework Subjects*

### Example of limits placed on types of TEA based on being fair to the student

Methods may include online components and/or components that are self-assessed by the student or peer assessed by other students. The assessment method chosen must provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes at a standard defined by specified assessment criteria. Alternative arrangements must be made for those who might be disadvantaged by the form of assessment chosen.

*From DIT General Assessment Regulations*

# The development and delivery of TEAs

## Key questions

- How does the assessment policy address the need to ensure that staff and students are fully informed about what conducting TEA involves?
- Should the HEI consider adopting a minimum standard for designing a TEA?
- What is the HEI's approach to ensuring TEAs are appropriate to the level of learning and skill for the student?
- Should the HEI specify a level of competence that staff and students have in using the chosen applications and platforms before participating in a TEA?
- Should the HEI consider an approved list of methods of eSubmission?
- Is the use of plagiarism detection applications permissible, voluntary or mandatory?
- Should the HEI consider what it defines as a late submission for eSubmissions and non-eSubmissions?
- Should the HEI consider setting a turnaround time for marking and providing eFeedback?
- Should the HEI consider a minimum standard for level and completeness of eFeedback?
- Should students have access to the mark-up for all types of TEA, including ePortfolios?
- What is the HEI's approach to an assessment appeals process that is not face-to-face?

### Example of the type of information to be communicated to students prior to a TEA

- The format of the assessment
- The number and type of questions to be used/answered
- The scoring rules for individual questions and the overall assessment
- The contribution the assessment makes to an overall module
- How the questions are selected for the assessment
- Any time limit
- Any restraints on navigation between questions, or blocks of questions
- Assessment regulations including permitted and excluded resources
- Feedback to be provided (including timescales and their mark if appropriate)
- Details of the appeals procedure available to students
- How they will be identified for the assessment

*From Dundee University Online Assessment Policy*

### Example of a HEI that is promoting but not mandating the use of plagiarism detection software

2.1 Turnitin is available to all academics and it is recommended that, where appropriate, all courses make use of Turnitin as an educational tool by allowing their students to submit at least some of their assignments to the system.

*From University of Glasgow Policy for the use of the Plagiarism Prevention Software*

### Example of when plagiarism prevention software is mandatory

- All typed summative assessment, including dissertations, should be submitted online and subjected to plagiarism detection software, where appropriate
- Schools must ensure students are aware that plagiarism detection software is used and must be directed to information, advice and guidance on academic writing, avoiding plagiarism and the penalties arising from academic misconduct.
- Where a School requires alternative methods of submission for typed assessment, any printing costs must be met by the School.

*From University of Manchester Policy on Submission of Work for Summative Assessment on Taught Programmes*

# Security, reliability and validity

## Key questions

- Are TEA approaches/tools/processes to be tested for security/validity/appropriateness/reliability before being used?
- What, if any, off-campus or online proctoring approaches are acceptable?
- What are the conditions under which it is acceptable to use third-party platforms for TEA?
- Should the HEI adopt an accepted approach to validating TEAs?
- Are there HEI-approved mechanisms for verifying student identity?
- Has the policy considered its commitment to the student should any authorised TEA platform become unavailable?
- Should the policy restrict submission of TEA to specific time periods?
- What level of security does the policy commit to?
- What level of contingency is guaranteed for system downtime?
- Who has access to submitted and marked up TEAs?
- For how long will TEAs be retained and by whom?
- Will sharing of the marked up TEAs be permissible?

### Example from a policy that mandates the use of Turnitin for validity

Electronic marking will be conducted via Turnitin GradeMark, which will be the only supported tool for electronic marking on in-scope assessments. The Technology-Enhanced Learning Office will provide a programme of training and development for all members of staff involved in the marking process. The GradeMark software enables the current policy on marking to be conducted and therefore allows modules to be marked by more than one marker.

- All work submitted electronically will be uploaded to the Turnitin database to produce an originality report, which will be available to markers, who will receive training in how to interpret the report.
- Feedback will be provided in accordance with University policy on deadlines for feedback. Students will receive feedback as set out in regulation 2.6.4. Feedback for all assessment modes that are in-scope will be provided electronically via Sussex Direct for marks and Turnitin GradeMark for annotated scripts.

