Professional Development Reports

A SNAPSHOT OF ACCREDITED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVISION IN IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION

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

A Snapshot of Accredited Professional Development Provision in Irish Higher Education

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Executive Summary

This is the first of three snapshot reports arising from the professional development consultation document: Mapping professional development pathways for those who teach in higher education. As indicated by the term snapshot, these reports provide focused in depth coverage of key topics; accredited, non-accredited and disciplinary engagement with professional development.

The aim of these snapshot reports is provide readers with the opportunity to delve selectively or comprehensively into the underpinning research and benchmarking activity that has informed the proposals and options outlined in the professional development consultation document. Based on structured data gathering and analysis as well as active engagement with key personnel across the sector, these snapshot reports allow the current arrangements for professional development in Irish higher education to be described and interpreted further in the context of prevailing research literature.

This report expands upon details provided in the National Forum's consultation document for professional development, entitled 'Mapping Professional Development pathways for those who teach in higher education; Where are we now and where do we want to go?'. In that document a brief overview was provided of accredited professional development in Irish higher education (section 1.14). This report details the methodology behind the mapping process that gave rise to that overview and presents more detailed findings.

Summary of Key findings

- With one exception, all programmes submitted were at NFQ level 9

- Programmes ranged in ECTS credit value from 5 – 120 credits

- The majority of programmes were certificate programmes of 30 ECTS or fewer.

- Masters qualifications were awarded a variable number of credits depending on the programme and institution (90-120 ECTS).

- The range of programme duration was typically 1 semester, 2 semesters or 1 year. 55 of the 68 programmes fell within a one year period.

- All but two of the submitted programmes were delivered in part-time mode.

- Programmes divided equally between blended and face-to-face delivery. with ten online only programmes identified.

- Some programmes were mandatory for new staff to complete.

- Staff incentives to participation on programmes included concessions to timetables and free enrollment/fee waivers.

- While participation in professional development programmes was not identified as being formally linked to promotion, there was recognition that attending programmes could be advantageous in progression pathways for full time staff.

- Recognition of prior learning (RPL) was generally considered on a case-by-case basis both for entry and exemptions from modules.

- Four-hundred-and-fifty students graduated from fifty-eight programmes that ran during the 2012/13 academic year.

- Thirteen of the submitted programmes were not scheduled to be offered for the academic year 2013/14.

- The qualitative analysis of the programme and learning outcomes identified four overarching domains; Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge, Development as a Reflective Practitioner, Development of Research Skills and Development of Digital Capacity. Not all programmes included each of the four domains.

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Introduction

This report expands upon details provided in the National Forum's consultation document for professional development, entitled 'Mapping Professional Development pathways for those who teach in higher education; Where are we now and where do we want to go?'. In that document a brief overview was provided of accredited professional development in Irish higher education (section 1.14). This report details the methodology behind the mapping process that gave rise to that overview and presents more detailed findings.

This is the first of three brief reports that expand the sections on **accredited (APD), non-accredited** and **disciplinary engagement** in relation to continuing professional development consultation process. Together these reports provide a snapshot of the range and type of accredited professional development that is currently being offered throughout the higher education sector in Ireland. They will help to inform the emerging professional development framework for those who teach in Irish higher education.

This report presents snapshot of the existing accredited professional development (APD) provision in Ireland. It documents the programmes that are on offer, outlines their level and associated credits. In addition a qualitative analysis has been completed on the programme and modular learning outcomes of all identified provision to determine the knowledge, skills and competency development currently incorporated into teaching and learning accredited programmes across the sector. The outcome of this analysis provides an excellent foundation for informing a national professional development framework.

The report is in two parts. Part 1 profiles the different programmes identified including, level, associated ECTS credits, mode of delivery, recognition of prior learning (RPL), support offered to participants and numbers graduating from these programmes nationally. The second part of the report provides a qualitative analysis of (i) the programme objectives and (ii) the associated modular learning outcomes to identify the key aspects of the provision. Finally a comparison of the intended modular learning outcomes and the programme objectives is provided.

Aims of the Study

- To identify accredited teaching and learning professional development programmes available in Irish higher education institutions.

- To describe programme content, structures and formats including; learning outcomes, entry routes, staff incentives, provision methods, credits and other relevant information associated with existing accredited professional development provision.

Methodology

The methodology involved 4 distinct phases as follows:

Phase 1

The National Forum team visited the websites of all higher education institutions in Ireland, identified all relevant programmes and collated all information available about each programme. The information gathered was inputted into a questionnaire. A sample of the questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

Phase 2

Two higher education institutions were sent the completed questionnaire - which included all the information that had been gathered from their institutional website. These pilot institutions were asked to validate and update the information in the questionnaire as appropriate.

Phase 3

Each higher education institution was sent a unique link to the questionnaire with all details that could be completed from their institutional website already inserted. They were asked to validate/update and complete the information.

The National Forum communicated with each institution's 'designated contact' (DC) in advance of sending the link. The process and aims of the project were shared and a request was made to them to engage in the project. The Forum Team was available to support all DCs in the completion of the questionnaires throughout the study.

Phase 4

A qualitative analysis of the programme objectives and modular learning outcomes was completed by QDATRAINING Ltd on behalf of, and under the direction of the Forum. The qualitative analysis process is outlined in detail in Appendix 2.

As evident from the methodology used, broad participation from the institutions was prioritised. The Forum endeavoured to make use of available information, where possible, so as to increase the likelihood of participation of institutions and reduce their workload related to this data gathering exercise.

