

#DigitalEd25

DIGITALED 25

ATU DigitalEd Conference

May 13th

ATU Galway
Campus

Digital education technologies and practices shaping the future of teaching and learning

Book of Abstracts

Conference outputs available at DigitalEd.ie

Welcome to ATU's DigitalEd 25 Conference

Welcome to ATU's DigitalEd 25 Conference. The conference aims to bring together educators, researchers and practitioners working in digital education and transformation across the higher education sector. Participants will share and discover innovative uses of education technology in teaching, learning and assessment. The conference will have a particular focus on assessment and artificial intelligence (AI) and designing learning for the future.

An international keynote address will be delivered by Professor Phillip (Phill) Dawson, who is the Co-Director of the Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE) at Deakin University in Australia. CRADLE is the world's leading higher education assessment research group in terms of publications and citations. Phill is most known for his research on feedback, cheating and artificial intelligence in assessment. His work is highly cited, and he ranks 6th internationally in the field of higher education research over the past five years (ScholarGPS).

The second keynote address will include Associate Professor Sue Beckingham, Professor Peter Hartley, Stephen Powell and Dr Jenny Lawrence, who will share case stories from the book 'Using Generative AI Effectively in Higher Education', published in 2024. This timely book explores how higher education providers can realise their role and responsibility in harnessing the power of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) ethically and sustainably. This resource is invaluable to educational leaders, HE educators, educational developers, learning technologists, course administrators and quality assurance staff wishing to embrace and adapt to a GenAI-enabled world.

Parallel conference sessions will provide a wide range of disciplines including educators and students from across ATU and the HE sector in Ireland including DKIT, MTU, SETU, IADT, UCC, UCD and UG. The sessions will explore a range of topics such as immersive learning, innovative pedagogies, digital transformation in teaching and learning, student partnership and AI fluency, GenAI and assessment, and a showcase from the MA Teaching and Learning Applied programme.

On behalf of the ATU Teaching and Learning Centre and the DigitalEd conference team, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the presenters for sharing their digital teaching, learning and assessment experiences at DigitalEd 25. In addition, many thanks to the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the National Forum for the enhancement of Teaching and Learning for supporting DigitalEd under the SATLE strategic fund.

Enjoy the conference and the book of abstracts from DigitalEd25.

Check out all the outputs from the conference at [DigitalEd.ie](https://www.digital-ed.ie).



Dr Carina Ginty, DigitalEd Conference Chair
*Head of Teaching and Learning
(Transformative Education &
Sustainable Learning Futures)*

DigitalEd 25 Conference Co-ordinator: Olga Vaughan

ATU Teaching and Learning Centre Conference Committee: Dr Carina Ginty, Olga Vaughan, Dr Kevin Cunningham, Pat Heffernan, Orla Skehill, Dr Sean Daffy, Emma McDonald, Annette Cosgrove, Noreen Henry and Dr Niamh Plunkett.

Tuesday 13th May

TIME	ROOM	SESSION TITLE	PRESENTER	THEME
9.15am	1000	Welcome	Dr Orla Flynn, ATU President and Dr Carina Ginty (DigitalEd Conference Chair)	
9.30am	1000	Assessment design for a time of AI	Professor Phillip Dawson (Phill) is the Co-Director of the Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning (CRADLE) at Deakin University	Keynote 1
10.30-11.30am	1000	Insights from the EU Digital Education Hub report on Immersive Learning: innovative pedagogies, techniques, best practice and future trends.	Jacqueline Toal (DKIT)	Parallel Session 1 Immersive Learning Chair Dr Carina Ginty (ATU)
10.30-11.30am	1000	Co-Creating Digital Transformation in Higher Education: Exploring the impact of the N-TUTORR Students as Partners in Innovation and Change Fellowships	Dr Sarah Carroll (ATU), Dr Carina Ginty (ATU), Dr Moira Maguire (DKIT), Olya Antropova (DKIT) and Student Empowerment Co-ordinators for N-TUTORR	
10.30-11.30am	1000	Where are We and Where Do We Need to Be? Supporting Staff and Student GenAI Literacy	Dr Sarah Thelen, Dr Loretta Goff, Dr Marie Ryan (UCC)	
10.30-11.30am	1000	Guth Fánach: Considering the Educational Implications of Mediating the Traditional Voice in Extended Reality (XR)	Dr Jeremiah Spillane (MTU)	
10.30am	1041	GenAI Exploration Workshop	Annette Cosgrove & Noreen Henry (ATU)	Parallel Session 2 GenAI Exploration Workshop
11.30-11.45am	Café Foyer	BREAK		