*From University of Sussex Policy on Electronic Assessment Submission, Marking and Feedback*

A number of HEIs have based their policies on the principles of BS ISO/IEC 23988:2007 Information Technology - A code of practice for the use of information technology in the delivery of assessments, which include:

- Validity and reliability of delivery or scoring of assessments
- Computer delivery and scoring should be fair to all candidates
- No candidate is placed at substantial disadvantage
- The health and safety of candidates
- Maintaining confidentiality of assessment content and correct responses if required
- Maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of candidate data
- The value of an audit
- Ensuring back-up facilities and fall-back procedures are in place

### Example of enhanced security measures for third-party platforms

A signed agreement/contract must be in place between NUI Galway and all partners. The following criteria must be included in all agreements:

- A statement of compliance with the NUI Galway security policies
- The contract must include a suitable Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), if applicable e.g. personal information is exchanged or NUI Galway intellectual property is divulged. ISS have a standard NDA which can be obtained from the Director of ISS on request
- Security responsibilities must be clearly defined including the security controls applied to NUI Galway data. This is also a legal requirement where personal data may be processed
- A notification procedure and security incident management
- Right to audit and monitor compliance with the security requirements and controls of the agreement
- Return or destruction of the information on completion of the agreement
- Change management procedure
- Service level and acceptable parameter indicators

*From NUI Galway Partnering Policy*

# Copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

For the purpose of this guide, copyright policy refers to the use of digital content not owned or created by the lecturer in teaching content, and IPR policy refers to the ownership and licensing of digital content created by staff and students of the HEI. IPR policies are also used to address additional issues, such as the commercialisation of research outputs and innovations. This guide, however, is restricted to questions surrounding digital outputs for teaching and learning purposes.

## Defining the HEI commitment to the topic

### Key questions

- Will the HEI address IPR of staff on a case-by-case basis through employment contracts, through an institution-wide policy or through a faculty/department policy?
- Will HEIs challenge staff who are in breach of its IPR policy?
- Will HEIs protect the IPR of staff and students in accordance with its IPR policy?
- What effort will the HEI make to ensure that all staff and students are aware of and understand their IPR and the HEI's IPR?
- What will the HEI do to ensure that its staff do not infringe on a third party's copyright in their teaching material?

### Suggested headings on HEI commitment in a copyright policy

- Statement of commitment
- Purpose and role of the policy, including authority
- Contact information for questions
- Person(s) with final decision-making authority regarding issues covered by policy
- How the entity enforces its copyrights
- When and how to obtain permission to use protected works
- When and how the entity will grant permission for use of its own works
- How the entity will enforce the policy

*From McCord (2016)*

### Example from a policy that assigns responsibility to check potential infringements of third-party copyright in teaching material

Knowledge officers make the following checks for documents available on the Internet:

- Check the document carefully for copyright information.
- Scan the sites for details of a copyright policy. This is usually located at the top or bottom of the home page.
- Look for a Creative Commons licence on the site. This may mean that the material can be used for educational purposes without written permission. (Details of Creative Commons licences are available from the copyright guide.)
- If there is no obvious copyright policy, they try the site's own search engine or enter the organisation's name and 'copyright policy' into Google.

*From Hibernia College Procedures for Assuring the Quality of the Learning Environment Including the VLE*

# Ownership of digital content

## Key questions

- Under what circumstances will the HEI exercise its right to the ownership of digital material created by its employees?
- What exceptions to its ownership of digital teaching content will the HEI grant?
- Who owns a recorded lecture, given that the performance aspect of a lecture may be retained as the IPR of the lecturer?
- Whose consent is required before a lecture is digitally captured?
- Under what conditions can a digitally recorded lecture be re-used?
- How is the authorship of digital content determined when it is created by a multi-skilled team?
- Where is re-usable teaching material retained?
- What happens to digital teaching content produced by a lecturer who has since left the HEI?

### Example from an IPR policy that recognises the IP of staff with a few exceptions

UCL also recognizes the rights of members of staff to copyright and other forms of IPR in teaching materials in all formats. UCL waives its employers' rights to copyright in order to give effect to this.