Data was collected during the 2013/14 academic year and reflected provision on the 2012/13 academic year.

Part 1
An Overview of APD provision

This section presents an overview of 68 accredited professional development teaching and learning programmes that are available to support those who teach in the sector, from 23 Irish higher education institutions. The number of programmes available from each higher education institution is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Programme Offerings of Irish Higher Education Institutions

Higher Education Institution	Programmes on offer Up to 2013/14	Programmes available 2014/15
Institution 1	11	3
Institution 2	5	0
Institution 3	3	0
Institution 4	12	0
Institution 5	1	0
Institution 6	1	0
Institution 7	7	2
Institution 8	2	0
Institution 9	1	0
Institution 10	2	1
Institution 11	1	1
Institution 12	1	1
Institution 13	1	1
Institution 14	2	1
Institution 15	1	0
Institution 16	4	0
Institution 17	2	0
Institution 18	1	0
Institution 19	2	0
Institution 20	2	0
Institution 21	4	3
Institution 22	1	0
Institution 23	1	0
Total Programmes Submitted	68	13
Total Programmes available 2014/15		55

Of the 68 submissions, 10 programmes did not run in (2013/14) and were not scheduled to run in 2014/15; a further three programmes that ran in 2013/14 were not scheduled to run in 2014/15.

Programme Level and Credit Value

Programmes submitted were NFQ level 9 with one exception (level 8). Programmes ranged from 5-120 ECTS credits (Table 3). Over 50% of the programmes available had an ECTS credit value of 10 or fewer. 8% of the programmes had an ECTS value of 30 credits or fewer. 22% of the programmes offered had 60 credits or more.

Table 3 – Number of credits available by programme

No. Credits	No. of Programmes	% of total Programme Offerings
5	14	21
7	1	2
10	19	28
15	5	10
30	5	7
60	8	12
90	10	15
120	4	6

Masters level awards ranged from 90 to 120 credits, Diploma level programmes were consistent at 60 credits across all providers, while certificate programmes naturally ranged from 5 to 30 credits.

Programme Duration

The majority of programmes are typically 1 semester, 2 semesters or 1 year in duration (Table 4). Of the 68 submitted programmes 55 could be completed within a one-year period:

Table 4   Duration of Programmes

Duration of programme	No. of programmes
1 Semester	34
2 Semesters	8
1 Year	11
1.5 Years	2
2 Years	6
2.5 Years	2
3 Years	1
1-3 Years	1
5 Weeks	3

Mode of Delivery

Delivery media were coded under three headings: Face-to-Face, Online and Blended (defined as a combination of face-to-face and some online component). Figure 1 outlines the distribution of delivery type across all submitted programmes. Ten programmes were delivered online. The remaining courses were delivered face-to-face or blended in equal measure.
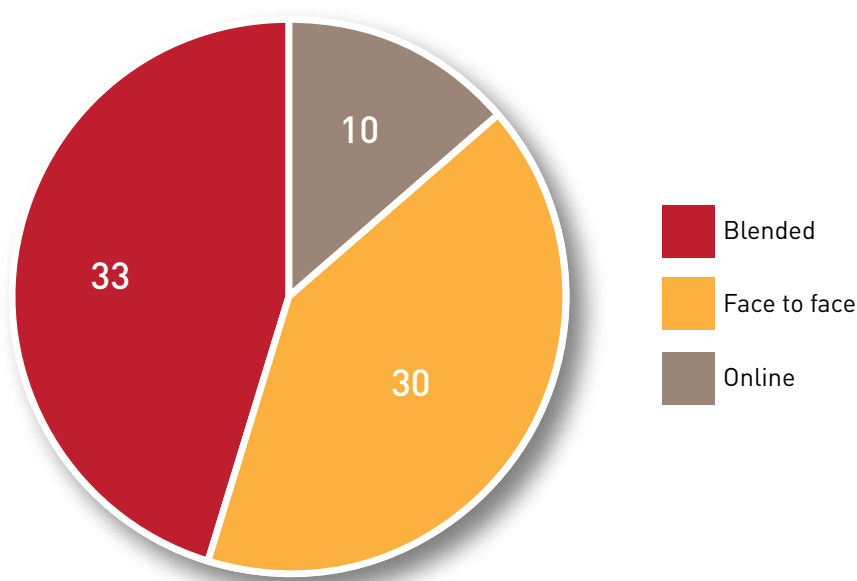

Figure 1 Mode of Delivery of Programmes

Recognition of Prior Learning Entry Routes to Programmes

Almost all (28 of 31) responding institutions reported treating RPL entry requests on a case-by-case basis (See Table 5). Ten courses had extended (i.e. not just for access to a programme) RPL provision and had arrangements in place for RPL credit for modules under strict conditions. Seven respondents referred to adherence to their wider institutional policies and three programmes had no RPL entry mechanisms. One programme communicated plans to introduce RPL in the next year.

