



**Academic Quality  
Framework**  
**Digital Education Policy**  
**Procedures for Implementation**  
Approved by Academic  
Council  
21<sup>st</sup> June 2024

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## Document Control Summary

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## 1. Introduction

TU Dublin is committed to “creating transformational educational opportunities that inspire, support and develop the individual in reaching their full potential” (Strategic Intent 2030). Underpinned by the key sustainable development goal no.4 (SDG) ‘Quality Education’, our strategic objectives include developing and embedding a dynamic new model of education at TU Dublin; providing flexibility in structure, mode, and place of delivery to suit an evolving global landscape; and delivering a digitally enhanced student learning experience that will facilitate the development of our learners to become the most sought-after digitally literate graduates. The approval of the Digital Education Policy at TU Dublin signalled a strategic commitment to quality, flexible, accessible and inclusive Digital Education at TU Dublin. The implementation of that policy will help TU Dublin achieve its strategic objectives in this space.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to signpost the high-level roles that the Digital Education Policy is relevant to and outline their responsibilities for the realisation of this policy. It also sets out relevant processes where they already exist; and signposts access to supporting guides and resources for staff around designing technology-enabled learning, teaching and assessment experiences, and designing/redesigning modules for delivery in each of the different modalities. This document should be viewed alongside the Digital Education Policy Implementation Plan, which details both ongoing and future actions, projects and initiatives that will, together, implement this policy.

### 3. Scope

The Digital Education Policy has many elements to it such as:

- Module Design and Delivery in the context of the University Education Model
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement
- Student Assessment and Feedback
- Accessibility
- Staff Digital Capability Development, Professional Development, and Support
- Student Digital Capability Development and Support
- Technical and Physical Infrastructure

As such, no one procedures document can set out all of the details relevant to the full implementation of the Digital Education Policy, rather, the implementation of this policy can only be realised through the successful completion and implementation of a whole series of current and future projects, all of which have a strong digital education focus e.g. the University Education Model; Graduate Attributes, Assessment Handbook, Micro-credentials Framework; Digital Transformation Plan; the NTUTORR project; a unitary VLE for TU Dublin; CPD Framework for staff, and the development of a Digital Capabilities Strategy for the university. Responsibility for the development and subsequent implementation of these different projects lies across all five Faculties as well as across different teams within various university functions and services. Each of these projects will have its own detailed communication, implementation and training plans.

It should also be noted that the successful implementation of aspects of the Digital Education Policy will be influenced somewhat by the ongoing work and outcomes of other working groups such as the workload model working group.

## 4. Procedure Details

### 4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

<b>Faculty Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure consistency across their Faculty and its schools on how digital education is adopted and implemented</li><li>• Ensure that the resources required by students and staff to enable a quality digital educational experience are in place in their Faculty</li></ul>
<b>School Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support staff and students across their schools to adopt and implement digital education</li><li>• Ensure modules will adhere continuously to the agreed and advertised mode of delivery throughout the duration of the module</li><li>• Approve minor amendments to modules, including module mode of delivery, in line with Quality Framework policies and procedures for approval of such minor changes</li></ul>
<b>Academic Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work to assure the quality and academic standards of programmes and modules in all modalities</li><li>• Ensure consistency in the nature and implementation of the quality assurance and enhancement processes across all modalities</li><li>• Encourage academic staff, where appropriate, to avail of professional development opportunities and training made available to them by</li></ul>

	<p>professional services staff regarding the design, development and delivery of digital education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure consistency across programmes on how digital education is adopted and implemented</li> <li>• Ensure modules adhere continuously to the agreed and advertised mode of delivery throughout the duration of the module (notwithstanding the need for flexibility to adapt to unforeseen and significant circumstances such as a mandated university closure).</li> <li>• Remind all staff that all learning materials (web, video, audio and/or text based materials) must meet minimum accessibility standards and direct them to the resources provided in the Accessibility section below.</li> </ul>
<b>Academic Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake any relevant professional development and training that supports them to develop and deliver, where applicable, a quality digital educational experience for TU Dublin students</li> <li>• Design, develop and deliver modules aligned to one or more of the TU Dublin approved modalities that contain digital content and digital learning experiences for students to develop their digital capabilities, and that are based on innovative, evidence-informed and learner-centred pedagogical principles</li> <li>• Ensure that all learning materials (web, video, audio and/or text-based materials) meet minimum accessibility standards.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Students</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage fully with module content, activities and assessments etc., as advised by their lecturers</li> <li>• Ensure access to any technologies and digital services required to engage fully with module content, activities and assessments etc. Access to technologies and digital services can be facilitated through the TU Dublin library and support services</li> <li>• Abide by the basic rules of online etiquette; adhere to policy statements in TU Dublin's Acceptable Usage Policy; and commit to honest and moral behaviour regarding academic assessments as set out in the Declaration of Academic Integrity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Academic Affairs – Digital Education Manager</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the Digital Education Policy, update content and organise a review at least every three years to ensure continued relevance</li> <li>• Chair the Digital Education Policy Implementation Working Group (DEPI W/G)</li> <li>• Oversee and contribute to the effective implementation of the Digital Education Policy Implementation Plan</li> <li>• Lead the DEPI W/G in updating the Digital Education Policy Implementation Plan; regularly noting project status, including additional initiatives and projects as required</li> <li>• Provide resources and organise professional development opportunities for staff to develop their digital capabilities and expertise regarding digital pedagogies</li> </ul>