The exceptions to this are:

- Institutional materials including reports, syllabuses, curricula, papers commissioned by UCL for administrative purposes etc.
- Materials generated by prior agreement, for which UCL provides resources which are in excess of these normally available to members of staff.
- Materials which are generated by prior agreement as ventures which involve sharing of copyright ownership between UCL and members of staff.
- Copyright in any software programme generated during the normal course of University employment
- Copyright in any designs, specifications or other works which may be necessary to protect rights in commercially exploitable intellectual property.

In these cases ownership of copyright vests in UCL, as sole owner or as a part owner, except where otherwise agreed. Performance rights will be treated in the same way as copyright.

*From University College London Staff IPR Policy*

### Example from an IPR policy that recognises the IP of staff and students, but retains a royalty-free right to use such IP

2.5 Unless otherwise provided for in writing, DIT specifically acknowledges that the substance of a lecture, whether delivered in the classroom or by other means, belongs to the Creator, and that IP created in the form of a textbook, instructional website, or other instructional material developed as part of the normal teaching activities of a DIT Colleague is owned by the Creator.

2.6 DIT intends that IP created exclusively by a Student Creator will be owned by the Student Creator. For such to be the case, the TTO must agree in writing that the Student is the sole Creator, that in the reasonable opinion of the TTO that DIT Resources did not form a significant part of the development of the IP, and that there are no sponsorship agreements that require assignment.

2.7 In all cases, DIT retains a royaltyfree irrevocable perpetual right to use for scholarly, academic and other noncommercial purposes all of the IP created by Colleagues and Students that is subject to this IP Policy.

From DIT Policy on Intellectual Property

### Example from a lecture capture policy with an opt-out clause and clarification on the IPR of the recording

3.2 Prior to the beginning of each Semester, teaching staff will be informed that recordings will be made if their teaching and learning activities take place in a location containing automated lecture capture technology. Staff not wishing to have their sessions recorded should respond to this stating 'Opt out'.

3.3 Recordings will, by default, be available only to students who are registered on the unit for which the recording was made, unless requests are made by the teaching staff involved to make the recordings more widely available (to, for example, students on other units or through iTunesU, etc.).

*From University of Manchester Policy on the Recording of Lectures and other Teaching and Learning Activities*

# Licensing and sharing of digital content

## Key questions

- Can students share content outside the HEI that they have created in their role as learners in the HEI?
- Can students share their digital assessments, including the mark-up, outside the HEI?
- Under what circumstances can a lecturer use student-generated content as a teaching tool?
- Who decides who should have access to digitally-retained teaching content?
- Under what conditions can digital teaching material be made open access?

### Example from a policy that determines the publishing conditions and areas of responsibility for open educational resources (OERs)

1. The University encourages staff and students to use, create and publish OERs to enhance the quality of the student experience, provided that the resources are fit-for-purpose and relevant.
2. Use, creation and publication of OERs are consistent with the University's reputation, values and mission to "make a significant, sustainable and socially responsible contribution to Scotland, the UK and the world, promoting health and economic and cultural wellbeing."
3. It is expected that OERs used, created or published by individual staff and students will normally be single units or small collections (e.g. podcast episodes, small collection of images etc.).
4. Whether or not OERs are used or published in a School, Department or Service is ultimately a decision for the Head of School, Head of Department or Head of Service as appropriate. Unless stated to the contrary, it is assumed that use, creation and publication of single units or small collections will be allowed. Where use, creation and publication are to be restricted, Schools, Departments and Services are encouraged to identify and communicate a rationale for restriction. It is expected that justifications for restriction will normally be based on protection of commercial interests.
5. University policies on IPR must be adhered to. When using OERs, students and staff must comply with the terms of the licence of use.
6. All OERs used and created must comply with the University policy on Accessible and inclusive learning
7. The University reserves the right to remove resources that do not comply with its policies, and/or request removal of resources from external repositories/sites.

*From University of Edinburgh Open Educational Resources Policy (Adapted from University of Leeds OERs, incorporating additions from the GCU Interim OER Policy and the University of Greenwich Position in relation to Open Educational Practices 2015-2017)*

### Example from an IPR policy discussing ownership of student-generated content

3.1 The University agrees that a student does not relinquish his/her IP rights solely by pursuing a course of study offered by the University.