Table 5   Recognition of Prior Learning Approaches

RPL entry routes	
Case by Case	28
Possible for Module Exemption if Participant Demonstrates participant meets learning outcome standards (Committee and Extern Decide)	10
Institution Policy on RPL Applies (Web Link); Procedure Under Revision	7
No RPL Entry Routes	3
RPL to Commence 2013/14	1

Support and incentives offered to staff to encourage programme participation

Twenty-two of the 68 programmes offered some support or incentive to staff to complete the programme. The range and type of incentives offered differed. The majority of the programmes were offered to staff free of charge. However, there were variances in how programme providers defined and applied supports and incentives. In most cases incentives were offered on a discretionary basis rather than as a matter of policy. For new staff, attending programmes and obtaining credits were mandatory in some institutions not only for obtaining promotion but also to maintain their post on a permanent basis. The range of supports and incentives mentioned by respondents and the number of mentions are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6 Range and Types of Incentives mentioned

Supports and incentives Mentioned	No. of Mentions
Possible Link to Promotion	10
Required for Promotion	10
Fees Waivered	7
Time Off Possible but Discretionary	5
Not Linked to Promotion	2
The Issue of Incentives is Under Discussion	2

Typically links to promotion fell into two categories: the possibility of obtaining promotion by having completed certain programmes and the requirement to have completed programmes before being considered for promotion:

There are no overt incentives for completion of the programme. Staff do this in their own time. Completion is noted as part of the teaching and learning submission for promotion applications.

Programme ID 16

Completion of the programme could be used as evidence for meeting one of the teaching benchmarks for promotion to senior lecturer.

Programme ID 16

Where completion was cited as a prerequisite to promotion, it was almost always in the context of new staff:

New staff - requirement to achieve 30 ECTS in 3 years which will assist with progression
Existing staff - assists with progression

Programme ID 56

Time off to attend APD programmes was also applied on a discretionary basis, with five programmes citing some allowance in timetables to accommodate staff attending programmes:

While there is no concession of hours, for example, timetables are however arranged within Schools/ Departments so as to allow attendance at face-to-face classes when these are required (the programme is blended). This is greatly welcomed and perhaps it is an incentive.

Programme ID 51

Numbers Graduating from existing provision

450 people graduated from 58 programmes in the 2012/13 academic year. The highest number of graduates from any one programme reported was 22.

Part 2

An Analysis of the Domains within Accredited Programmes in Ireland

Through a qualitative analysis four overarching domains were identified in the analysis of the programme content as outlined in the programme objectives: Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge, Development as a Reflective Practitioner, Development of Research Skills and Development of Digital Capacity.

The analysis identified that 40% of the programme objectives related directly to the development of generic teaching skills and knowledge. 26% of mentions were concerned with reflective practice and a further 18% related to developing research skills. Development of digital capacity accounted for 15% of the learning outcomes associated with the programmes. Table 7 provides a breakdown of the proportion of objectives identified within each domain.

Table 7– Programme objectives across the four domains identified

Domains	No. of Mentions	% of Total
Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge	86	41
Development as a Reflective Practitioner	55	26
Development of Research Skills	37	18
Development of Digital Capacity	32	15
	210	100

Not all programmes included each of the four domains. An outline of how the four domains were reflected in programme offerings from participating institutions is provided in Table 8.

Table 8 – Available programme offerings across four domains by learning institution

	Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge	Development as a Reflective Practitioner	Development of Research Skills	Development of Digital Capacity
Institution 1	10	3	3	3
Institution 2	2	2	2	0
Institution 3	3	3	2	0
Institution 4	1	1	1	0
Institution 5	1	0	0	1
Institution 6	1	1	1	0
Institution 7	1	1	1	0
Institution 8	3	0	0	2
Institution 9	1	1	1	0
Institution 10	2	2	2	2
Institution 11	1	0	1	1
Institution 12	0	0	0	0
Institution 13	4	3	2	2
Institution 14	4	2	1	2
Institution 15	1	1	1	0
Institution 16	1	0	1	1
Institution 17	1	1	1	0
Institution 18	2	0	0	1
Institution 19	0	0	0	0
Institution 20	0	0	0	0
Institution 21	7	3	1	4
Institution 22	2	1	1	0
Institution 23	0	0	2	0

Domain 1: Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge

Programme objectives incorporated within this domain were considered to lead to an increase in participants' knowledge and skills thereby enabling them to enhance the quality of their practice at both general and specific levels in relation to their everyday roles.

This module has been developed to help postgraduate teachers learn about a range of strategies, approaches and methods to support student learning across a range of contexts.

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Programme ID 2

Table 9– Domain 1 – Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge   **Mentions**

Domain 1 – Generic teaching skills, knowledge	86
Equip participants to Improve the Quality of their Practice	22
Expose participants to a Range of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies	19
Enable participants to Integrate Theory and Practice	13
Equip participants in Design, Delivery, Evaluation of Training and or Education Programmes (+ Inclusivity)	8
Provide Opportunities for participants to Deepen Awareness, Build Knowledge on Practical, Theoretical Issues in relation to Teaching and Learning	8
Expose participants to a Range of Strategies, Approaches, Methods to Support Student Learning	5
Development of Understanding of Issues and Debate in Policy and Practice in HE	4
Enable participants to Design, Deliver, Critically Assess Problem Based Learning (PBL) Activities	4
Development of Creative and Critical Thinking Skills	1
Development of Leadership and Management Skills	1
Development of Skills as RPL Assessors	1

Content articulated in programme offerings centred mainly on references to knowledge and/or skills development, whether general or specific, that aim to equip participants to improve the effectiveness and quality of their practice:

To equip participants, who already have teaching responsibilities, with the requisite knowledge and skills to be more effective and competent lecturers / trainers.