TIME	ROOM	SESSION TITLE	PRESENTER	THEME
11.45-12.30pm	1000	Minds, Hearts and Behaviours: Bridging the Sustainability Value-Action Gap. A Case Study in Irish Tertiary Education	Dr Gabriela Gliga (ATU)	Session 3 MA T&L Applied Showcase Chair Annette Cosgrove (ATU)
11.45-12.30pm	1000	Enhancing the learning experience of Higher Education students by diversifying the mode of assessment - A case study implementing UDL principles	Dr Luca Mirimin (ATU)	
11.45-12.30pm	1000	Automating the Feedback and Marking Process when Assessing a Manufacturing Process Planning Curriculum in Higher Education Using Virtual Learning Environment Tools	Dr Doru Boblea (ATU)	
12.30-1.15pm	1000	Use of Technology to Enhance Students Learning Experience	Sinéad Keogh (ATU)	Session 4 Digital Transformation in T&L Chair Dr Niamh Plunkett (ATU)
12.30-1.15pm	1000	Exploring AI in Language Education: A Case Study on Student Language Teachers' Perceptions, Practices and Uses	Dr Eileen Bowman (UCD)	
12.30-1.15pm	1000	Drivers of the Digital Pedagogy of Teacher Educators for the Further Education sector	Anne O'Mahony (SETU)	
1.15pm-2pm	Café Foyer	LUNCH		
2pm	1000	Using Generative AI Effectively in HE	Sue Beckingham Associate Professor and Learning, Teaching and Assessment Lead in the School of Computing and Digital Technologies Sheffield Hallam University. Professor Peter Hartley is a freelance Higher Education Consultant, and Visiting Professor at Edge Hill University	Keynote 2

TIME	ROOM	SESSION TITLE	PRESENTER	THEME
2.45-3.45pm	1000	From Beans to Brilliance: The World Café Method. A Masterclass in utilising the WC methodology in person and online for conversations that matter.	Margaret McLoone (ATU) & Prof Colette Kelly (UG)	Session 5 Student Partnership & AI Fluency Chair Noreen Henry (ATU)
2.45-3.45pm	1000	Exploring the integration of traditional and synthetic Instructional video as an enhancement for third-level Construction Education.	Colin Harte (ATU)	
2.45-3.45pm	1000	Empowering students through undergraduate research dissemination at home and abroad	Dr Therese Montgomery (ATU)	
2.45-3.45pm	1000	Trust, But Verify: Calibrating Student Trust in GenAI for Research	John Hough (UCC)	
3.45-4pm	Café Foyer	BREAK		
4-4.45pm	1000	What does 'embracing' Generative AI look like in Higher Education?	Dr Kevin Cunningham (ATU)	GASTA Chair Dr Tom Farrelly (MTU)
4-4.45pm	1000	Engaging Online Students through Active Scenario-Based Learning: Bridging Theory and Practice with Digital Technologies	Caroline Mullan, Fionnuala Farrell, Yvonne Sarsfield, Mary Malone (ATU)	
4-4.45pm	1000	WAVING not Drowning! Co-creative teaching on Project WAVE, Students with Learning Disabilities in Higher Education	Dr Tamsin Cavaliero & Ms Jennifer Gilligan (ATU)	
4-4.45pm	1000	Digital tools to advance sustainability in culinary training in Ireland and Europe.	Dr Sarah Berthaud, Dr Francesco Noci, Ulrich Hoeche, Eamonn Hoult, Mary Reid, Clare Newman. (ATU)	
4-4.45pm	1000	Enhancing Social Robotics Education through Immersive VR: A UDL-Aligned Approach	Dr Perry Share, Dr John Pender, Yvonne Sarsfield (ATU)	
4-4.45pm	1000	Unifying Minds: Collaborative Approaches to AI in Higher Education	Ken McCarthy & Dr Hazel Farrell (SETU)	

CLOSE CONFERENCE - Dr Michèle Glacken, Registrar & Vice President Students, Teaching & Learning & Dr Carina Ginty Conference Chair, Head of Teaching and Learning, (Transformative Education & Sustainable Learning Futures)

Keynote 1

9.30am

Assessment design for a time of AI

(Room: 1000)

Professor Phillip (Phill) Dawson

Artificial intelligence can now generate outputs that meet the requirements of high-stakes assessments in fields like law, medicine, and engineering. This has sparked concerns about students using AI inappropriately to complete tasks, misrepresenting their abilities. It also raises deeper questions about the sustainability and authenticity of current assessment practices.

This presentation examines how assessment must evolve in response to AI. It draws on the presenter's work as one of the leaders of Assessment Reform for a Time of Artificial Intelligence, a major Australian project funded by the national higher education regulator. As AI becomes an ever-present part of professional and academic life, how do we design assessments that both uphold integrity and prepare students for this new reality?

Parallel Session 1 Immersive Learning

10.30-11.30am

Insights from the EU Digital Education Hub report on Immersive Learning: innovative pedagogies, techniques, best practice and future trends.

(Room: 1000)

Jacqueline Toal (DKIT)

Immersive learning offers the promise of engaging learners cognitively, emotionally, and physically in their learning experiences. It can have a positive impact on emotions compared to traditional desktop-based learning (Lonne et al., 2023). It encompasses the use of technologies such as virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality, offering real-world and experiential learning opportunities to foster active participation in the construction of knowledge.