3.2. The University agrees that students are the owners of copyright in their theses and any other assessable work to the extent that they are the author of the work.

*From University of Canterbury Intellectual Property Policy*

### Example from an open access policy that promotes the use of OERs

This policy is designed to support the free flow of information across national and international research communities; to support the principle of research-enabled teaching and learning and the generation of Open Educational Resources (OER); to contribute to Open Innovation through richer and more effective knowledge transfer and diffusion.

*From Open Access Ireland National Principles for Open Access Policy Statement*

### Example from a policy on authorship

This document outlines Waterford Institute of Technology's policy on authorship of research papers and other artefacts produced by members of the WIT academic community that are made available to the external community in a manner acknowledging the author's or authors' affiliation with the Institute. It covers the following: criteria for authorship; acknowledgement of the contribution of non-authors; order of authorship; responsibilities of authors; authorship dispute resolution; and issues relating to retention of data used in the preparation of the paper/artefact.

*From Waterford Institute of Technology Authorship and Data Retention Policy*

# Curriculum Design

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Curriculum is a term that can be used to encompass the structure and content of a unit or programme of study, the experience of learning, or the process of teaching and learning.<sup>1</sup> The planning involved in curriculum development is often termed curriculum design. The digital dimension of teaching and learning has had impacts on the nature of curriculum design.

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## Defining the HEI commitment to the topic

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### Key questions

- How does the HEI intend to incorporate the benefits of digital technology into its vision for learning?
- Will the HEI commit to providing the IT infrastructure necessary to meet its commitment to incorporate digital technology into teaching and learning?
- Will the HEI commit to complying with national and EU directives on the accessible use of digital technology in the curriculum?
- Will the HEI commit to ensuring a consistent approach to the use of digital technology in the curriculum?
- Will the HEI commit to managing expectations of its staff and students with regard to the use of digital technology in the curriculum?

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### Example of a Teaching Charter that spells out the student, academic and HEI commitments

- Provide a Safe, Secure, and Inclusive Environment: Honouring this commitment requires that the University provide a safe, secure and inclusive environment for all members of the university community. It requires that all members feel welcome and valued, and that administrative systems are designed and operated to minimize stress and avoid frustration.
- Provide Appropriate Learning Resources, Facilities, and Technology: Honouring this commitment requires that the University provide appropriate classroom, research, and study environments for students; access to informational resources; and appropriate teaching and research technology to support teaching, learning, and student discovery within a context that supports both on-campus and distributed learning. This also requires that class sizes be set commensurately with the pedagogy that best fits their course content and learning objectives.

*From the University of Saskatchewan Learning Charter*

1. Fraser, S.P., Bosanquet, A.M. (2006) The Curriculum? That's just a unit outline, isn't it? *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(3), 269-284.

# Hour allocation and the flexibility afforded by digital technology

## Key questions

- Is the term contact hours a relevant measure of student-lecturer interaction given the flexibility of contact afforded by digital technology?
- Are staff hour allocations tied to face-to-face engagement with student?
- How does the HEI acknowledge the additional preparation and “off timetable” effort that is required to teach with digital technology?
- How does the HEI’s IT procurement take into consideration digital technology’s use in curriculum design?
- How does hour allocation take into consideration the flipped classroom, monitoring discussion boards and other flexible teaching methods facilitated by digital technology?

### Example from a policy on procurement and review of educational technologies

New enterprise-level educational technologies will only be considered for adoption in accordance with terms of reference approved by Education Committee, in consultation with the Office of the Chief Information Officer. New enterprise-level educational technologies will only be adopted upon Academic Board approval of an education and business case.

Enterprise level educational technologies will be reviewed at least every three years by Education Committee and the Office of the Chief Information Officer, in accordance with terms of reference approved by Education Committee.

Use of alternative enterprise-level educational technologies will only be allowed upon Education Committee and Academic Board approval of an education, business and backup and disaster recovery case.

*From Monash University Educational Technologies Policy*

### Example from a policy that acknowledges the different demands of preparing content for online and distance learning and the need for HEI commitments to meet those demands

It is appreciated that the development and maintenance of distance learning module materials are time-consuming tasks in which departments have long standing and well-developed expertise. This is essential to ensure a high standard of learning materials, which are particularly central to the experience of distance learners.

