

PRE-SPECIFIED NATIONALLY CO-ORDINATED PROJECT

A REVIEW OF THE EXISTING HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY LANDSCAPE
FOR DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING IN IRELAND



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

A Review of the Existing Higher Education Policy Landscape for Digital Teaching and Learning in Ireland

Report compiled by Tony Murphy, in collaboration with the National Forum team



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Preface

The use of digital technologies continues to expand within higher education globally. With this growing use comes a need for staff, students and professional services within institutions to be supported and encouraged in their use of these technologies to create innovative and effective learning. The ability of institutions, their staff, students and their systems to embrace digital transformation will underpin their future success.

Arising from National Forum work on building digital capacity, this Review of the Existing Higher Education Policy Landscape for Digital Teaching and Learning in Ireland is designed to inform, guide and support all those responsible for the development of key policies in teaching and learning throughout our higher education sector.

We are grateful to Tony Murphy, the enabling policies project leader, and to all those involved in the scoping group who guided this work. We are greatly encouraged to see the level of engagement by the sector and this report will help all institutions to think through the kinds of policies that need to be in place to enable and support more flexible modes of delivery and the sound and effective integration of digital approaches to teaching and learning.

This report merits wide discussion across the sector and will form a valuable input to the development of a Higher Education Digital Transformation Framework, a key area of focus for the Higher Education Authority.

Dr Gemma Irvine

Head of Policy and Strategic Planning, Higher Education Authority



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Key Findings

- The emergence of digital technology has created exciting opportunities in higher education. Accompanying these are a new set of policy-related challenges and considerations for teaching and learning.
- Areas identified as being of particular significance for policy development within digital teaching and learning were: technology-enabled assessment, copyright and intellectual property rights, curriculum design, managing artefacts on a VLE, and student digital footprint and digital wellbeing.
- In this review, enabling policies are characterised as those which are implementable, situated in practice and reflective of institutional priorities. The review suggests that many existing policies do not recognise the practice context within which they are situated.
- Further, the challenges and opportunities related to digital teaching and learning were not often reflected in the language of existing policies.
- Enabling policies are permissive rather than restrictive and are intended to aid decision making, point to key challenges and help us to answer questions about how best to ensure consistent approaches and enhanced practice.
- When institutions operate without a robust policy framework for digital teaching and learning, informal practices can emerge which are inefficient, confusing or risky. The development of clear policies is part of a wider strategy, outlined in *A Roadmap for Enhancement in a Digital World*.¹
- Many institutions reported being in the process of developing policies for digital teaching and learning. It is therefore timely for a policy framework to enable enhanced digital teaching and learning in Irish higher education.
- A step-by-step Guide to Developing Enabling Policies for Digital Teaching and Learning, recently published by the National Forum, aims to support those developing policies in a way that is mindful of both what is important to the HEI and also what is achievable in practice.²

1 Available at www.teachingandlearning.ie/DigitalRoadmap

2 Available at www.teachingandlearning.ie/EnablingPolicies

Introduction

Recognising the importance of policies in shaping the activities of higher education institutions (HEIs), the National Forum's Enabling Policies for Digital Teaching and Learning project aimed to build awareness and capacity in policy development for digital teaching and learning across Irish higher education. The project stemmed specifically from Recommendation 1 of the Roadmap for Enhancement in a Digital World 2015-2017 (National Forum, 2015a): *'Prioritise the strategic development of digital capacity in institutional and national policy and quality frameworks in a way that supports innovation for impact'*.

The use of digital technology has changed the environment of teaching and learning in higher education. One effect of digital technology on teaching and learning is that practitioners often find themselves making decisions in situations that did not arise in a pre-digital teaching and learning context. For example:

- Teaching in a digital world tends to require more of a collaborative, multi-skilled approach. This prompts related decisions regarding contact hours, workloads and remuneration for staff.
- Collaboratively authored, digital teaching and learning content can be re-usable, which can raise questions regarding ownership of content. Guidance needs to be provided in relation to how, when and by whom digital teaching content can be accessed and re-used.
- Digital teaching and learning can involve working with people, platforms and applications outside the control of the HEI. This requires deliberation and clarification regarding the nature of relationships with outside agents.
- Digital teaching and learning can involve student-generated content being used as course content. Guidance is required relating to the treatment of such student-generated course content.
- The activities of teachers and students can now be recorded and monitored in new ways. Clarification is required regarding how such recordings are to be treated and what level of monitoring is appropriate.