Furthermore, it is a form of learning that encompasses a range of multi-sensory stimuli to enhance engagement and encourage critical thinking and problem-solving through hands-on experiences (Almulla, 2023). Aligning with the European Digital Education Plan (2021-2027), which drives digital transformation and promotes inclusive and equitable quality education, a diverse range of like-minded academics, educators, and digital learning experts came together to share ideas in an Immersive Learning Squad, which is part of the European Digital Education Hub. Working collaboratively, they produced an output of content to support, inspire, and offer insights into innovative pedagogical techniques, best practices, recommendations, and trends in Immersive Learning.

10.30-11.30am

Co-Creating Digital Transformation in Higher Education: Exploring the impact of the N-TUTORR Students as Partners in Innovation and Change Fellowships

(Room: 1000)

Dr. Sarah Carroll (ATU), Dr Carina Ginty (ATU), Dr Moira Maguire (DKIT), Olya Antropova (DKIT) and Student Empowerment Co--Ordinator's for N-TUTORR.

Digital transformation in teaching and learning has been recognised as a key driver of pedagogical innovation in higher education. One of the most powerful catalysts for this transformation is the development of effective student-staff partnerships, which can foster meaningful and collaborative change across institutions. A notable example of such a partnership is the Students as Partners in Innovation and Change Fellowships (SaPICF), a central initiative within the National Technological University Transformation for Recovery and Resilience (N-TUTORR) programme. This initiative spanned seven partner institutions within the technological higher education sector.

Running from 2022 to 2024, the SaPICF programme encompassed 175 projects and was coordinated by eight Student Empowerment Coordinators from across the institutions: Jessica Duffy (ATU), Angela Magennis (DKIT), Sinea McEntee (IADT), Aoife Kelliher (MTU), Caitriona McGrattan (SETU), Roisin Murray and Heidi Kelly-Hogan (TU Dublin), and Raquel Cox (TUS). The initiative engaged approximately 1,800 students and 600 staff members, reaching directly over 6,000 students and 700 staff.

As part of evaluating the programme's effectiveness, an impact assessment was conducted through a survey distributed to project leads. This survey collected data on project aims, descriptions, participant numbers, outreach, benefits, and perceived impacts. The resulting analysis, based on a logic framework model, culminated in a collection of 95 impact case studies, which were organised according to five themes. One of the most prominent themes, Digital Transformation, featured 23 case studies (24%).

This presentation will showcase these Digital Transformation case studies, which co-created a variety of resources including digital artifacts, platforms, events, guidelines, innovative teaching methods, and digital infrastructures. Additionally, it will highlight the key inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of these Digital Transformation partnerships, offering insights into actionable strategies recommended by project leaders.

10.30-11.30am

Where are We and Where Do We Need to Be? Supporting Staff and Student GenAI Literacy

(Room: 1000)

Dr Sarah Thelen, Dr Loretta Goff, Dr Marie Ryan (UCC)

The ongoing development of Generative AI (GenAI) tools continues to present both opportunities and challenges for higher education. This presentation will share insights from the "AI-ntegrity" and "GenAI LEARN" projects at University College Cork (UCC), which offer evidence-based strategies for GenAI integration in higher education (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). These projects employ a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and focus groups, to examine staff (AI-ntegrity) and student (GenAI LEARN) knowledge, engagement, and perceptions of GenAI in teaching, learning, and assessment. This approach establishes a baseline of current GenAI engagement levels, identifies knowledge gaps, and gathers rich qualitative data on user experiences and concerns. Findings from these surveys will inform the development of targeted training initiatives and guidelines for responsibly integrating GenAI into educational practices. The GenAI LEARN project follows up on the survey data by taking

a student's-as-partners approach to developing a resource hub designed by and for students to support their development of skills to use GenAI responsibly and effectively, framed by evaluative, ethical decision-making. By addressing the pressing need to understand and adapt to these technologies, the studies contribute to shaping responsive and future-ready higher education. This presentation will discuss key findings, methodological approaches, and practical implications, inviting participants to reflect on transferable lessons for their own institutions in navigating the GenAI landscape.

10.30-11.30am

Guth Fánach: Considering the Educational Implications of Mediating the Traditional Voice in Extended Reality (XR)

(Room: 1000)

Dr Jeremiah Spillane (MTU)

Extended Reality (XR) offers tremendous potential for new modes of education. For example, remediating heritage or cultural practices can transform how learners engage with works or specific cultural practices. This has the potential to create new transformative, speculative and critical experiences for the learner.

This paper examines Guth Fánach, an extended reality (XR) work that explores the mediation of sean-nós singing through Bruno Latour's concept of technical mediation (On Technical Mediation, 1994), Jacques Derrida's hauntology (Specters of Marx, 1993), and Even Eisenberg's notion that records (read here as media) provide a vehicle for time travel (The Recording Angel, 1987). Rather than treating XR as a neutral medium for preservation, this paper argues that Guth Fánach reveals how technology actively transforms cultural memory, producing conditions where the voice is simultaneously present and absent, embodied and disembodied, material and virtual.