For the majority of distance learning departments, the following quality checks will be already embedded in practice; a consistent University-wide approach is an important step in protecting and upholding our strong distance learning reputation (in addition to strengthening our compliance with the QAA’s Quality Code)

Following on from the Programme Approval Process, the Head of Department is responsible for allocating the task of writing distance learning module materials to an appropriately qualified member of staff, or appointing associate tutors/external consultants to undertake this work, where internal resources are not available.

The Head of Department will also be responsible for the overall monitoring of the progress of the development of module materials [...]

Members of staff responsible for developing module materials should receive the necessary briefing and training to enable them to perform the task.

Heads of Department will be required to sign off materials (paper based and online) for each component module of a programme.

*From University of Leicester Quality Assurance Policy for Distance Learning Module Materials*

# Incorporating digital technology into the curriculum design process

## Key questions

- Should a mapping exercise to track the use of digital technology across the curriculum be integral to the design process?
- Should the curriculum design process identify how digital technology can be utilised to support universal design for learning through multiple means of representation, expression and engagement?
- Should new academic staff be required to participate in educational technologies training or workshops as part of their induction?
- To what extent does the use of digital technology, as stipulated in the design of a curriculum, meet the HEI's obligations to facilitate accessibility?
- Should the templates for curriculum design (programme descriptors/module descriptors) contain the language of digital technology for teaching and learning?

### Example from an induction policy that requires new lecturers to take a course that covers digital technologies and curriculum design

All new Assistant Lecturers and Lecturers who do not hold a teaching qualification or equivalent on appointment will be facilitated to undertake a Postgraduate Diploma in Third Level Learning through the Learning Teaching & Technology Centre.

*From DIT Staff Induction & Probation Policy*

### Example from an induction policy that mandates training in digital technologies for curriculum design

Academic staff will be required to undertake training in the use of new e-learning technologies to be used in the development of curriculum resources, teaching methods, delivery of instruction and interaction with students inter alia.

As a part of a continuing professional development policy with this new technology, academic staff are:

- Encouraged to attend each other's lectures/webinars.
- Encouraged to attend conferences and courses run by other organisations in relevant technical fields.
- Involved in the development and writing of new course proposals and content, as well as reviewing and critiquing the work of other lecturing staff.

*From Engineering Institute of Technology Selection, Appointment and Induction Policy – Academic and Administration Staff*

# Curriculum design as a collaborative process

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## Key questions

- Which professionals other than lecturers are involved in the curriculum design process?
- How is the involvement in the curriculum design process of multi-skilled professionals from different departments co-ordinated?
- Is curriculum design a discipline-led or non-discipline led activity?
- How does curriculum design take into account the concept of students as co-creators?

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### **Example from a course design policy that assigns responsibility to the faculty but ensures the process is a collaborative one**

2. Each Faculty, in consultation with the Vice-President Academic, determines the course development process that will be followed within its courses and programs.
3. The development of AU courses is led by the Course Coordinator, who meets with a community of specialists in content, design, online teaching and learning strategies, multimedia, editing, production and evaluation in ways co-determined by the Course Coordinator and the development team as described in the Course Development Procedures.

*From Athabasca University Course Development Policy*

### **Example from a policy that recognises a team approach to curriculum design and the need to properly acknowledge the time and effort behind digital teaching and learning**

1. Technology-enhanced learning approaches will combine technology-related and face-to-face activities. These will be aligned with best practice to enhance the student learning experience.
2. A Virtual Learning Environment will be used for all modules to promote student engagement, self-responsibility and independent learning.
3. Students and staff will require training and support in the use and application of e-learning tools.
4. Programme design teams will introduce blended learning approaches into all programmes. Consideration will also be given to eventually achieving fully online delivery mode for some modules and programmes.
5. There will be recognition for staff in terms of time, consistent with the level of technology-enhanced activities being implemented. Such recognition will offer opportunities to develop partnerships, research practice, share resources and contribute to the scholarship of e-learning and e-pedagogy.
6. The Institute will ensure a consistent, reliable and scalable IT infrastructure and will provide a range of learning resources and software.
7. Protocols for online engagement will complement existing policy on social networking.
8. Students and staff will have opportunities to evaluate the quality of support provided.