Policy development is critical to supporting digital teaching and learning in its various forms (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Gregory & Lodge, 2015; Picciano & Dziuban, 2007; Tshabalala, Ndeya-Ndereya, & Merwe, 2014). An absence of formal policies has been noted as hindering decisions on educational technologies (Brown, Paewai, & Suddaby, 2010), leading to confusion and a lack of consistency (Korr, Derwin, Greene, & Sokoloff, 2012) and a failure to assess properly the real costs of development, delivery and support of digital teaching and learning initiatives (Gregory & Lodge, 2015).

Policies hold the potential to aid decision making. Effective policies are seen to provide direction (Garrison, 2011), drive change (de Freitas & Oliver, 2005) and act as a unifier for staff with different professional and disciplinary backgrounds as they engage with technology (Drysdale, Graham, Spring, & Halverson, 2013). To guide decision making effectively, it is important that policy development stays relevant to the needs and challenges faced by institutions, staff and students, as they evolve. The impact of digital technology has created a new set of policy-related opportunities, challenges and considerations to which the National Forum's enabling policies project has aimed to respond.

Aims of this report

This report aims to:

- describe existing perspectives and practices regarding policies for digital teaching and learning across Irish higher education.
- explain how policies can enable excellent practice.
- map the teaching and learning policy landscape across HEIs in Ireland to determine the degree to which existing policies can be considered enabling and inclusive of the language of digital teaching and learning.

International and National Policy Context

Innovation in teaching and learning needs to be digitally enabled and underpinned by a mix of policies which are adaptable to individual contexts (OECD, 2016). At European level, ICT in education has been identified as a key policy issue for member states and HEIs and much of the discourse points to its value in facilitating more effective and personalised learning experiences, teaching and research (European Commission, 2011). National policy initiatives, however, have been found to be fragmented and the European Commission has called for urgent action at local, regional, national and European-wide policy levels (European Commission, 2013). The High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education challenged public authorities to consider how the learning opportunities afforded by new models of provision can be more fully integrated. Among its recommendations was a call for the EU to support efforts at a national level to develop and implement 'comprehensive national frameworks for diversifying provision and integrating new modes of learning' (High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education, 2014, p. 25). Moreover, the report recommended that national guidelines should be developed for 'ensuring quality in open and online learning, and to promote excellence in the use of ICT in higher education provision' (p. 40). The uptake of digital and online learning technologies has been characterised as uneven across the EU, and a lack of coherent policy frameworks is seen as one of the main barriers to mainstreaming (European Commission, 2016b). A recent survey of European member states found that approximately one third have national policies for digital and online learning either in place or being implemented (European Commission, 2016).

The national outlook on policies for digital teaching and learning can be viewed within the context of the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 (DES, 2011) and the Higher Education System Performance Frameworks (HEA, 2016, 2018). Both emphasise the increasing demand for flexible learning opportunities, part-time, work-based learning and short intensive skills programmes, and the need for strategy development in this area in higher education. In mission-based performance compacts agreed between the HEA and HEIs, most HEIs have pledged to achieve targets that would reflect their commitment to digital teaching and learning. These developments are further supported by the recently published Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines for Providers of Blended Learning Programmes (QQI, 2018). The national higher education strategy noted an inflexibility in the current system, and the administrative and institutional challenges that the drive for a more flexible and open learning environment can create.

Nationwide consultations with senior managers of HEIs conducted by the National Forum in 2014 and 2017 have continued to echo concerns regarding rigidities in the system which can stand in the way of the building of digital capacity across the sector (National Forum 2015b; in press). The National Forum's Digital Roadmap provided a framework for embedding a digital dimension in teaching and learning policies in Ireland. In response to this, the Enabling Policies project has adopted a focus on the policy aspect of the Roadmap, and set out to review existing policies and provide guidance to HEIs in assessing and enhancing their policies.

Data Sources

This report was informed by the following:

- A review of related literature
- Individual interviews with 21 experts across the sector
 - These included experts in five topic areas identified by the project scoping group³, heads of teaching and learning units and institutional leaders
- Three focus groups
 - One with academic staff, one with learning technologists and one with students
- A content analysis of 101 policies related to teaching and learning retrieved from 25 HEIs⁴ across the sector. Full details of the content analysis are available in Appendix A.

A note on documents and terminology

For the purpose of this review, policies are defined as mandated principles for guiding decision making by staff and students in a HEI. Documents were included in the review if they contained principles or standards intended to guide decision making that related specifically to teaching and learning.

'Policy' is an inconsistently applied term and, in the initial search for policy documents, this review noted the variety of document types to which it is often attached, such as procedures, guidelines, strategies, protocols and QA documents. This review adopted an inclusive approach and incorporated consideration of QA manuals, regulations, procedures, guidelines and codes of practice.

3 The five identified topic areas were: technology-enabled assessment, copyright and intellectual property rights, curriculum design, managing artefacts on a VLE, and student digital footprint and digital wellbeing.