The work unfolds as a two-stage encounter: the participant first discovers an archival sean-nós recording in a mixed-reality space, engaging with the traditional voice embedded in a technologically mediated spectral artifact. As the song begins, the environment dissolves into a fully virtual space, where a contemporary sean-nós singer performs the same piece in real time. This transition destabilises the boundary between past and present, archive and embodiment—invoking hauntology's preoccupation with the persistence of lost voices and the spectral (re)turn of history.

This presentation then considers the educational implications for this kind of VR/XR work, highlighting the ways in which new media technologies can contribute to innovative, critical and speculative learner experiences.

GenAI Exploration Workshop

10.30-11.30am

(Room: 1041)

Annette Cosgrove & Noreen Henry (ATU)

Session 3 MA T&L Applied Showcase

11.45-12.30pm

Minds, Hearts and Behaviours: Bridging the Sustainability Value-Action Gap. A Case Study in Irish Tertiary Education

(Room: 1000)

Dr Gabriela Gliga (ATU)

While students often express positive attitudes toward sustainability, there is often a disconnect between these stated values and actual behaviours. This study investigates the “value-action gap” in sustainability education in a marketing discipline context. Drawing on Ajzen’s (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour, along with constructivist and humanist learning theories, the study applies a design thinking approach to redesign a Consumer Behaviour module with the goal of engaging students cognitively, emotionally, and behaviourally.

Using a qualitative case study methodology, data was collected through two student focus groups and one expert interview. Insights from the Empathise stage of Design Thinking reveal low student engagement with sustainability; financial constraints, a preference for convenience, limited knowledge, and scepticism towards corporate sustainability claims (greenwashing) are barriers to sustainable behaviour. Conversely, key motivators for sustainable behaviour include personal values, government policy, and the influence of peers and social norms.

Findings from the Testing stage indicate that experiential, hands-on activities, personal reflection, positive framing, and integrating sustainability more broadly across the curriculum are effective teaching and learning strategies for sustainability education. The redesigned module incorporates these insights, embedding factual sustainability content, interactive activities, and a revised assessment approach that encourages student choice and applied learning. These changes align with Universal Design for Learning principles.

The study concludes that addressing the sustainability value-action gap in third level marketing education requires a student-centred approach, focused on applied activities and critical thinking development. It also highlights the need for systemic changes and policy interventions to encourage (or require) the adoption of more sustainable consumer behaviours.

11.45-12.30pm

Enhancing the learning experience of Higher Education students by diversifying the mode of assessment - A case study implementing UDL principles

(Room: 1000)

Dr Luca Mirimin (ATU)

The present study aimed at assessing the effectiveness of applying UDL principles in teaching and learning strategies within a cohort of undergraduate students (n = 35) undertaking a science module in an Irish HE Institution. The first step was to attempt the identification of different (VARK) learning styles by means of a questionnaire. This enabled the identification of 4 potential groups: non-kinesthetic, kinesthetic-aural, kinesthetic-visual and kinesthetic-read/write. Subsequently, a series of lectures/practical classes were delivered and assessed using a diverse range of strategies, including individual and group work, MCQs, question banks, and choice of multiple assessment (MCQ, reflective statement, or graphical visualisation). Finally, students were asked to complete a questionnaire that assessed their experience and preferences in terms of assessment strategies as well as skills acquired. Results showed a general tendency of students to display a kinesthetic style of learning, but at the same time no specific pattern could be identified for a given potential learning style group; however, variation within the cohort was evident and appeared to be at an individual level. Overall, students displayed a very

positive response to a UDL approach and expressed a keen interest towards diversification of assessment strategies. This led to increased engagement as well as satisfaction by the students and also provided the educator with an insight on variation present within the cohort. Despite the limiting factors due to small sample size, this study provided supporting evidence that UDL approaches are beneficial and even though VARK definitions may be limiting or too simplistic to truly capture learning styles, it was still an impactful exercise for both the educator and especially the learners.

11.45-12.30pm

Automating the Feedback and Marking Process when Assessing a Manufacturing Process Planning Curriculum in Higher Education Using Virtual Learning Environment Tools

(Room: 1000)

Dr Doru Boblea (ATU)

In recent years, and especially during the pandemic, technology has become increasingly part of the teaching and learning experience. Various digital tools for content delivery and assessment of different curricula became available during this time. However, there are limitations based on the course learning outcomes of specific modules, namely Manufacturing Process Planning, a course delivered both online and onsite across different programs, to full time students and part-time adult cohorts. The course content is divided into a well-established number of steps, describing the procedure in creating a manufacturing process plan to convert a chosen raw material into a finished part. The students must analyze personalized dimensioned parts for the duration of the course, learn, reflect and justify each step taken before moving to the next phase of the process. They are continuously assessed through linked assignments, and personalized feedback is given after each submission based on their decisions and calculations, approving the correct ones, or indicating any modifications before continuing to the next step. Due to the constantly increasing number of students, the lecturer spends more and more time correcting each assessment and sending individual feedback, resulting in delays in which in return reduce the time the students have to update their work and prepare for the next assessment. As result, the need of partially or totally automating the feedback and marking process became obvious. This paper presents a method of both partially and totally automating the feedback and marking process, where the students receive instant feedback and mark once the work submitted. As benefits, the students can correct their work straight away, while the information is still fresh, creating more time to reflect on the work completed and prepare for the next task, and lecturer having more time to create additional activities to improve the students' learning experience.