*From DKIT Transforming Learning Through Technology Policy*

# Enabling Policies for Managing Artefacts on a Virtual Learning Environment

A virtual learning environment (VLE), or learning management system (LMS) is an online platform for groups of teachers and learners to share digital teaching content, engage in learning activities and communicate online. This guide focusses on the management of digital content on the VLE. A third-party platform refers to an online platform for sharing digital teaching and learning content that is not subscribed to by the HEI.

## Defining the HEI commitment to the topic

### Key questions

- Will the HEI commit to support open access to all teaching and learning material on the VLE for all staff?
- Will the HEI commit to protecting lecturers controlling access to teaching material they have created?
- Will the HEI commit to clearly defining roles and responsibilities with regard to access rights to the VLE and external applications used for teaching and learning?
- Will the HEI commit to protecting staff and student data and content kept on internal and external storage?
- Will the HEI commit to clarifying the purpose of the VLE for either administrative or teaching purposes or both?

### Example of a policy that requires engagement with the VLE

Moodle is a virtual learning environment (VLE), a software package designed to help educators create quality on-line courses and manage learner outcomes. Lecturers assigned to deliver and assess modules are required to make certain course materials available to their learners via Moodle. All course material uploaded to Moodle is subject to review and validation.

*From DBS Assessment Policy, Procedures and Regulations*

### Example of a disclaimer approach to the management of content on a VLE

- DIT is not responsible for unexpected downtime of the Virtual Learning Environment. The users will, however, be informed in advance of any scheduled downtime
- Loss of data due to interruptions in Internet service is not the responsibility of DIT but that of the users' internet service provider
- Neither will DIT be liable for the loss of data caused by a computer or electronic virus. It is the responsibility of the user to implement procedures for backing up data and virus checking
- DIT reserves the right to monitor user activity
- DIT reserves the right to review, move or delete material at its own discretion, including postings to discussions boards, bulletin boards and chat rooms, which it considers to be in breach of the terms and conditions for use
- DIT will not be responsible for links posted by users in its system or using its online tools
- No member of DIT will knowingly give out users' personal contact details

*From DIT Disclaimer Webcourses Acceptable Use Policy*

# Inconsistent use of the VLE

## Key questions

- Should the HEI mandate that all course content be made available on the VLE?
- Should consistent use of the VLE be determined at the level of department, faculty or institution?
- Should the HEI mandate a consistent approach to training and instruction on using the VLE?
- Should there be a quality control mechanism (peer review) for content uploaded to the VLE?
- How can lecturers be reassured that open and honest recorded communication on a VLE will not be used for purposes other than those originally intended?
- Should lecturers be permitted to opt out of using the VLE?

### Example of a minimum standard for the VLE

All courses should have the following mandatory minimum presence on VISION to ensure equality of provision for all students:

- Lecturer contact details
- Calendar of dates
- Course outline/syllabus
- Core information (e.g. course or programme handbook)
- Course learning materials
- Assignment and assessment details
- Marking criteria and hand-in timeline
- Sample exam paper and other examples
- References, e.g. websites
- Course feedback survey

*From Herriot Watt University VLE Minimum Criteria*

### Example of a minimum standard for the VLE

The first three points from the 11-point Design and Navigation Standards section of a VLE Policy and Guidance document:

- i. Include an outline of the module/programme with a statement of learning outcomes (by quoting from or linking to approved versions held in the SRS), and a module/programme calendar where relevant, under the main navigation heading of "Overview".
- ii. Learning and teaching content should normally be stored under the overarching main navigation heading of "Materials and Activities" and organised in such a way as to aid student navigation – for example, content might be arranged chronologically with reference to the module/course calendar; by theme or topic; or by group activity – but other formats may be used as appropriate to the programme/module.
- iii. Key contact information for academic, administrative and technical support should normally be provided under the overarching main navigation heading of "Help and Contacts".