Programme ID 1

Submitted programme objectives cited exposing participants to a range of teaching and learning strategies as well as assessment techniques in equal measure:

To enable lecturers to explore concepts in assessment and evaluation and to develop their knowledge and skills as effective assessors of student learning and programme evaluation.

Programme ID 59

Enabling participants to integrate theory and practice was set out as a programme learning outcome in almost 1 in 5 programmes on offer.

To enable participants to acquire the theoretical and practical skills necessary to become effective teachers and/or facilitators of student learning.

Programme ID 50

Domain 2: Development as a Reflective Practitioner

Programme objectives included in this domain aimed to equip participants to develop as a reflective practitioner and as a member of a community of scholars capable of advanced thinking and integrating theoretical perspectives in the field of teaching and learning to the highest academic professional standards. Some programmes encouraged goal setting for future professional development (Table10).

Table 10– Domain 2 – Development as a Reflective Practitioner | **Mentions**

Domain 2 – Development as a Reflective Practitioner	57
Development of Participants' Capacity for Critical Reflection	28
Help Participants in Professionalising their Career; Development of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning	26
Allow Participants Build Progression Pathways in Accredited Professional development	3

Programmes which included this domain referred to the provision of opportunities to develop and improve the capacity for critical reflection and independently cited this as a distinct learning outcome in more than one in three programmes:

It provides an opportunity for teachers in higher education to document their practice, to explore various notions of excellent teaching, to reflect on their own approach to teaching and to further develop their practices in an informed and critically reflective manner.

Programme ID 21

Similarly, programmes which included this domain frequently set interactive objectives of helping participants to exchange ideas with peers, colleagues and the academic community; of encouraging the creation of a supportive, challenging, high-trust network of colleagues to provide longer-term peer support beyond the duration of the programme; and of developing participants' capacity to engage actively in their own career development:

To develop a scholarship of teaching and learning approach in the disciplines, enabling participants to peer review their practice.

Programme ID 13

Domain 3: Developing Research Skills

Programmes which included this domain identified objectives ranging from developing participants' capacity to engage with the scholarly literature, develop their capacity to conduct small scale research, present findings commensurate with the highest scholarly standards and develop the skills and competence to supervise student research (Table 11).

Table 11– Development of Research Skills   **Mentions**

Domain 3 - Development of Research Skills	37
Facilitate Peer Review and Progress Research towards Publication	12
Development of Research Skills	11
Enable Participants to Engage with Relevant Research Literature and Theory	11
Development of Skills in Research Supervision	3

Progressing research projects towards publication was set as a clear objective in Domain 3:

To enable participants' work to become the focus of a form of sustained inquiry, leading towards publication. To progress well-planned research work along the road to publication.

Programme ID 18

However, only one programme made specific reference to academic writing as a core skill and included it in its programme objectives:

To enhance key skills …including, communication, presenting research, interacting effectively with novice learners, confidence and competence in academic writing and publishing, establishing rapport among students, peers and supervisors, exercising effective pedagogical and supervision skills, receiving and acting on feedback both in research and teaching settings, enhancing and developing academic competence.

Programme ID 27

Four programmes mentioned academic writing in less specific terms:

An opportunity to be able to articulate research findings to a standard commensurate with publications in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Programme ID 18

The development of broader primary research skills was also a fundamental objective in one in six programmes:

This builds upon the Research Cycle (Introduction) research (a pre- requisite module) by adding primary research, a conference presentation, and an expanded research paper.

Programme ID 4

Domain 4: Development of Digital Capacity

Programme learning outcomes that included this domain aimed at developing participants' capacity in the area of digital pedagogy. The development of digital capacity had a number of objectives including for example creating digital teaching materials and critical assessment of multimedia applications in teaching and learning; encouraging engagement with existing and emerging learning technologies; providing an interactive experiential learning environment in an applied technology-based project.

Table 12: Development of Digital Capacity — **Mentions**

Domain 4 – Development of Digital Capacity	32
Provide Interaction with Existing, Emerging Learning Technologies	18
Equip participants in Creating Digital Teaching Materials and Critically Assessing Multimedia Apps	8
Development of Skills for those using technology	5
Provide Interactive Experiential Learning Environment in Applied technology based Project	1

Programme objectives in this domain emphasised the development and use of technology as a key resource for teachers:

To equip participants with storyboarding skills to allow them plan the creation of their own digital content and build a store of teaching materials derived from several digital sources… To equip participants with an understanding of the implications of digital media and other related technologies on student/pupil learning.