4 Initially the websites of 26 HEIs, including universities, institutes of technology and HECA colleges, were searched for policy documents. The 26 HEIs were then emailed with information about the project and a list of policies that had been retrieved from their respective websites. They were invited to forward any further policies they felt were relevant. 101 policy documents were retrieved in all. Of the 26 HEIs, one did not yield any policy documents.

Existing Perspectives and Practices

The scoping group for this review suggested that there would be value in exploring five particular topic areas related to the digital aspect of teaching and learning⁵. These topic areas were:

- technology-enabled assessment
- copyright and intellectual property rights
- curriculum design
- managing artefacts on a VLE
- student digital footprint and digital wellbeing

During interviews with staff and students across the sector, while some acknowledged that policies were appropriate with regard to copyright and intellectual property rights, on the whole, most questioned the role of policies for teaching and learning, especially when referring to curriculum design. It was argued that many of the topics raised by the project scoping group were best addressed by guidance, briefing notes, infographics and other channels rather than through centralised policy. Concerns were expressed that top-down, mandated policies might risk creating rigidities or fail to engage staff or students.

On the other hand, conversations with practitioners across the sector suggested that attempts to accommodate digital teaching and learning without appropriate policy frameworks has allowed practices to emerge within HEIs that have the potential to lead to inefficiencies and/or confusion among staff and students. Examples of such reported practices include the following:

- Requiring physical rooms to be booked for an online tutorial because the timetable is governed by the room booking application
- Teachers being required to submit grades both electronically and by hand
- Teachers using third-party platforms for teaching, learning and assessments independently of the HEI, resulting in an absence of institutional technical support in the event of something going wrong with a platform
- Informal approaches to seeking permission to record participating students and staff or use student content
- HEIs claiming ownership of teaching content and the right to re-use it, while teaching and learning units within HEIs guarantee teachers that their content will not be shared with other teachers
- Ownership of content being determined on a case-by-case basis, influenced by employment contracts rather than HEI policy
- Challenges in verifying student identity in assessment and participation in distance learning or technology-enabled assessment contexts

5 The Terms of Reference for the Enabling Policies project is available at www.teachingandlearning.ie

Concerns raised by participants regarding specific topics

Participants highlighted a number of concerns under each topic area that could be addressed through an enabling policy infrastructure. These concerns are listed below.

Technology-enabled assessment

- Verifying the identity of students when a technology-enabled assessment (TEA) is conducted at a distance
- Ensuring that distance and on-campus students experience similar appeals processes
- Having to rely on third-party vendors to retrieve assessments and information about assessments during time-critical periods
- Ensuring the overall security of information on third-party platforms
- Informal approaches to sharing of grading and feedback on students' assessments or other confidential assessment-related content
- Dealing with some lack of consistency in the use of platforms and applications
- A perceived lack of guidance and/or support for students, among some staff, especially in the area of e-portfolios
- A perception among some students of poor technical knowledge on the part of some teaching staff overseeing TEAs
- A perception among some students of a lack of IT infrastructure to support proposed TEAs
- An overestimation, reported by some staff, of the technical capabilities of students in some instances
- The desire of some students to use their own devices for assessment purposes

Copyright and intellectual property rights

- Lack of clarity regarding the implications for the HEI or for individual teachers of using other peoples' intellectual property, downloaded from the web, in teaching material made available online
- Concerns regarding student information and content being shared with third-party platforms without related data protection measures being in place
- Questions regarding how a HEI can exercise its right to ownership of teaching material created by its employees within the context of the drive to make educational resources openly available online
- Questions regarding how to ensure appropriate treatment of and access to digital teaching material

Curriculum design

- A perceived lack of planning in the incorporation of digital technology into curriculum design
- The capacity of HEIs to meet the expectations of staff and students regarding the use of digital technology
- A concern that the language of curriculum design, as it appears in module descriptors or course outlines, does not always take into consideration the language of digital teaching and learning
- Questions regarding the value of hour allocation as a measure of the effort required to incorporate digital technology into the curriculum, especially given the increasing involvement of multi-skilled teams in curriculum design

Managing artefacts on a VLE

- Concerns regarding inconsistent use of platforms by teaching staff
- Questions regarding the retention and storage of content on a VLE and who is granted access
- VLEs not always being perceived as a safe space, where staff or students can express themselves openly and frankly without fear of criticism
- A perceived lack of clarity around who is responsible for carrying out administrative and management tasks, such as uploading or taking down content
- VLEs being perceived, in some cases, as failing to meet the teaching needs of staff, who then turn to third-party vendors not subscribed to by the HEI, leading to further issues regarding data protection, security and technical support

