Intellectual Output (IO):   IO5 A2

IO Lead: Dublin City University

Description: An updated offering of a MOOC on the FutureLearn platform to promote students' digital readiness for online learning

Course Title
A Digital Edge: Essentials for the Online Learning

Target Audience
This course is designed for higher education students at all levels who'd like to enhance their online learning experience.It's also suitable for those who want to become more capable online learners for their chosen careers.

Duration   2 weeks
Weekly Study   3 hours
Mode of Delivery   Online

Course Facilitation
The course was facilitated for a 3 week period from Monday 20th September to Friday 8th October 2021 by a team of online learning educators from the National Institute of Digital Learning and a team of experienced online learners from Dublin City University. The course remains open to learners as a self-paced resource.

Project partners were consulted for useful resources to include and they promoted the course in their respective countries and universities.

Course Structure
The course is structured around four key thematic areas. Two areas are covered each week. Please find further breakdown of the course structure in Appendix A.

- Ways of Thinking (Week 1)
- Ways of Working (Week 1)
- Tools for Working (Week 2)
- Tools for Thriving (Week 2)

The design of the MOOC is also anchored in the European LifeComp Framework (Sala et al., 2020) and the Learning Compass 2030 (OECD, 2019). Figure 1 presents a visual representation of how these models were synthesised.

Topics Covered
- Taking charge of your learning
- Setting goals and establishing good learning habits
- Creating the right places and spaces for learning

- Managing collaboration and effective online relationships
- Developing your online support network
- Harnessing digital tools and online resources
- Looking after your digital well-being and flourishing online
- Managing and professionalising your online identity

Figure 1: A Digital Edge: Life Skills Framework
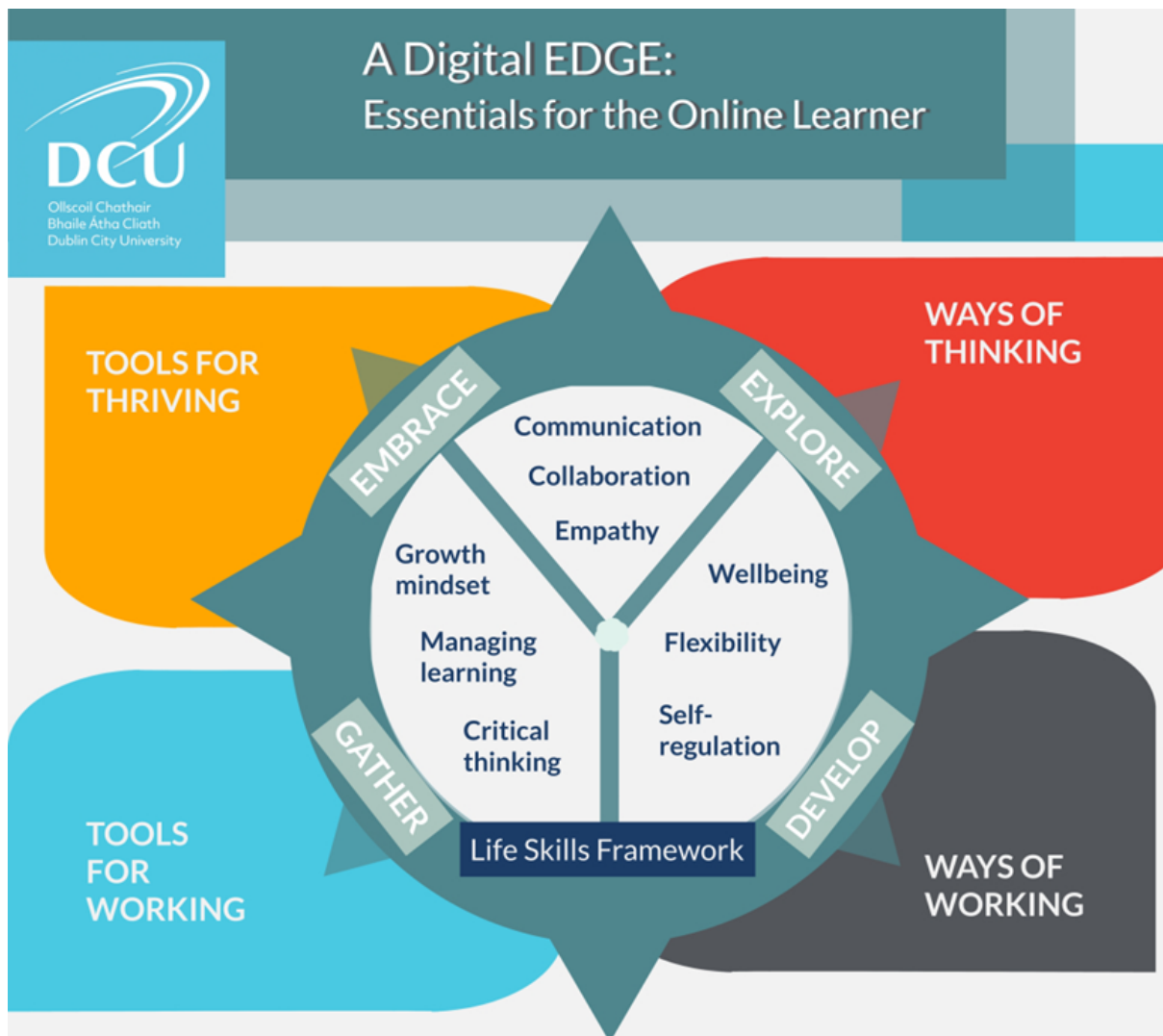
Learning Outcomes
- Reflect on and apply different ways of thinking.
- Develop good study habits and create your space for learning.
- Engage more effectively with instructors and online content.
- Contribute successfully to online collaborations with peers.
- Identify digital tools and online resources relevant to your learning.
- Identify and make the most of your wider support network.
- Improve and manage your online identity.
- Discuss your well-being and know how to flourish online.