*From University of Leicester Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard) Policy and Guidance Statement*

# Administration and management of the VLE and its content, including access

## Key questions

- Should lecturers have access to content other than the modules they are teaching?
- Under what conditions can one lecturer use another lecturer's content on the VLE?
- Who is responsible for granting access to a module on a VLE?
- Under what conditions can teaching material be removed from the VLE?
- Who is responsible for removing content from a VLE?
- Who is responsible for uploading content to a VLE?
- What happens to student-generated content on a VLE after the module has ended?
- What happens to teaching material on a VLE after the lecturer who created the teaching material is no longer teaching the module?
- Who is responsible for backing up the content on the VLE and retrieving it when required?
- How will access for data protection and content security be managed?
- Who is responsible for determining who has access to what on a VLE?
- How long is data and content retained on the VLE?
- Should the VLE be wiped at the end of each academic year?

### Example from a policy that outlines the access rights to modules on a VLE

#### 3.9.2 Access to Blackboard

- The course coordinator as listed in Banner will be automatically assigned to their course with full permission (i.e. as "Instructor"), in the online learning and teaching environment (Blackboard) at the time the online course is being set up for teaching. The school administrator as listed in Banner will automatically be assigned to the course with "administrator" permissions.
- The course coordinator is then responsible for enrolling other individuals such as other academics, guest lecturers, tutors, and the subject librarian as required, ensuring that the level of permission is appropriately set, particularly in relation to allowing access to student personal information, such as that stored in the Grade Centre.
- The relevant Dean may instruct ITS to enrol them, or their delegate, in any course in their faculty. Heads of School may instruct ITS to enrol them, or their delegate, in any course in their school.
- Blackboard access to courses will be made available to enrolled students one week prior to the commencement of the relevant trimester.

*From Victoria University of Wellington Programme and Course Design Handbook*

### Example of a take-down policy for content on a VLE

All materials stored in module sites will be considered active and dynamic for the duration of the term that the module runs. While the module is active instructors and students will have access to participate in collaborative work, submit work for assessment, take online tests/surveys and contribute to communication forums. At the end of the live module term, a phased process of archiving and eventual destruction will begin.

Five years after the end of the module, instructors on a module will be contacted by email and warned that the site on which they are enrolled is scheduled for deletion. Staff will be given the choice to allow the entire module site to be deleted, or for student contribution & enrolments to be removed. The latter would allow staff to retain teaching materials in the site. Staff will be given 2 months notice on receipt of the email to respond. If no response is received the module site will be deleted.

*From University of York (2013) Archiving of VLE Teaching and Learning Material and Communications policy (E-Learning Development Team, University of York).*

### Example from a policy that determines how staff access to the VLE is managed

#### Registration of Staff Users

The VLE Administrator (see 7.0 Virtual Learning Environments - Staff Roles below) is responsible for the registration of staff users. In order to protect personal data, only staff with a direct learning, teaching or support role in the programme/module should be given access to the associated Blackboard instance. Senior management or other approved staff receive reasonable access in order to study and improve systems.

*From University of Leicester Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard) Policy and Guidance Statement*

## Use of third-party platforms

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### Key questions

- Under what conditions can a lecturer use a third-party platform for teaching and learning content?
  - How can the HEI guarantee security of student and lecture data and content on a third-party platform not subscribed to by the HEI?
  - How are students to be supported using a third-party platform not subscribed to by the HEI?
  - Who is responsible for managing student and lecturer generated content on a third-party platform not subscribed to by the HEI?
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### Example of a partnering agreement with conditions for using a third-party vendor

A signed agreement/contract must be in place between NUI Galway and all partners.

4. The following criteria must be included in all agreements:

- A statement of compliance with the NUI Galway security policies
- The contract must include a suitable Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), if applicable e.g. personal information is exchanged or NUI Galway intellectual property is divulged.
- Security responsibilities must be clearly defined including the security controls applied to NUI Galway data. This is also a legal requirement where personal data may be processed.
- A notification procedure and security incident management
- Right to audit and monitor compliance with the security requirements and controls of the agreement
- Return or destruction of the information on completion of the agreement
- Change management procedure
- Service level and acceptable parameter indicators

*From NUIG Partnering Policy*

# Student Digital Footprint and Digital Wellbeing

Digital wellbeing is defined as 'understanding the nature of your online self, data and information, privacy and protection and taking care of yourself, others and information in ways that are ethical and respectful', while digital footprint is a measure of what information is available online about an individual as a result of their online activity.<sup>2</sup> HEIs have a responsibility to their staff and students to ensure their digital wellbeing is supported and they are aware of the consequences and implications of their behaviour online.