Programme ID 26

Focus on Module Learning Outcomes

This section sets out the results of a systematic review of the module learning outcomes described by the 68 programmes identified. Module learning outcomes show more emphasis on the development of generic teaching and learning skills (54%) when compared to programme objectives (41%). There was less emphasis on Domain 2 – Developing as a Reflective Practitioner (15% v 26%), less emphasis on the Development of Research Skills(13% v 18%) and slightly more emphasis on the Development of Digital Capacity (18% v15%).
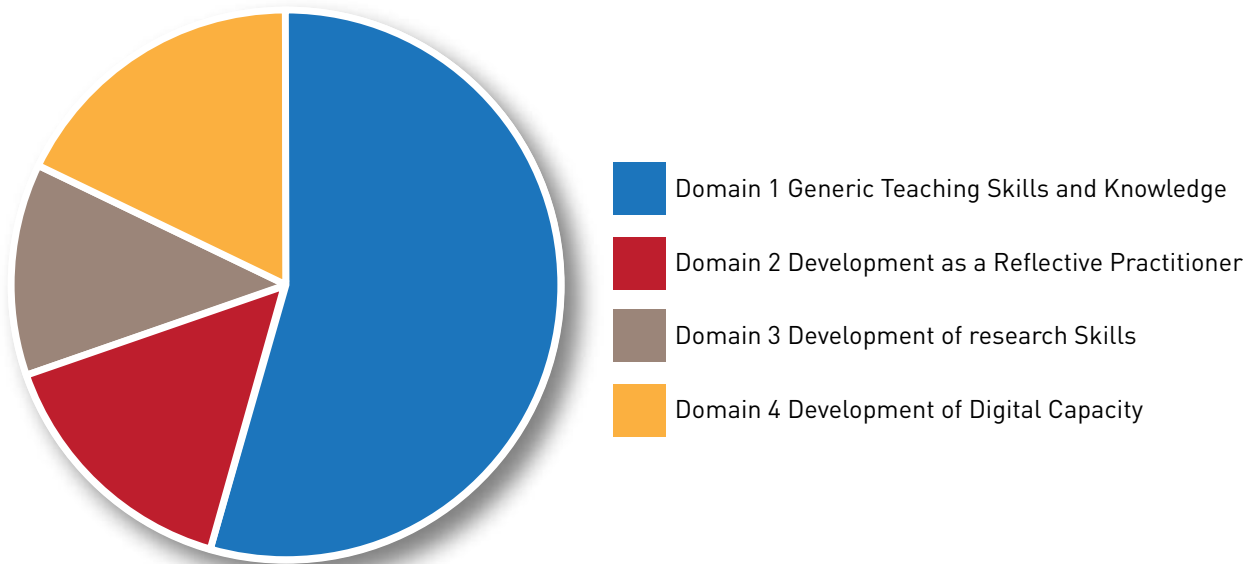

Domain 1 Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge

Domain 2 Development as a Reflective Practitioner

Domain 3 Development of research Skills

Domain 4 Development of Digital Capacity

Figure 3– The percentage of module learning outcomes across four domains

Domain 1 – Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge

The range of skills and knowledge to be acquired and demonstrated by course participants was diverse. Table 13 outlines the range and type of learning outcomes aimed at encouraging the acquisition of generic teaching skills, knowledge and competence that were cited as module learning outcomes.

Table 13- Domain 1 –Generic Teaching Skills and Competence

Domain 1 - Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge	245
Conversant in Theoretical Perspectives & Issues and Implications (Application) for Own Practice	55
Identify Possible Models of Good Practice (+ Inclusivity)	42
Skills for Assessment Processes (Accreditation & QA)	29
Evaluate, Modify Own Model of Practice (based on feedback)	18
Demonstrate Understanding of Issues and Debate in Policy & Practice in HE	12
Demonstrate Broad Awareness, Knowledge	11
Demonstrate Specialised Knowledge in Variety of Areas in HE	7
Demonstrate Skills for Team Work, Group Work, Leadership	7
Demonstrate Skills for Nurturing Creativity & Critical Thinking in the Classroom	7
Articulate a Personal Philosophy and its Relationship to Own Practice	7
Demonstrate Skills for Problem Based Learning	5
Demonstrate Critical Reflection on Own Practice in Light of Literature & Experiences of Peers	5
Demonstrate Skills for Mentoring	4
Demonstrate Skills for Recognition of Prior Learning Processes	1
Improve Competency in Workplace, Practice	25
Use Student-Centred Approach in Practice; Inspire Enthusiasm in Pupils	4
Act as Role Model, Coach, Critical Friend & Colleague in Workplace	3
Communicate Effectively in a Variety of Contexts	3

Learning outcomes higlighted general as well as specific skills. General skills included, for example, demonstrating the application of theory to practice, identifying and implementing models of good practice, formulating and articulating a personal philosophy and putting it into practice; while specific skills included skills for problem-based learning, skills to practice as a mentor, as an RPL assessor, and skills for assessing student progress and learning.

Being "conversant in theoretical perspectives, issues and implications (application) for one's own practice" referred to course participants being able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theoretical perspectives, including the application of theory to practice, and the use of technology. This category was included in 4 of every 5 modules:

Refer to general and subject-specific educational research literature, and consider the practical implications of such research-based evidence for student learning, including how such literature can inform their own approach to teaching.

Course ID 7

Three out of every five modules required participants' identification and implementation of good practice as a demonstrable learning outcome. Module content that required participants to "identify possible models of good practice" focused mainly on participants demonstrating abilities in relation to implementing models of good practice; such abilities ranged from identifying to designing content, and to evaluating models of good practice:

Recommend possible practices and procedures that can be implemented to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment for all students.

Programme ID 67

Design effective and efficient learning opportunities that contribute to a more coherent and continuing curriculum.

Programme ID 32

Two in every 5 courses included a learning outcome that referred to participants demonstrating skills and knowledge of assessment for accreditation and/or quality assurance.

Discuss the nature of assessment in the college environment both at individual student (for accreditation and learning) and at system level (for quality assurance).

Programme ID 44

Evaluate the role of different assessment methods in further and higher education.

Programme ID 50

Design, implement and evaluate an appropriate assessment scheme for a specific subject area.

Programme ID 52

Both reflecting on one's own practice in relation to ongoing professional development and improving workplace competency was considered to be a desirable learning outcome in 2 out of every 5 courses:

Generate a continued commitment to professional development as a teacher and researcher in a higher education context. Identify areas where further learning and practice is needed. Generate an awareness of own learning preferences.