Student digital footprint and digital wellbeing

- The sensitive and confidential nature of online student-teacher interactions, particularly with regard to assessments and grading
- The potential for digital overload, and the need to prevent an 'always online' mentality in the teaching and learning environment
- A need to raise awareness about students' digital footprint/wellbeing through training, inductions and support
- The need for HEIs to encourage the development of a community of online learners within courses as part of curriculum development

Ongoing Policy Developments and a Call for Enabling Policies

This review of the national policy landscape for digital teaching and learning, which was concluded in February 2017, came at an important time as a number of participants reported being in the process of developing policies on topics such as collaboration between academic staff and learning technologists in curriculum design; the development of e-learning courses; the use of third-party platforms, eProctoring and lecture-capture applications; retention and removal of online teaching and learning material and the use of personal devices in teaching and learning.

Consultation with staff and students across the sector highlighted a need for policies for higher education which enable staff to practice enhanced teaching and learning in an atmosphere of consultation, innovation and strategic alignment. Staff and students across the sector welcomed the concept of ‘enabling policies’ for digital teaching and learning and engaged in discussion regarding how enabling policies might best be defined within the Irish context.

Characteristics of enabling policies

A definition of what constitutes an enabling policy was constructed through interviews with representatives across the sector. The agreed definition is as follows:

Enabling policies are those which are implementable, situated in practice and reflective of the HEI’s priorities.

Accordingly, the ten criteria outlined for determining whether a policy is enabling are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Criteria for determining if a policy is enabling

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

How Enabling are Existing Policies?

The definition of enabling policies agreed by the sector, and the associated criteria, were used as a lens to review existing policies. Each of the 101 policy documents retrieved for this review was measured against the enabling policy criteria and given one point for each of the ten criteria that was met. This allowed each policy to be viewed on a spectrum from non-enabling (0 points) to enabling (10 points)⁶.

Looking across all policies

The extent to which the 101 reviewed policies were enabling, according to these criteria, is outlined in Figure 1. More than three quarters of policies met just four or fewer criteria. Those policies that were located on the enabling end of the spectrum tended to owe their high score to meeting criteria under being 'reflective of the HEI's priorities' or being 'implementable', rather than being 'situated in practice'.

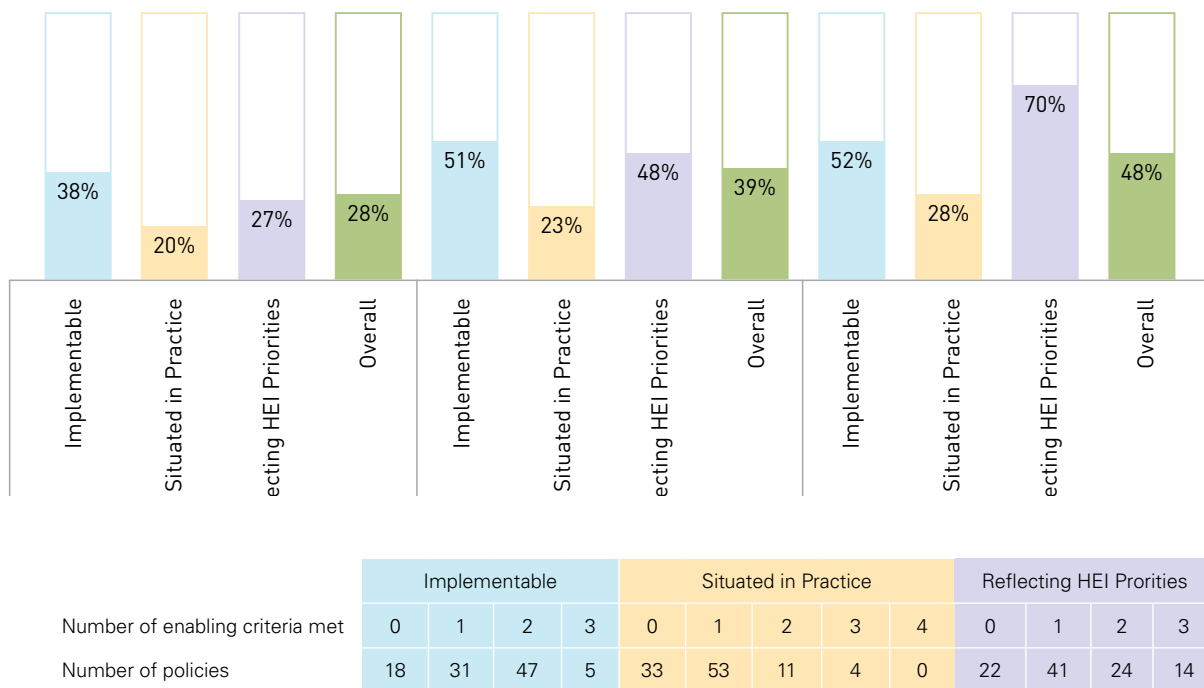


Figure 1 Overview of how enabling existing policies are (n = 101)

As Table 2 demonstrates, looking across all 101 policies, of the three categories used to assess how enabling policies were, implementable scored highest (46% of criteria met). Reflective of HEI priorities scored second highest (43% of criteria met). Situated in practice scored lowest of the three categories (22% of criteria met). Overall, 35% of available criteria were met across the reviewed policies. Appendix B gives a further breakdown of which criteria each of the 101 policies met.