## Defining the HEI commitment to the topic

### Key questions

- Will the HEI commit to ensuring a safe online environment for staff and students?
- Will the HEI clarify who is responsible for ensuring students and staff behave in an appropriate manner online?
- Will the HEI commit to ensuring that digital wellbeing is embedded in the curriculum?
- Will the HEI acknowledge its staff and students' 'right to disconnect' and not be available online 24/7?
- Will the HEI contractually oblige staff and students to protect the reputation of the HEI online?

### Example of a social media policy that clearly defines responsibility and support for the use of social media

- General Provisions
- Use of Social Media Sites for General Business, Marketing and Communications
- The Vice President for External Relations will be responsible for administering this policy.
- The Social Media Policy Staff has been established to provide input and assist in University outreach and training on this policy and best practices. The Social Media Policy Staff will manage the day-to-day application process and update the [www.socialmedia.colostate.edu](http://www.socialmedia.colostate.edu) web page and account directory as needed.
- Administrators may contact CSU's Social Media Policy Staff at any time for consultation.

*From Colorado State University Policy: Social Media*

2. <https://www.teachingandlearning.ie/aboard-metro-map/>

# Digital wellbeing and teaching and learning

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## Key questions

- Should the HEI embed a mapping exercise into course design that measures the extent and variety of digital activities to avoid digital overload for staff and students?
  - Will the HEI consider restricting all digital activity for teaching and learning to the VLE?
  - Should online behaviour be graded?
  - Should all staff and students sign up to a netiquette agreement for good online behaviour?
  - Should developing an online community of responsible learners be embedded in course design?
- 

## An example from a HEI's Netiquette

- Be respectful of others' views and opinions. Insulting, condescending or abusive words will not be tolerated. Debate is welcome as long as you are discussing the ideas, not attacking the person.
- Be sensitive to different cultural, political and religious backgrounds. These differences will add to your experience, not detract from it.
- Be aware of the impact of your posts. In general, if you think something could be taken the wrong way it's probably best not to post it. If there is something you want to say to a teacher or peer that you're unsure is appropriate for public display, sending it via private message/email is the best solution.
- The online environment is great place to share ideas and support each other. Be proud of the posts you make as they can contribute to your fellow students learning experience.
- Posts that do not adhere to the above guidelines may be removed. Further action may be taken if it contravenes Swinburne policies.

*From Swinburne University of Technology's Online Student Charter and Netiquette*

# Training and support

## Key questions

- Will awareness about digital wellbeing be incorporated into student and staff inductions?
- Will digital wellbeing awareness be relevant for all users, regardless of digital capabilities?
- Should the HEI facilitate peer support to help students and staff ensure their digital wellbeing?
- Will training and support for digital wellbeing include how to 'clean up' a digital footprint?
- What else should such training and support include?

### Example from a social media policy that advises staff and students

- Users should not use social media so as to contravene or breach the laws of Ireland, specifically in relation to: privacy rights, defamation law and data protection law.
- Users should not use social media sites to engage in any form of bullying. Behaviour which is illegal or likely to cause harassment to others is strictly prohibited.
- Users should not excessively duplicate previously posted communications (other users may consider this as spam).
- Users should not impersonate any other person nor should users engage in trolling (i.e. intentionally insulting and harassing people via the Internet).
- Users should ensure that information posted is accurate and not misleading.
- Users should not post material for the purpose of embarrassing people or which will bring that person or the University into disrepute.
- Users should not use the name of the University, including any emblems or logos, to promote their own commercial objectives or activities.

*From UCC Social Media Policy*

### Example from an article that advises on what to include in a social media policy

- Philosophy of social media
- Defining terms of social media
- Can employee can include their organization in their profile?
- What types of information should remain confidential on social media
- Compliance with existing institutional, local, state and national policies
- Following social media sites terms of service agreements
- Boundaries with job duties
- University computer equipment terms
- Consequences if violations were to occur

*From Eaton, Luse, & Hodge. (2012)*

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