Programme ID 27

Expand your repertoire of teaching, learning and assessment strategies to promote a more engaging and enjoyable experience for staff and students.

Programme ID 32

Domain 2 – Development as a Reflective Practitioner

Module learning outcomes did not reflect the same emphasis on the development of participants as reflective practitioners cognisant of their personal development as professionals when compared to programme objectives. Only 15% of modules incorporated learning outcomes that captured the need for reflective practice at module level when compared to those explicitly mention at programme level (26%).

Table 14- Domain 2 –Development as a Reflective Practitioner   **Mentions**

Development as a Reflective Practitioner	68
Reflect on Own Practice in Relation to On-going Professional Development	37
Engage with Community of Teachers from Variety of Subject Disciplines	13
Understand Importance of & Actively Engage in on-going Critical Self-Reflection as Means of Enhancing Practice	12
Profound Respect for Intellectual Integrity, Ethics of Scholarship, Professionalism	6

The range and focus of the learning outcomes in this domain varied considerably (Table 14). Some were directed towards assessment (Programme ID 32, Programme ID 45) while others captured the process of reflection and professionalisation more holistically (Programme ID 65).

Both reflecting on one's own practice in relation to ongoing professional development and improving workplace competency were mentioned in 2 out of every 5 courses:

Generate a continued commitment to professional development as a teacher and researcher in a higher education context. Identify areas where further learning and practice is needed. Generate an awareness of own learning preferences.

Programme ID 27

Expand your repertoire of teaching, learning and assessment strategies to promote a more engaging and enjoyable experience for staff and students.

Programme ID 32

Create an evidence-based portfolio of reflective professional develop in terms of their own development as a reflective practitioner and their concurrent development as a professional within the higher education sector.

Programme ID 32

Demonstrate competence in reflective self-evaluation and professional / academic awareness.

Programme ID 45

Some modules were very explicit in what participants were required to achieve:

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

a. *Review critically their professional experience, influence and impact, their teaching situation and professional context.*

b. *Identify their professional development needs.*

c. *Plan targets to address their professional development needs.*

d. *Develop a strategy to support the achievement of targets.*

e. *Analyse the concept of professionalism within the context of their professional practice.*

f. *Identify how the process of reflective enquiry can help inform changes in their practice.*

Programme ID 65

Domain 3 – Development of Research Skills

One in three modules cited participants' ability to demonstrate research skills as a desired learning outcome. Participants on these modules had to demonstrate the capacity to engage with the literature, to conduct small-scale research, and present findings commensurate with the highest scholarly standards for publication. A small number of learning outcomes focused on participants' capacity to supervise student research (Table 14).

Plan and carry out complex research projects in specific curricular areas of teaching including dissertation/ research papers.

Programme ID 20

Apply research skills, to constructively critique, draw conclusions and offer recommendations within the field of education and training.

Programme ID 23

Broaden their range of research skills to include those appropriate for the study of academic practice including ethnography, surveys, action research and case study.

Programme ID 24

Table 14 – Domain 3 – Development of Research Skills   **Mentions**

Domain 3 - Acquisition of Research Skills	57
Demonstrate Research Skills	36
Engage in Peer Review + Demonstrate Honed Academic Writing & Presentation Skills	16
Demonstrate Research Supervision Skills	5

Specific module learning outcomes that focus on acquiring or increasing levels of academic writing skills were directly cited in 5 modules

Outline the principles of academic writing and discuss different genres of academic writing. Write clear, well-structured academic assignments of some length, with a high degree of grammatical accuracy and in an appropriate style.

Programme ID 9

Publish research outcomes in accordance with academic writing standards.

Programme ID 35

Domain 4 – Development of Digital Capacity

This domain incorporated all learning outcomes related to digital capacity (Table 15).

Table 15 – Domain 4 – Development of Digital Capacity	Mentions
Domain 4 - Acquisition of Skills to Practice in eLearning Sec tor	**80**
Acquisition of skills in using & developing digital technologies	41
Acquisition of skills for incorporating technology into ones own Practice	39

The acquisition of skills in this domain focused on using and developing digital technologies. It centered on the technology rather than its application as a teaching and learning tool:

Compare and contrast a range of technologies available to teachers in HE (including classroom technologies, internet based, mobile communication) and evaluate their effectiveness.

Programme ID 43

In contrast, the sub-category "acquisition of skills for incorporating technology into ones own practice" focused on the application of the technologies, once understood, in a classroom or online teaching and learning environment:

Emphasise the appropriate use of e-Learning approaches in each participant's work and in the work of others in order that they are able to undertake a practitioner based e-Learning initiative within their own working practice.

Programme ID 3

Relationship between Programme objectives and moduleLearning Outcomes

In order to evaluate the degree to which there was consistency between stated programme objectives and desired module learning outcomes across the entire range of 68 courses, a comparative cluster analysis was run on the content across all four domains that had been coded to both programme objectives and associated module learning outcomes. This approach used algorithms to match words exactly and uses a thesaurus to match words with similar meaning and character strings (groups of words or phrases) appearing in both sets of domains. "Jaccard's Similarity Coefficient" was used an inter-rater instrument.