<b>Academic Affairs – Quality Framework Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the overarching quality framework to facilitate the academic community in planning, delivering, reviewing, and enhancing the university's programme offerings and Student Experience, whilst supporting and guiding staff in these undertakings.</li> <li>• Monitoring the alignment of module changes with its principles, related processes and checklists.</li> <li>• Monitor the implementation of policies and guidelines</li> </ul>
<b>Academic Affairs – Curriculum Management Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the development, configuration and maintenance of Curriculum data within Academic Information Systems (AIS) including Student Records Management System, EGB/Faculty Grade Book, the Programme Module Catalogue, Student Survey System and Reporting applications</li> <li>• Provide development and provision of reports from Curriculum AIS.</li> <li>• Enable development, upgrade and implementation of the Curriculum AIS across TU Dublin to ensure required functionality and data is available.</li> <li>• In partnership with Technology Services and HR People Development, develop training resources, user guides, and deliver training on AIS for academic users.</li> <li>• Develop integrated processes providing data interoperability within Curriculum applications</li> </ul>

<b>Academic Affairs – eLearning Technologies Applications Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide, maintain and support an enabling cloud-based Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) upon which academic staff and students rely for online learning, teaching and assessment activities</li> <li>• Provide, maintain and support additional technologies integrated with the VLE such as a plagiarism detection tool and a virtual classroom</li> <li>• Provide resources and training to support staff and students to use these learning technologies effectively</li> </ul>
<b>Academic Affairs – Timetabling Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in the facilitation of the modalities</li> <li>• Ensure that timetabling procedures are in line with the procedures for the implementation of the Digital Education Policy</li> <li>• Ensure that the data held within the timetabling system is up-to-date and compliant</li> </ul>
<b>Technology Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide, maintain, and support the cloud-based platforms, systems and solutions that are aligned to university policies, standards, recommendations of the industry, and external regulations (GDPR, Data protection and others) on which academic staff and students rely to engage in digital education</li> </ul>
<b>People Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training and guidance on a broad range of general and specific digital skills for staff who teach</li> <li>• Provision of well-being programmes for staff in relation to the use of technology</li> </ul>

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<b>Learning, Teaching and Assessment Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide accredited and non-accredited opportunities for staff to develop their own digital capabilities</li> <li>• Support academic staff in the design of strategies that will enable their students to become Digitally capable, life-long learners.</li> </ul>
<b>Library</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through Collection development will support digital literacies for students and staff in the areas of teaching, learning, and research</li> <li>• Incorporate Digital Literacies Frameworks into the development of Library Teaching &amp; Learning activities including the development of multi-modal guides and tutorials</li> <li>• In partnership with staff and students, Librarians will offer library classes and/or multi modal content to enhance student and staff digital capabilities</li> <li>• Advise on the Critical Evaluation of Digital/Online Information</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Education Policy Implementation Working Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft the initial Digital Education Policy implementation plan</li> <li>• Contribute to the implementation of the plan</li> <li>• Review and update the plan</li> </ul>

## 4.2 Quality Assurance and Enhancement

TU Dublin has developed [Quality Assurance and Enhancement Processes](#) that support staff to continuously improve the TU Dublin Student Experience and enhance the University's Quality Culture. The University will, through its Quality Framework, assure the quality and academic standards of programmes and modules.

### **Approving a proposed change to the modality of a module**

If a module has been redesigned to facilitate a different mode of delivery to that already validated for that module, processes for approval followed need to align to the Quality Framework and associated guidelines. See [“Making Changes to Programmes and Modules Process”](#).

Appropriate evidence will be made available to validation, amendment and review panels and staff responsible for module amendment, to provide assurance that the capability to deliver a quality student experience in a sustainable manner exists, through the selected modalities. Such evidence will include details of hardware and software available, learning resources and tools, and available teaching spaces.