⁶ Whether a criterion was deemed to be met was dependent on whether there was any reference to the given aspect. As policies were not originally designed with these enabling criteria in mind, by allocating each point based on 'any reference', the threshold for each criterion being met was set intentionally low.

Table 2 Proportion of each of ten enabling criteria met across all 101 policies

Implementable	Clearly define the HEI's commitment to the policy area	56	140/303 (46%)
	Have an implementation plan	8	
	Accompanied by policy instruments	76	
Situated in Practice	Based on consultation	19	87/404 (22%)
	Have been tested at operational level	4	
	Facilitate innovation	1	
	Routinely monitored and reviewed for effectiveness	63	
Reflecting HEI Priorities	Guided by the HEI's vision	44	131/303 (43%)
	In line with the HEI's strategic objectives	21	
	Allow the HEI to meet its legal obligations	66	
Overall			358/1010 (35%)

University policies met a lower proportion of enabling policy criteria than those in institutes of technology (IoTs) or other colleges (see Figure 2). Across institution types, criteria associated with the enabling aspect of being situated in practice were the least likely to be met.

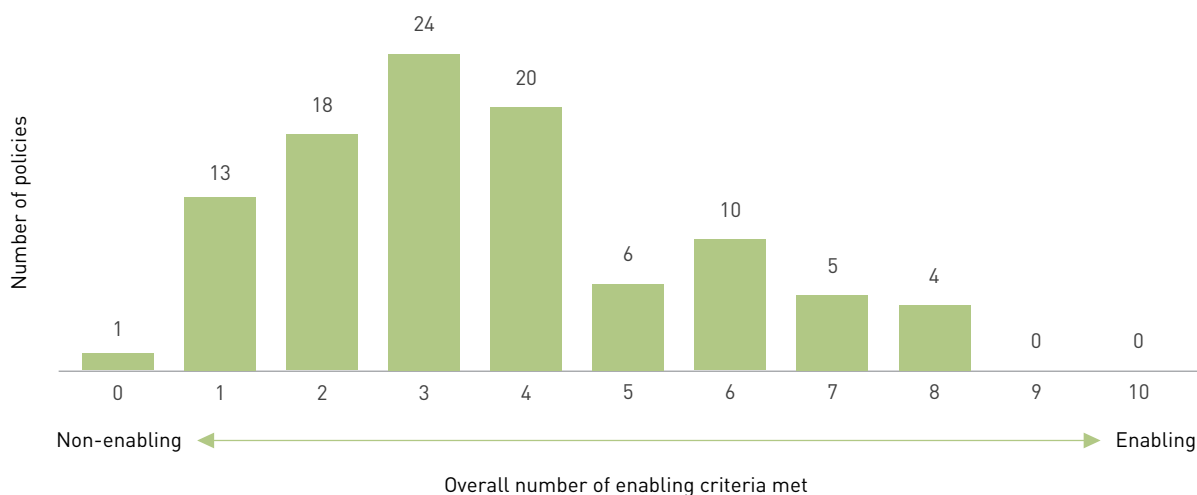


Figure 2 Proportion of types of enabling criteria met in existing policies according to institution type

Language of Existing Policies

Policy documents were also reviewed in terms of content. The detailed policy topic breakdown is attached as Appendix C. Assessment/standards/plagiarism, copyright/intellectual property rights (IPR) and curriculum/programme were an explicit focus of a number of policies. Only one of the policies reviewed focused on VLEs and no policy reviewed focused explicitly on students' digital footprint/wellbeing.

Assessment

25 of the reviewed policies focused on assessment and/or the related areas of standards/plagiarism. Overall, such policies met just under one third of the enabling criteria (27%). 43% of available implementable criteria were met, while 24% of criteria associated with being reflective of HEI priorities were met and 18% of criteria associated with being situated in practice.

Looking across all 101 reviewed policies, 66 policies mentioned the word assessment, nine of which contained mentions of assessment near the words electronic, online or digital. A third of those mentions referred to the electronic management of assessments, such as electronic submissions or the issuing of grades online. There was a noted absence of mentions of technology-enabled assessment.