Domain 1 — Development of Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge (P)
Acquisition of Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge (M)

Domain 2 — Development of competence as a Reflective Practitioner (P)
Acquisition of Research Skills (M)

Domain 3 — Development of Research Skills (P)
Acquisition of competence as a Reflective Practitioner (M)

Domain 4 — Development of Digital Capacity (P)
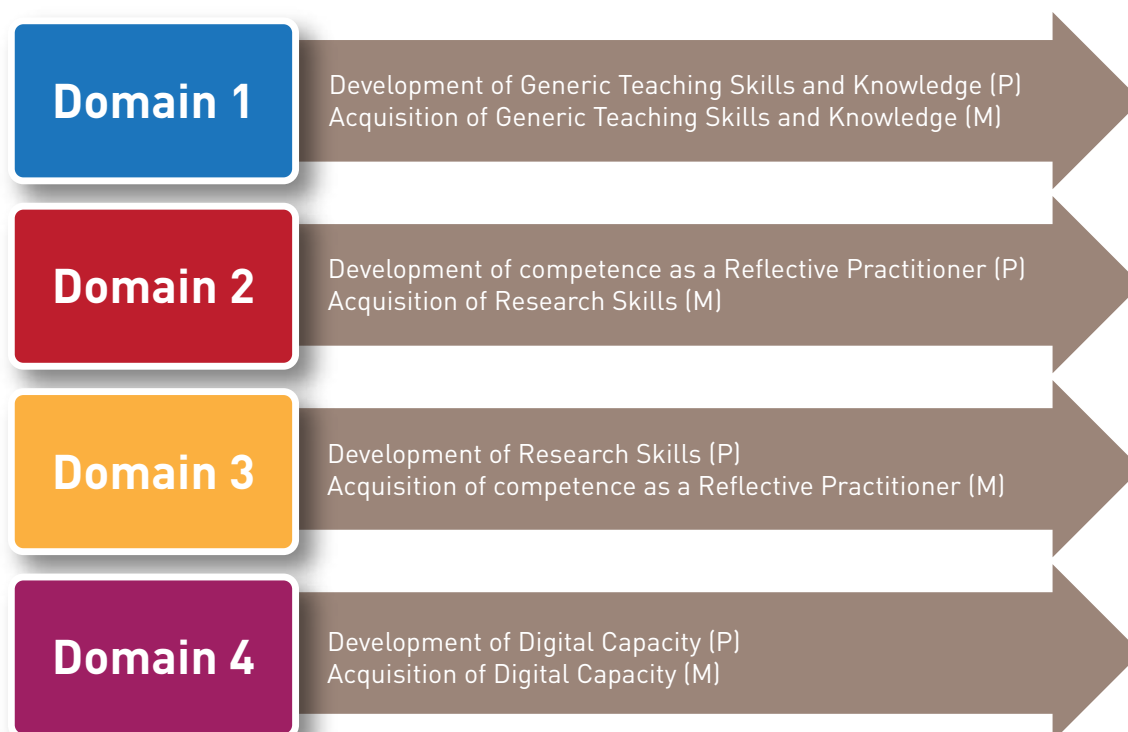Acquisition of Digital Capacity (M)

Figure 5 – Results of cluster analysis between Programme Learning Outcomes and associated Module Learning Outcomes

Strong correlations between programme objectives and desired modular learning outcomes were observed. Groups of words beginning with "Develop" are linked to programme level domains and groups of words beginning with "Demonstrate" or "Acquisition of" reflect modular level learning outcome domains.

Domain 1: "Development of Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge and " was mapped closely to "Acquisition of Generic Teaching Skills and Knowledge

Domain 2: "Development as a reflective practitioner matched more closely to "Acquisition of Research Skills" indicating a link between achieving greater levels of academic professionalism and development of research skills as a desired outcome

Domain 3: As with Domain 2, "Development of Research Skills" matched more closely to "Acquisition of competence as a reflective practitioner" as the programme designers' language used associated the demonstration of research skills as synonymous with greater academic professionalism.

Domain 4: "Development of digital capacity" mapped closely to "Acquisition of digital capacity"

Summary

Current provision of accredited professional development in Irish higher educations is in the main comprised of level 9 programmes of 30 ECTS credits or fewer, the majority of which incorporate some online component. To support participation, some providers encouraged staff to complete a programme through fee waivers and time off. Other providers made it mandatory for new staff to complete accredited professional development in teaching and learning. Several linked successful participation to subsequent promotion prospects. Providers varied in their approach to the recognition of prior learning. Some programmes made provision for RPL on a case by case basis. Other providers had RPL processes in place that enabled participants to gain credit for modules through a RPL route.

Given the number of programmes available, numbers graduating in 2012/13 were low. The maximum graduating from any one course was 22, and the average number of graduates from existing provision is 8.

Over 40% of the course content, as indicated by the programme objectives, aims to develop generic teaching and learning skills and competence that integrate theory and practice. Only a small proportion of programme objectives focused explicitly on policy and practice in higher education (circa 5%), the development of creative and critical thinking skills (circa 1%), the development of leadership and management skills (circa 1%) or the development as an RPL assessor (circa 1%). Over 25% of the programme objectives made explicit the need for participants to develop as reflective practitioners and to develop their scholarship of teaching and learning. 18% of programme objectives were linked to the development of research skills with many emphasising the need to work towards publication.

The recognition that participants now live and work in a rapidly changing digital world was reflected in the explicit requirement to build individuals' personal digital capacity incorporated as a key component of programme design. Participants were afforded the opportunity not only to learn about different technologies but also how the potential of technology could be harnessed to enhance teaching and learning.