Session 4 Digital Transformation in T&L

12.30-1.15pm

Use of Technology to Enhance Students Learning Experience

(Room: 1000)

Sinéad Keogh (ATU)

This presentation is an overview of the technological additions and enhancements that I made to a number of in-person, online and hybrid taught modules in order to enhance the learning experience of the student and incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL). It gives practical examples of the various technological tools used to encourage collaborative learning approaches, provide lecture content in a variety of formats, using AI as a tool for learning and enhance the presentation of content on VLE. Feedback from students is encouraged, included and the enhancements based on this feedback is also presented.

12.30-1.15pm

Exploring AI in Language Education: A Case Study on Student Language Teachers' Perceptions, Practices and Uses

(Room: 1000)

Dr Eileen Bowman (UCD)

This case study examines the perceptions, practices and uses of artificial intelligence. (AI) tools among student language teachers, focusing on their impact on teaching and learning, within our initial language teacher education programmes. In the context of language education, AI offers substantial opportunities to enhance teaching methodologies, enrich learning experiences, and improve assessment practices. Despite extensive speculation and debate surrounding the impact of these tools on language teaching and learning, the perspectives of student language teachers concerning their influence on initial language teacher education remain insufficiently examined. This small-scale study employed a mixed methods approach. Initial findings suggest that most student language teachers recognise the transformative power of AI tools to create and tailor content for their own students in the classroom but it also underscores the need for pedagogical approaches that balance technological innovation with human-centred learning experiences.

12.30-1.15pm

Drivers of the Digital Pedagogy of Teacher Educators for the Further Education sector

(Room: 1000)

Anne O'Mahony (SETU)

The increasing digital transformation of our cultural, societal and economic context has prompted an emphasis on a growing focus on digital skills for employability, social inclusion, active citizenship and wellbeing and an associated Digital Transformation of Teaching and Learning. The process of the integration of technology in teaching and learning was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and has been more recently impacted by the increasing influence of AI on teaching, learning and assessment. Both these events have highlighted the potential and the challenges of integrating technology in education.

The European Commission identified Teacher Educators as crucial to the maintenance and improvement of a high-quality teaching workforce, including their digital competencies. Although teacher educators in general have been described as a "hidden profession", even less is known about those that prepare the teachers for the Further Education sector.

This qualitative study, through ten semi-structured interviews, focuses on the individual Further Education Teacher Educators' experiences of digital pedagogy, the associated narratives and how these impact their digital pedagogy practices. This population consists of educators that are working within Higher Education on Teaching Council registered programmes. This presentation will report on the initial findings of this research by charting the developing digital pedagogy of individual lecturers and the underpinning drivers of their practice.

Keynote 2

2pm

Using Generative AI Effectively in Higher Education

(Room: 1000)

Associate Professor Sue Beckingham & Professor Peter Hartley

The SEDA publication - "Using Generative AI Effectively in Higher Education" (Routledge, 2024) - examines the pivotal role higher education institutions play in ethically and sustainably harnessing generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). This edited collection, featuring contributions from global higher education educators, offers a practical guide through evidence-based practices and stakeholder reflections. The book provides inspiration and approaches for building GenAI capability across diverse higher education contexts.

The book is structured around four key themes:

Institutional Strategies for Building Generative AI Capability - Exploring the development of institutional strategies, pedagogy, and policies to support the ethical use of GenAI; and emphasises the importance of fostering inclusion and maintaining academic integrity in the age of GenAI.

Developing Generative AI Literacies - Highlighting the role of GenAI as a confidence enhancer and learning equaliser, particularly for students with English as an additional language, providing a taxonomy of practice and investigating student experiences through a user experience (UX-led) approach.

Curriculum Design for a Generative AI-Enabled World - Analysing strategies for re-imagining student engagement in AI-enhanced classrooms, including case studies in music education, the potential of AI text-to-image generation in medical education and the use of GenAI agents for scalable roleplay activities in health sciences.

Assessment in a Generative AI-Enabled World - Considering the implications of GenAI for authentic assessment, along with the challenges, ethics, and opportunities it presents, providing an example advocating for a focus on the process rather than the product in written assessments.

The book concludes with discussion on the importance of sustainable and ethical practices for the common good.

Our presentation will provide updated insights from our chapter authors, summarising what we/they have learned since the book's publication, and finally offer our overview of likely future developments, issues and challenges in the responsible and ethical use of GenAI across Higher Education.

Session 5 Student Partnership & AI Fluency

2.45-3.45pm

From Beans to Brilliance: The World Café Method. A Masterclass in utilising the WC methodology in person and online for conversations that matter.