Copyright and intellectual property rights

13 of the reviewed policies focused on copyright/IPR. Overall, they met just under half of the enabling criteria (45%). 62% of available criteria associated with being reflective of HEI priorities were met, while 51% of implementable criteria and 29% of criteria associated with being situated in practice were met.

Across the 101 reviewed policies, the words digital or electronic or online appeared near the words content or material 40 times in 25 documents. 40 policies included the terms copyright, IPR or intellectual property. Most such mentions related to copyright as a legal issue where responsibility for compliance rests with staff. There was an absence of reference in these mentions to the additional challenges posed by digital media or digital technology.

Curriculum/programme

12 of the reviewed policies focused on curriculum/programmes. Overall, such policies met just over one third of the enabling criteria (38%). 56% of the criteria associated with being implementable were met, almost half of the criteria associated with being reflective of HEI priorities (47%) and only 17% of criteria associated with being situated in practice were met.

Of the 101 reviewed policies, 82 mentioned the word curriculum. However, there was a relative absence of terminology associated with digital technology in such policies.

Managing artefacts on a VLE

Just one of the 101 reviewed policies focused on the VLE, specifically on ensuring the quality of the learning environment. Although there were no policies explicitly focusing on managing artefacts on a VLE, the terms VLE, LMS, virtual learning environment, learning management system, Blackboard or Moodle were mentioned in 23 policies. However, the implications of the use of VLEs were not detailed in these documents.

Student digital footprint and digital wellbeing

While digital wellbeing, digital footprint, code of practice or code of conduct were mentioned in 36 of the reviewed policies, none of the policies had been designed specifically to address students' digital footprint/wellbeing. The terms social media or social networking were found 162 times across 16 documents, although rarely close to the terms teaching or learning. Further, the content analysis suggested that the language of digital wellbeing does not have a significant presence within institutional policies.

Concluding Comments and Future Plans

There is a drive at both international and national level for digital technology to be embedded within higher education to facilitate a move towards a more flexible learning environment. It is also acknowledged that policy development at all levels is crucial for such a transition to take place. Given the national and international policy context, it is important to have a sense of the degree to which teaching and learning policies have taken into consideration the needs and the impact of digital technology. This will enhance our understanding of how best to guide policy development at institutional and national levels.

The content analysis conducted as part of this review indicated that the language of digital teaching and learning was not often reflected in institutional policies. Further, it was found that without appropriate, situated policy guidance, informal practices can emerge that may not serve institutions, staff or students well. It is acknowledged that the policies reviewed in this briefing paper were not designed specifically with enabling criteria in mind. It is nevertheless notable that a key feature of the policies reviewed were that they were rarely situated in practice. Evidence of inconsistent, inefficient or informal practices surrounding the digital dimension of teaching and learning suggested a need to ensure that policies are rooted in consultation with the staff who will implement them in practice, are innovative and responsive to existing needs and are accompanied by clear implementation plans.

Many institutions reported that they were currently planning or in the process of developing policies for digital teaching and learning. Enabling policies, defined as those which are implementable, situated in practice and reflective of the priorities of the HEI, hold the potential to guide decisions in such a way that reflects the experiences of staff and students. A step-by-step Guide to Developing Enabling Policies for Digital Teaching and Learning⁷, recently published by the National Forum, aims to support those developing policies in a way that is mindful of both what is important to the HEI and also what is achievable in practice. This guide offers a framework to allow HEIs to reflect on their existing teaching and learning policy documents and, in doing so, aid decision making, point to key challenges, and help students and staff to answer questions about how best to enable consistent approaches and enhanced practice.

7 Available at www.teachingandlearning.ie/EnablingPolicies

Acknowledgements

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Appendix A

Content Analysis

To conduct the content analysis, 101 documents were imported into a project in Nvivo 10. Over 80 searches were carried out seeking keywords and phrases relevant to digital teaching and learning. Proximity searches, where the connector NEAR is used, looked for keywords and phrases that appeared within six words of each other. The first part of this content analysis involved searching across all documents for words and phrases related to five concepts that were found, through the literature review, to be associated with digital teaching and learning: student generated content, reusable content and ownership, collaboration, social media, and flexible learning.

The collection was then divided into five sub-collections that corresponded to the five topics identified in the Enabling Policies project scope: technology-enabled assessment, copyright and intellectual property rights, curriculum design, managing artefacts on a VLE, and student digital footprint and digital wellbeing. These sub-collections were then searched for keywords and phrases related to digital technology.

Tables A1-A6 display all search results.