### **Assuring the quality and parity of the student experience across all modalities**

The University will assure the quality and parity of the student experience, in terms of module delivery and student support, regardless of the modality of delivery. Supplementary guidelines for the implementation of the Digital Education Policy will be provided. Alignment with these guidelines will also form part of the reporting of a programme validation/amendment/review.

### **Requisite supports**

Quality reviews will consider requisite supports such as the Blended and Online Checklist, QA/QE Checklist for the Review of HyFlex Modules, and the Supplementary Guidelines for Blended & Fully Online Programmes, in the design of modules using these modes of delivery.

The Digital Education Policy Implementation Plan details any ongoing and future actions, projects and initiatives, with respect to the quality assurance and enhancement of digital education.

### **4.3 Programme Design and Delivery**

TU Dublin is committed to ensuring technology-enabled learning experiences along with flexibility in structure, mode & place of delivery to help facilitate lifelong education opportunities at every level. The ongoing implementation of the University Education Model, and the approval by Academic Council in December 2022 of the four modalities for our university and their subsequent inclusion in the Digital Education Policy, were the first steps in addressing such flexibility.

Guidance for staff, in the form of checklists and other resources around how to design for learning across each modality, taking a ‘digital by design’ approach, engaging students, and building an effective module within the VLE, can all be found on the Digital Education and VLE sections of the university website.

Guidance for staff in the form of checklists and other resources on the module development process using appropriate, learner focused, evidence-informed, learning design principles can be found on the Learning, Teaching and Assessment section of the university website, and accessed through continuing professional development modules run by LTA.

The following core infrastructure, information technology, administrative systems and support is currently in place and managed between Academic Affairs and Technology Services, but work is constantly ongoing to maintain, increase and improve provision, performance and support. Current and proposed projects are outlined in the implementation plan.

**Infrastructure:** Next Gen VLE (Brightspace); Bongo Virtual Classroom; MS Teams; MS SharePoint

**Information technology:** Turnitin; Vevox Polling; ScreenPal video creation

**Administrative systems:** Student Record System; Electronic Gradebook; Akari; Timetabling; Student feedback system

**Support:** VLE Support; Learning and Teaching support; A process through which staff can request support for academic software (via Academic Affairs)

#### 4.4 Student Assessment and Feedback

TU Dublin is committed to ensuring parity in standards, experience, challenge, security and integrity of all assessments conducted wholly online and/or those that rely on the use of digital technologies in their creation, and traditional assessments conducted in-person, on-campus.

Guidance on the design and delivery of authentic and alternative assessments can be found on the Learning, Teaching and Assessment section of the university website.

TU Dublin's next generation VLE Brightspace provides a robust and consistent system through which the submission, receipt, marking, feedback, academic integrity and return of assessments is managed.

Work is constantly ongoing to maintain, increase and improve these systems and processes. Related current and proposed projects are outlined in the implementation plan.

#### 4.5 Accessibility

TU Dublin is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive digital/online learning and working environment that ensures all campus information resources, technologies and communications are fully accessible to all staff and students.

**Assistive Technology** refers to practical tools that enhance independence for people with disabilities and is defined by the WHO as “any item, piece of equipment or product system whether acquired commercially, modified or customized that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities” (World Health Organisation & World Bank 2011, p.101). Assistive Technology is any item that enhances an individual’s independence which can include: text-to-speech software, dictation software, loop systems, recording devices, screen reading / screen magnification software, adaptive keyboards and mice. In order to access Assistive Technology supports, students must be registered with the Disability Support Service. Further information on how to register with the Disability Support Service, and the provision of support including technology which can be availed of via the service can be accessed on the [Assistive Technology webpage](#).

TU Dublin operates a laptop loan scheme and students who are eligible to register with the Disability Support Service are eligible to apply for this scheme. The Assistive Technology Officers within the Disability Support Service will be able to provide more information on this scheme. TU Dublin students not registered with Disability Support Services may also be eligible to apply for the scheme and should search the TU Dublin website for ‘laptop loan scheme’ for more information or access the information via the following link: [TU Dublin laptop loan scheme](#)

Financial support in the form of the Student Assistance Fund is also available from TU Dublin and further information can be access via the following link: [TU Dublin Student Assistance Fund](#)

Staff who require assistive technology, or support with assistive technologies, to fulfil the terms of their employment should [contact the Disability Support Manager](#)

### **Documentation and Publications; Staff Awareness; UDL**

In line with the EU Web Accessibility Directive (Directive (EU) 2016/2102), all learning materials (web, video, audio and/or text based) should meet minimum accessibility standards. It is recommended that all staff must familiarise themselves with the following resources as appropriate and attend any related training and professional development opportunities organised at the university over the course of the academic year.