(Room: 1000)

Margaret McLoone (ATU) & Prof Colette Kelly (UG)

This masterclass will outline the principles and core concepts required to host a World Cafe (WC) session both in person and online. WC's can be modified to meet a wide variety of needs, with location (in person or online), and other circumstances being factored into each WC's unique invitation, design, and question choice. Each WC must adhere to the five components of the WC model which are; setting, welcome and introduction, small-group rounds, questions and harvest (1). Hosting a WC is also based on the seven design principles as outlined by the WC Community Foundation (2). Using these principles allows for a simple, yet effective, and flexible format for hosting large group conversations.

Methods:

This case study will guide attendees through the World Café (WC) methodology model and the seven design principles of World Café Community Foundation. The presenter is a Globally Certified World Cafe Host having completed the World Cafe Community Foundation Hosting Fundamental Training Programme in 2024. She will also outline some of her experience and practical tips for utilising this methodology for both research and teaching & learning purposes.

Conclusions:

Using WC's allows for the development of engaging and inclusive conversations which can have valuable contributions in the classroom, digitally, and for research purposes. Engaging a wide variety of stakeholders using this innovative pedagogy leads to immersive learning and fruitful experiences for both the WC Host themselves and the participants.

2.45-3.45pm

Exploring the integration of traditional and synthetic instructional video as an enhancement for third-level Construction Education.

(Room: 1000)

Colin Harte (ATU)

Graduate Construction students are expected to maintain excellent process knowledge skills to align project tasks, so the critical path is sustained. Traditional Higher Education models in this field deliver huge volumes of theoretical data through didactic methods however research validates that students face challenges in understanding how construction processes align and are structured in the field.

It is suggested that a Flipped classroom supports teaching and comprehension. This model encourages self-regulation and self-direction and is adaptive to individual learning styles. The integration of Video-based learning (VBL) is advantageous as viewers can learn by mimicking the observed actions with demonstrations being supported by Human Variable verbal instruction. This paper examines the benefits and challenges of developing instructional videos in practical construction modules and investigates the integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in the production of valuable learning objects.

Educators play a significant role in this assimilation as pedagogical approaches can aid students' cognitive abilities and capability to think more abstractly. Concerns exist as educators are limited by the availability of time, insufficient technological skill, and a lack of experience in the design of Instructional videos.

By employing an interview-based approach to Data Collection, this research will investigate Third-level educators' and Construction graduates' perspectives at ATU Sligo. The hypothesis indicates that Instructional video supports traditional pedagogy and benefits the student's learning. A qualitative research methodology will identify stakeholder insights surrounding guidance and implementation support within the broader educational Institutions.

This paper will accentuate the requirement for Higher Education to provide further support, guidance, and regulation for educators who engage in Blended Learning. It demonstrates that instructional video has the potential to alleviate demands in education and improve learning outcomes however this requires Educators to develop capacities through improved strategy, innovative pedagogies and administration.

2.45-3.45pm

Empowering students through undergraduate research dissemination at home and abroad

(Room: 1000)

Dr Therese Montgomery (ATU)

The Irish Science Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) Network was established in 2016 by a group of multi-institutional Irish academics passionate about the enhancement and promotion of Undergraduate Research (UR) in STEM. UR is a core element of most BSc Hons Degree programmes, providing educators with the opportunity to examine key programme learning outcomes such as critical thinking, problem solving and scientific communication in a real-world context. UR also fosters student Innovation and Entrepreneurial skills and can promote civic engagement through targeted and applied research for societal benefit. Academic staff also benefit, utilising project supervision to continue their own research initiatives, whilst mentoring the next generation of scientific researchers. However, despite the significant advantages associated with UR for staff, students, employers and university culture, it is an area of teaching which largely remains under resourced and underdeveloped nationally.

To raise the UR profile in Ireland, the SURE Network established a national SURE conference. Students are supported through a competitive process to disseminate their research to peers, academics and invited industrial partners. We have hosted 7 annual conferences since 2018, disseminating the research of 490 final year projects, across 11 different host universities in multiple formats to an audience of 3600 undergraduate students nationally. In addition, Ireland's first and only expertly reviewed open access undergraduate research journal (SURE-J), hosted by Elsevier was established through the SURE Network in 2018. We have received two Irish Education Awards, one in 2019 for Best academic Partnership and another in 2023 for Best Student Career Impact Strategy. More recently, we have embarked on a new Erasmus+ funded research project entitled Posters in Brussels. This project aims to leverage critical skills honed through UR, empowering students to disseminate innovative research directly to policy makers across Europe, thus evoking social responsibility and civic engagement in our student population.

2.45-3.45pm

Trust, But Verify: Calibrating Student Trust in GenAI for Research

(Room: 1000)

John Hough (UCC)

Trust, encompassing cognitive and emotional dimensions, is foundational for the adoption and sustained use of technology. As generative AI (GenAI) tools reshape information-seeking behaviours in higher education, understanding students' trust in these systems is crucial. This study explores models of trust in GenAI, drawing from Jacovi et al's (2021) contractual trust framework and others. These models highlight trust as a dynamic construct shaped by user expectations, satisfaction, risk perception, competence, and benevolence.