Table A1 Proximity searches of 101 reviewed documents for keywords and phrases relevant to digital teaching and learning

Query	Documents	Occurrences within documents
Student Generated Content		
"student generated content"	0	0
"learner generated content"	0	0
"learner generated contexts"	0	0
"user generated"	0	0
student(s) NEAR content	16	17
student NEAR material	13	26
prosumer	0	0
"peer assessment"	0	0
Co-creator	0	0

Query	Documents	Occurrences within documents
Reusable Content and Ownership		
Copyright NEAR digital OR electronic OR online	4	5
Owner NEAR digital OR electronic OR online	1	1
Author NEAR digital OR electronic OR online	2	2
Lecturer NEAR digital OR electronic OR online	2	2
IPR NEAR digital OR electronic OR online	0	0
Content NEAR digital OR electronic OR online	9	16
Material NEAR digital OR electronic OR online	16	24
Reusable	0	0
Collaboration		
Collaborate OR collaboration OR collaborating NEAR staff	4	6
Team OR teams OR teamwork NEAR staff	12	36
Designer OR technologist NEAR academic OR lecturer	0	0
Technician NEAR academic OR lecturer	3	2
Social Media		
“social media”	10	111
“social networking”	6	51
teach OR teaching NEAR media OR social	1	1
learn OR learning NEAR media OR social	9	13
Flexible Learning		
flexible NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	2	2
learn OR learning NEAR flexible	12	22
learn OR learning NEAR work	16	24
“mobile learning” OR “mobile teaching”	0	0

Table A2 Proximity searches of policies containing the word assessment (n = 66)

Query	Documents	Occurrences within documents
Proctoring NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	0	0
Formative NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	2	2
Summative NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	1	1
Assignment NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	2	2
Test NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	1	1
Exam NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	2	2
Assessment NEAR online OR digital OR electronic	9	21
eAssessment	1	1

Table A3 Proximity searches of policies containing the words copyright or IPR or “intellectual property” (n = 40)

Query	Documents	Occurrences within documents
Copyright NEAR media OR multimedia OR AV OR image OR photograph OR audio OR podcast OR stream	2	2
Copyright NEAR compliance OR legal	5	16
Copyright NEAR help OR aid OR assistance OR guide OR support	4	11
Intellectual NEAR online OR electronic OR digital	4	5
IPR NEAR online OR electronic OR digital	0	0
Copyright NEAR online OR electronic OR digital	4	5
Reproduce NEAR electronic OR digital OR online	0	0
Upload NEAR electronic OR digital OR online	1	1
Intellectual NEAR teach OR teaching OR learn OR learning	12	21
IPR NEAR teach OR teaching OR learn OR learning	0	0

Table A4 Proximity searches of policies containing the word curriculum (n = 82)

Query	Documents	Occurrences within documents
Notes NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	6	6
Material NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	15	25
Content NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	0	0
Tutor NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	2	4
Lecturing NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	1	1
Teaching NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	10	12
Class NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	3	6
Tutorial NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	3	8
Lecture NEAR online OR digital OR electronic OR recorded	2	4
"Digital literacy"	1	1
"Digital pedagogy"	0	0
"Universal design"	0	0
"Discussion boards" OR flipped OR "open educational resources" OR wiki OR asynchronous OR "recorded lectures" OR "online quiz"	9	15

Table A5 Proximity searches of policies containing the words LMS or “learning management system” or VLE or “virtual learning environment” or Blackboard or Moodle (n = 23)

Query	Documents	Occurrences within documents
Takedown OR take?down	0	0
Notes NEAR Blackboard OR Moodle OR LMS OR VLE	2	2
Retention NEAR Blackboard OR Moodle OER LMS OR VLE	0	0
Upload	4	5
Content NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	5	6
Material NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	4	7
Owner NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	0	0
Access NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	4	5
Backup NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	0	0
Safety NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	0	0
Reliability NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	0	0
Security NEAR LMS OR VLE OR blackboard OR Moodle	1	1
Recovery NEAR VLE OR LMS OR Blackboard OR Moodle	0	0
Crash NEAR VLE OR LMS OR Blackboard OR Moodle	0	0
Risk NEAR VLE OR LMS OR Blackboard OR Moodle	0	0

Table A6 Proximity searches of policies containing the words “digital wellbeing”, “digital footprint”, “code of practice” or “code of conduct” (n = 36)

Query	Documents	Occurrences within documents
Distraction NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Overload NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Workload NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Stress NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Balance NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Relationships NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Safety NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Health NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	0	0
Personal NEAR Digital OR Online OR Electronic	5	6
Cyberbullying	0	0

Appendix B

Breakdown of Enabling Policy Criteria Met by Reviewed Policies

Ten enabling policy criteria:

Implementable		Situated in Practice		Reflecting HEI Priorities	
Clearly defines the HEI's commitment to the policy area	Commitment	Based on consultation	Consultation	Guided by the HEI's vision	Vision
Has an implementation plan	Plan	Has been tested at operational level	Tested	In line with the HEI's strategic objectives	Strategic
Accompanied by policy instruments	Instruments	Facilitates innovation	Innovation	Allows the HEI to meet its legal obligations	Legal
		Routinely monitored and reviewed for effectiveness	Reviewed		

Breakdown of criteria met by 101 reviewed policies:

Code	Category of policy	Enabling policy criteria met						Total		
HEIA	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed	Vision			4		
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed	Strategic	Legal		5		
	Quality Assurance/Enhancement Process	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed	Vision	Strategic	Legal	6		
	Recording	Commitment	Instruments	Strategic	Legal			4		
HEIB	Quality Assurance/Enhancement Process	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Tested	Reviewed	Vision	Strategic	Legal	8
	Copyright/IPR	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Reviewed	Vision	Strategic	Legal		7
HEID	Quality Assurance/Enhancement Process	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Tested	Reviewed	Vision	Strategic	Legal	8
	Social Media	Commitment	Instruments	Vision	Legal					4
HEID	Acceptable Use	Instruments	Reviewed	Legal						3
	Copyright/IPR	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Legal					4
	Social Media	Instruments	Reviewed	Legal						3

Code	Category of policy	Enabling policy criteria met										Total								
HEIJ	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Instruments	Legal																	2
	Copyright/IPR	Commitment	Reviewed	Vision																3
	Quality Assurance/Enhancement Process	Instruments	Consultation	Reviewed	Vision															6
	Staff Skills	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed																3
HEIK	Quality Assurance/Enhancement Process	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Tested	Reviewed	Vision													8
	Acceptable Use	Commitment	Reviewed	Vision	Legal															4
HEIL	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Instruments	Reviewed	Vision																3
	Copyright/IPR	Instruments	Reviewed	Legal																3
	Copyright/IPR	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Reviewed	Vision														7
	Network/ICT Security	Reviewed																		1
HEIM	Network/ICT Security	Reviewed																		1
	General T&L	Commitment	Consultation	Innovation	Vision	Strategic														5
HEIN	Data Protection	Legal																		1
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed	Legal															4
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Instruments	Reviewed	Legal																3
	Curriculum/Programme	Instruments	Legal																	2
HEIP	General T&L	Commitment	Plan	Instruments	Consultation	Reviewed	Vision													7
	Leamer Charter	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Vision															4
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Commitment	Instruments	Vision	Legal															4
	Curriculum/Programme	Commitment	Instruments	Vision	Legal															4
HEIP	Quality Assurance/Enhancement Process	Commitment	Instruments	Vision	Strategic	Legal														5
	VLE	Instruments	Reviewed	Vision	Strategic															4
	Student support	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed	Vision															4

Code	Category of policy	Enabling policy criteria met										Total			
HEIU	Acceptable Use	Commitment	Vision	Legal											3
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Commitment	Instruments	Vision	Legal										4
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Reviewed	Vision	Legal								6
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Instruments													1
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Consultation													1
	General Academic Regulations	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Reviewed	Legal									5
HEIV	Network/ICT Security	Commitment													1
	Quality Assurance/Enhancement Process	Commitment	Instruments	Consultation	Tested	Reviewed	Vision	Strategic	Legal						8
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Instruments	Reviewed												2
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Reviewed													1
	Curriculum/Programme	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed	Legal										4
	Social Media	Commitment	Instruments	Reviewed	Vision										4
HEIX	Learning and Technology	Plan	Instruments												2
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Commitment	Instruments	Legal											3
	Online Learning	Commitment	Instruments	Vision	Strategic										4
	Acceptable Use	Legal													1
	Assessment/Standards/Plagiarism	Instruments	Reviewed												2
	Copyright/IPR	Instruments	Reviewed	Legal											3
HEIY	General T&L	Commitment	Vision												2

Appendix C

Topic Breakdown of Reviewed Policies

Policy topic as main focus	Number of policies
Assessment/standards/plagiarism	25
Copyright/IPR	13
Curriculum/programme	12
Quality assurance/enhancement process	7
Network/ICT security	6
Social media	5
Acceptable use	4
General teaching and learning	4
General academic regulations	3
Record management	3
Recording lectures/presentations	3
Remote/mobile	2
Data protection	2
The following policy topics were each represented by one policy: VLE, Academic workload, Staff skills, Learner charter, Student support, Authorship and data retention, Dignity and respect, End user policy, Access, Partnering, Learning and technology, Online learning	







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