Programme objectives appeared to focus more explicitly on the development of research skills than did modular learning outcomes. Modular learning outcomes focused on the development of generic teaching skills, knowledge and competence and the use of technology to enhance teaching and learning.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

1.This questionnaire has been partially completed with Information from this link:

2.What are the programme objectives?
For e.g., To support lecturers to deepen their knowledge

3.What are the programme objectives?
For e.g., Critically review the formative and summative modes in their own courses.

4.How many credits are required to complete the programme?
- ◯ 5
- ◯ 10
- ◯ 15
- ◯ 20
- ◯ 30
- ◯ 60
- ◯ 90
- ◯ 120
- ◯ 150

Other (please specify) [＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿]

5.What is the NFQ (National Framework of Qualifications) level of the programme?
- ◯ 8
- ◯ 9
- ◯ 10

Other (please specify) [＿＿＿＿＿＿＿＿]

6.Is the programme:
- ◯ Part time
- ◯ Full time
- ◯ Both

7.How long does it take to complete the programme (full-time equivalent)?
- ◯ 1 semester
- ◯ 2 semesters
- ◯ 1 year
- ◯ 2 years
- ◯ 3 years
- ◯ 4 years
- ◯ 5 years

○ 6 years
○ 1-2 years
○ 2-5 years
○ 3-6 years
Other (please specify) ☐

8. Is this programme running in the 13/14 academic year?
○ Yes
○ No

9.If no to question 8, when did this programme last run?

10.When will the programme open for registration again?

11. Please list any outside institutions where participants have come from.

12. Please give details of any RPL (Recognition for Prior Learning) entry routes that are available for this programme.
For e.g., Participants with experience teaching or who have taken a similar module can fast-track.

13.Is this programme offered free of charge for internal staff members?
○ Yes
○ No

14. How many people graduated in the last cohort?

15. Are there any incentives provided for staff to complete this programme (such as time buy out or link to promotion)?
○ Yes
○ No

16.What is the primary medium of delivery?
○ Face-to-face (mostly attending lectures or practical sessions in person)
○ Blended (a mix of face-to-face sessions, online attendance, workshops, peer-learning etc)
○ Online (more than 70% of programme in virtual classrooms/forums etc)
Other (please specify) ☐

Appendix 2

Methodology- Qualitative Analysis

Data Analysis in this Study

Data were collected using an on-line questionnaire (Appendix 1). The questionnaire was designed to address the research questions as previously set out. There were eight discrete cycles of analyses. These cycles involved three separate cycles of coding, two cycles of managing codes, one for initial categorisation of open codes and one for data reduction through consolidating codes into a more abstract framework and three which used writing itself as a tool to prompt deeper thinking of the data (Bazeley, 2009) leading to findings from which conclusions may be drawn. Some of the managing coding cycles also involved additional coding. The eight phases of this study may be described as follows:

Phase 1 – Downloading qualitative comments and quantitative information on courses and other profiling information into a table for import into a computer aided qualitative data analysis system (CAQDAS) known as NVivo.

Phase 2 – Open Coding involved broad participant-driven initial coding of the institutions' submissions so as to deconstruct the data from its original chronology into initial non-hierarchical general codes. These codes were assigned clear labels and contained the units of meaning (text segments) which were coded from the content

Phase 3 – Categorisation of Codes involved re-ordering codes identified and coded in phase 1 into categories of codes by grouping related codes under these categories and organising them into a framework that made sense to further the analysis of this particular data set and research question. This phase also included distilling, re-labelling and merging of categories to ensure that labels and 'rules for inclusion' accurately reflected coded content.

Phase 4 – Coding On involved breaking down the now restructured categories into sub- categories to offer more in-depth understanding of the highly qualitative aspects under scrutiny and to consider divergent views, negative cases, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours coded to these categories and to offer clearer insights into the meanings embedded therein

Phase 5 –Data Reduction involved consolidating and refining codes into a more abstract and conceptual map or final framework of codes

Phase 6 – Involved writing analytical memos against the higher level codes to accurately summarise the content of each category and its codes and propose empirical findings against such categories. These memos considered 5 key areas:

1. The content of the cluster of codes on which it was reporting

2. The patterns where relevant (for example levels of coding, although this could be used to identify exceptional cases as well as shared experiences)

3. Quantifiable information recorded against courses such as course level, for example..

4. Situating the code(s) in a storyboard or creating a narrative which considers relatedness of codes to each other and drawing and describing inferences and their importance to addressing the research question, and sequencing disparate codes and clusters of codes into a story which is structured and can be expressed in the form of a coherent and cohesive set of outcome statements or findings.

5. Primary sources in the context of relationships with the literature as well as identifying gaps in the literature.

Phase 7 – Validation involved testing, validating and revising analytical memos so as to self- audit proposed findings by seeking evidence in the data beyond textual quotes to support the stated findings and seeking to expand on deeper meanings embedded in the data. This process involves interrogation of data and forced the consideration of elements beyond the category itself, drawing on relationships across and between categories and cross-tabulation with demographics, observations recorded by researchers during coding, and literature. This phase resulted in evidence-based findings as each finding had to be validated by being rooted in the data itself and relied on the creation of reports from the data to substantiate findings.

Phase 8 – Synthesising analytical memos into a coherent, cohesive and well-supported outcome statement or findings report that charts the APD terrain as currently configured.