Through the lens of calibrated trust, we examine how students form trust judgments when using GenAI for academic research. Using a scenario-based survey and a validated trust measurement instrument, we assess students' perceptions of two AI chatbots. The research aims to:

1. Assess the extent to which students trust or distrust GenAI in academic research.
2. Identify key factors that influence trust perceptions, including transparency and reliability.

Findings from this study will provide insights into how students calibrate trust in AI-based search tools, informing AI system design to foster appropriate trust levels. Additionally, results will help educators and administrators guide students in effectively integrating GenAI into academic research practices.

GASTA Session Chaired by Dr Tom Farrelly (MTU)

4-4.45pm

What does 'embracing' Generative AI look like in Higher Education?

(Room: 1000)

Dr Kevin Cunningham (ATU)

The integration of Generative AI in higher education represents a transformative shift in teaching, learning, and administrative processes. This abstract explores the multifaceted impact of 'embracing' Generative AI within academic institutions. Generative AI, characterised by its ability to produce content such as text, images, and even music, offers unprecedented opportunities for enhancing educational experiences. In the classroom, Generative AI can personalise learning by adapting content to meet individual student needs, thereby fostering a more inclusive and effective educational environment. AI-driven tools can generate customised study materials, provide instant feedback on assignments, and create immersive simulations that enhance understanding of complex subjects.

While there is lots of beneficial ways in which Generative AI can be used in higher education, there is still a question of how does it impact a student's learning if they rely on its outputs and does this hinder their learning and development. So what does 'embracing' Generative AI in higher education look like? Is it possible to ensure equitable access? Is there any frameworks that can help institutions understand how to address the use of generative AI as part of assessments in higher education.

This presentation aims to discuss some of the current programmatic approaches attempting to addressing this, namely: 1) The two-lane approach to assessment (Bridgeman, Weeks and Liu, 2024) 2) The AI Assessment Scale - AIAS (Perkins et. al 2023). Both of these approaches provide a structure that can be adopted towards assessment within a curriculum/ programme considering the ability of Generative AI. Some critical issues around generative AI use will be discussed within this presentation, such as: What constitutes academic misconduct when using Generative AI, what options you can consider when designing your assessments and is it possible to create an 'AI proof' assessment?

4-4.45pm

Engaging Online Students through Active Scenario-Based Learning: Bridging Theory and Practice with Digital Technologies.

(Room: 1000)

Caroline Mullan, Fionnuala Farrell, Yvonne Sarsfield, Mary Malone (ATU)

Active learning methods are becoming key in today's classrooms, where the focus is shifting from students passively listening to actively getting involved and participating in their learning journey. One such method is scenario-based learning (SBL), a strategy where learners are immersed in realistic and practical situations requiring them to apply theoretical knowledge to solve problems. It boosts student satisfaction in face-to-face settings. With online learning rising, 40% of Irish workers took courses online in 2024; research on satisfaction and engagement is limited. While online methods have benefits, challenges include lower engagement in collaboration and fewer student-faculty interactions.

This project design and developed an online scenario using Thinglink, a Web 2.0 platform widely used during the pandemic for creating interactive and engaging learning materials. The scenario simulated the application of the 5-Whys problem-solving technique in an industrial context, offering instant feedback on students' solutions.

This research sought to evaluate the effectiveness of SBL in fostering both theoretical understanding and practical skills, while also examining the virtual platform's ease-of-use and role in student engagement. The scenario was shared with online student cohorts, inviting them to complete an anonymous survey to reflect on their experience before and after its use.

Overall, a significant majority found the platform engaging (84%), easy to use (72%), and beneficial for connecting theory to practice (81%), though some experienced users found it of less value.

This research contributes to immersive learning by demonstrating how innovative pedagogies, such as SBL, can bridge the gap between theory and practice. The findings highlight SBL's effective application in online learning, aligning with the rapid digital transformation in T&L. It offers adaptability across contexts, enhancing accessibility and engagement with complex concepts. By integrating real-world problem-solving, this approach has the potential to transform traditional learning environments, fostering deeper understanding in an interactive, enjoyable manner.

4-4.45pm

WAVING not Drowning! Co-creative teaching on Project WAVE, Students with Learning disabilities in Higher Education

(Room: 1000)

Dr Tamsin Cavaliero & Ms Jennifer Gilligan (ATU)

Inclusive education involves socially just ways of teaching and learning and is fundamentally a social process of learning how to learn from difference so that universities and everyone in them benefit from the presence and participation of students with Intellectual Disabilities. This paper provides an insight into the exploratory learning journey we have undertaken with Project WAVE students in ATU Sligo as we collectively navigate real world dilemmas. Project WAVE is a two-year PATH 4 funded programme that offers individuals with Intellectual Disabilities the opportunity to attend university. We illustrate how through two modules, first, An Introduction to Equality Diversity and Inclusion, secondly, Information Communications Technology co-creative teaching and learning can provide an opportunity to engage students, in addition to advocating for an enhanced learning experience across the wider university community. Facilitating differentiated instruction in a variety of forms provided opportunities to increase strategies and interest. Domain general strategies have been shown to improve student outcomes across a range of levels and subjects. We will introduce a group advocacy project, Voices From the Field, that arose from the EDI module in semester 1 and engaged three ATU campuses and then move on to describe

how we have continued to build on our learning from this to include aspects of the EDI module into our ICT module in semester 2 and develop links with the Employability module through applying deliberative inclusion, shared tasks and assessment through aligning with students' interests, facilitating student voice, and adapting interactive platforms.