- [TU Dublin web accessibility guidelines](#)
- Digital Accessibility for Educators Course provided by AHEAD: <https://www.ahead.ie/Digital-Accessibility-for-Educators>. This free course takes approximately 90-120 minutes to complete.
- [Universal Design for Learning CPD module](#) with TU Dublin's LTA
- Microsoft Support: [Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities](#)
- Microsoft Support: [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities](#)
- Adobe Support: [Make PDFs accessible](#)
- [Plain English Writing Course](#) offered by People Development during the academic year

In addition to the above, staff are advised to implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles when designing learning materials and assessments so as to ensure all digital education is accessible and inclusive for all students. More information on embedding UDL principles, and links to resources, can be found on the Learning, Teaching and Assessment section of the university website.

#### **4.6 Staff & Student Training, Professional Development, & Support**

Related training and professional development opportunities are provided for staff regularly by People Development, the Library, Academic Affairs and Technology Services. These are advertised to all staff by email. Staff are encouraged to contact any of these professional services should they have additional training/professional development needs to those advertised.

Opportunities will be provided for students to develop their digital capabilities, and these will be communicated to students by email and/or through their lecturing staff and the Students' Union.

The Digital Education Policy Implementation Plan details any ongoing and future actions, projects and initiatives related to the provision of staff and students training, professional development, and support.

#### **4.7 Sustainability Enhancement**

The implementation of the Digital Education Policy will help the university respond to SDG 4, 10, 11 and 12.

Actions relevant to SDG4 and 10 are linked closely with actions in response to sections 5.2 - 5.6 above.

In Programme Design and Delivery (SDG 4.3), TU Dublin emphasizes technology-enabled learning experiences and flexibility in delivery modes to promote lifelong education opportunities. The university provides guidance and resources for staff to design learning experiences across different modalities, ensuring a 'digital by design' approach. Core infrastructure, information technology, administrative systems, and support services are continuously improved to enhance the digital learning environment.

Accessibility (SDG 4.5) is a key priority for TU Dublin, aiming to create an inclusive digital learning environment for all students. The university offers assistive technology support and operates a laptop loan scheme for students with disabilities. Training and resources are provided to staff to ensure learning materials meet accessibility standards, with a focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles.

Regarding SDG 11 and 12, the provision of flexible delivery modes will reduce the need for commuting. Programme teams are encouraged to consider redesigning and validating modules for flexible delivery, where appropriate.

All staff are also strongly encouraged to reduce the need for printing. Due regard also needs to be given to environmental impact when procuring any digital technology for learning, teaching and assessment.

The Digital Education Policy Implementation Plan details any ongoing and future actions, projects and initiatives with respect sustainability enhancement and digital education.

## **5. Approvals Process**

This procedures document will be approved by the Academic Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (AQAEC) along with the associated implementation plan. Once approved, both will be published on the intranet and accessible from the Academic Affairs area of the TU Dublin website.

## 6. Change Process

- Academic Affairs is the owner of this document.
- This document will be reviewed at least every three years to assess if there is a need for any required change.
- Minor changes such as document layout changes, change of document owner, document numbering changes etc. will be made to the document by the Digital Education Manager, Academic Affairs.
- Where a major change will be required such as changes to the scope, intent or procedure details of the document, the Head of Academic Affairs or their delegate, the Digital Education Manager, will reconvene a working group who will follow the processes set out in section 7 of the *Procedure for Policy and Procedure Development at TU Dublin*.
- The updated document will be reapproved following the approval process set out in section 5 of this document.

## 7. Related Document

Digital Education Policy AQF\_DEP\_01

[Digital Education Policy Implementation Plan](#)

## 8. Document Management

### 8.1 Version Control

VERSION NUMBER	VERSION DESCRIPTION/CHANGS MADE	AUTHOR	DATE
<i>Draft 1.0</i>	<i>Initial Draft</i>	<i>Frances Boylan</i>	16/01/2024
<i>Draft 1.1</i>	<i>Document updated with input from working group</i>	<i>Frances Boylan</i>	06/03/2024

### 8.2 Document Approval

VERSION NUMBER	APPROVAL DATE	APPROVED BY (NAME AND ROLE)
<i>Rev 1.0</i>	<i>21/06/2024</i>	<i>AQAEC</i>

### 8.3 Document Ownership

Accountability for defining, developing, monitoring and updating the content of this document rests with Academic Affairs.

### 8.4 Document Review

Academic Affairs is accountable for the review of this document in consultation with relevant stakeholders. This document should be approved by AQAEC.

### 8.5 Document Storage and File Naming

This document will be stored on the TU Dublin Intranet accessible from the Academic Policies listings page. The file will be called: “Digital Education Policy Procedures for Implementation AQF\_DEPP\_01” once released.

## **8.6 Document Classification**

This policy will be classed as TU Dublin Private and will be available to all staff.