4-4.45pm

Digital tools to advance sustainability in culinary training in Ireland and Europe.

(Room: 1000)

Dr Sarah Berthaud, Dr Francesco Noci, Ulrich Hoeche, Eamonn Hault, Mary Reid, Clare Newman. (ATU)

SCOOK is an Erasmus+ funded project aimed at enhancing sustainability awareness and digital readiness in culinary vocational education and training (VET). Partners from Ireland, Spain, France, and the Republic of North Macedonia are collaborating to develop multilingual digital tools supporting the integration of sustainable practices within the culinary sector specifically but also with the broader hospitality and tourism sectors, as they are all intertwined in promoting environmental sustainability.

The project aims to enhance sustainability understanding in culinary education, promoting innovative teaching methods aligned with industry needs. It has explored sustainable practices in food production and consumption, using surveys and expert input to assess and improve sustainability education in the culinary and hospitality sectors. The project has seen the development of a suite of digital tools to support sustainability within the culinary education curriculum. The suite of digital tools comprises (i) survey data developed into an e-poster, (ii) a series of webinars, (iii) a manual on local sustainable actions from the partners' networks, and (iv) a series of H5P videos with subtitles for each of the partners' language.

This presentation will provide a snippet of how the tools can be used together in and outside the culinary classroom to improve sustainability awareness.

4-4.45pm

Enhancing Social Robotics Education through Immersive VR: A UDL-Aligned Approach

(Room: 1000)

Dr Perry Share, Dr John Pender, Yvonne Sarsfield (ATU)

As digital transformation reshapes education, the integration of immersive technologies into curricula is essential to foster engagement, accessibility and interdisciplinary learning. This paper explores the implementation of Virtual Reality (VR) in social professional education with a focus on how it can help the learner to explore the complexities of care: whether delivered face-to-face by human carers, by social robots, or through VR agents. As students co-develop and co-create 'virtual carers' in virtual care scenarios, they learn about the nature and limits of 'care' itself.

VR's immersive nature promotes active learning by allowing students to interact with virtual patients and virtual social robots. This approach has the potential to enhance student engagement and experiential understanding. Unlike traditional social robotics labs, constrained by physical and financial resources, VR modules provide flexibility and customisability, allow for remote access, facilitate global participation and reduce hardware-related expenses. Furthermore, the interdisciplinary nature of this approach bridges robotics, care, social sciences and ethics, to prepare students for real-world applications of social robotics.

The proposed VR module aligns with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework by offering multiple means of engagement, representation and action/expression. It provides students with autonomy in scenario selection, ensuring motivation through authentic, real-world experiences. Multisensory learning elements, scaffolded prompts, and language accessibility features accommodate diverse learners. Additionally, flexible assessments, including simulated caregiving tasks and adaptive controls, enable all students to demonstrate their competencies effectively.

This paper contributes to the conference themes of digital transformation in teaching and learning, immersive pedagogies and AI-driven innovation in curricula. By integrating AI-driven feedback and real-time performance tracking, VR personalises learning pathways and enhanced critical AI literacy. Ultimately, this approach fosters a more inclusive and engaging educational environment, leveraging emerging technologies to support the next generation of digital learners.

4-4.45pm

Unifying Minds: Collaborative Approaches to AI in Higher Education

(Room: 1000)

Ken McCarthy & Dr Hazel Farrell (SETU)

The rapid evolution and multifaceted nature of Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents a wide range of challenges and opportunities for higher education. Recognising the need for a coordinated response, the N-TUTORR funded GenAI:N3 national project was established as a pioneering collaboration between seven partner technological universities in Ireland. This initiative aimed to create a cohesive National GenAI Network and Hub, providing open resources to support the integration of AI into teaching, learning, and research.

Through the GenAI:N3 project, 'AI Play' training courses tailored for staff and students were delivered both across the sector and internationally, fostering digital literacy and practical AI skills across diverse disciplines. Additionally, the project has facilitated hackathons within each partner university, encouraging participants to experiment with AI tools, develop innovative solutions, and enhance their creative and analytical capabilities. A crowdsourced book capturing examples of good practice across the sector was also developed.

This presentation will outline the collaborative framework of GenAI:N3, showcasing how a united approach across multiple institutions can accelerate the responsible and effective adoption of AI in higher education. Furthermore, it will highlight the successes, challenges, and future potential of leveraging shared expertise to enhance AI literacy and innovation.



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