Pedagogical Framework

The pedagogical approach adopted in the MOOC was influenced by the design principles underlying the FutureLearn platform, which promote visual learning, and learning through conversation and storytelling (FutureLearn, 2018).

Updates from Previous Iteration

Drawing on learner feedback and facilitator observations from previous iterations, the following amendments were made to this iteration of the course:

- Additional links and recommended reading materials updated with more recent publications
- Discussion forum facilitation strategy revised
- Training for student facilitators enhanced with examples from previous iterations
- End of Step discussion prompts were simplified to encourage more open discussion
- Polls/ surveys updated to reflect new context of learning (mid-pandemic)

Run Statistics

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the participation figures for this iteration of the course, which were supplied by FutureLearn.

Table 1: A Digital Edge participation statistics

Measure	Description	n	%
Joiners	Number of enrolments	2,717	100
Leavers	Users who have chosen to no longer be a part of the course	128	4.7
Learners	Users who have viewed at least one step, at any time, in any course week	1,897	69.8
Active Learners	Those who have completed at least one step at anytime in any course week	1,278	67.4
Social Learners	Those who have posted at least one comment on any step	373	19.7
Learners with ≥50% step completion	Users who have successfully completed 50% or more of the steps contained within the course. Calculated by learners clicking 'mark as complete'.	827	43.6

Learners with ≥90% step completion	Users who have successfully completed 90% or more of the steps contained within the course. Calculated by learners clicking 'mark as complete'.	790	41.6
Run Retention Index	R-Index is the highest percentage of activated learners who've completed an equivalent portion of the course. e.g. an R-Index of 37% means that 37% of activated learners completed at least 37% of the course.	0.658	65.8

FutureLearn statistics pertaining to gender, age and country of origin are also provided in Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4. The country data is based on the IP addresses of enrollees collected at the time of their enrolment. The gender and age data is based on those who participated in the FutureLearn pre-course survey, which was optional. The pre-course survey was completed by 184 learners (7% response rate). Thus, these figures only provide a limited insight into the learners on the course.

Overall, the course was well-received by the participants as evidenced by reviews posted on FutureLearn site (see Appendix B).

Table 2: Country of Origin (Top 10)

Country	Learners
Ireland	1320
Great Britain	169
India	147
Vietnam	69
United States	34
Egypt	26
Australia	24
Mexico	24
Spain	23

Table 3: Gender Profile

Gender	n	%
Female	116	63.0
Male	66	35.8
Non-Binary	2	1.0

Table 4: Age Profile

Age Range	n	%

Under 18	4	2.2
18 - 25	42	22.8
26 - 35	34	18.5
36 - 45	30	16.3
46 - 55	24	13.0
56 - 65	23	12.5
Over 65	15	8.2
Unknown	12	6.5

Appendix A
Detailed Course Overview

Week 1	Step Number	Step Name	Step Type
Welcome	1.1	Welcome to Week 1	Video
	1.2	Getting Started	Article
	1.3	Tell us about yourself	Poll
Ways of Thinking	1.4	Know thyself	Article
	1.5	What type of thinker are you?	Article
	1.6	What type of online learner are you?	Article
	1.7	Seven habits of highly effective learners	Video
	1.8	Steer your own course	Article
	1.9	Message in a bottle	Article
	1.10	Press Pause	Discussion
Ways of Working	1.11	How do I work?	Poll
	1.12	Where will I work?	Article
	1.13	How can I work together?	Discussion
	1.14	How can I stay on track?	Poll
	1.15	How do I work purposefully?	Article
Round up	1.16	A look back	Article
	1.17	Let's chat!	Discussion
Week 2			
Welcome back	2.1	Welcome to Week 2	Video
	2.2	Share your thoughts	Poll
Tools for Working	2.3	Get Connected	Article
	2.4	Get your toolkit	Article
	2.5	Get Exploring	Article
	2.6	Get Planning	Video
	2.7	Get Working	Article
	2.8	Get Backed-up	Exercise
	2.9	Get Specific	Discussion
	2.10	Press Pause	Article
Tools for Thriving	2.11	Balancing act	Article
	2.12	Your well-being	Article
	2.13	Dynamics of space	Video
	2.14	Juggling & Connecting	Video
	2.15	Think, Reflect, Think	Article

	2.16	Beware	Article
	2.17	Press Pause	Article
Round up	2.18	A look back	Poll
	2.19	A final chat!	Discussion

Appendix B
Sample of Learner Feedback

Clodagh G. Verified learner   06/10/21
★★★☆☆

I think the course was

I think the course was highly enjoyable. I learned new things to apply to my future learning online , I also learned about the different types of learners. I thought the information was easy and concise and I'd recommend the course to all.

↪ Share | Was this review helpful?   👍 0   👎 0

Samantha V. Verified learner   05/10/21
★★★★★

Great resources for new and returning online learners

Great reflections, interactions, and so many resources !

↪ Share | Was this review helpful?   👍 0   👎 0

Helena H. Verified learner   10/10/21
★★★★★

Well-structured and Useful

Great advice for students

↪ Share | Was this review helpful?   👍 0   👎 0

Alice M. Verified learner   30/09/21
★☆☆☆☆

A Digital Edge Review

This course doesn't improve digital literacy skills. It mostly provides ways to deal with well-being, motivation and organisational skills. I didn't find it very useful.

↪ Share | Was this review helpful?   👍 0   👎 0

A Aoife V. Verified learner   03/10/21
⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Excellent.

The course was very helpful, it had great resources and information. A must for online learners.

↪ Share | Was this review helpful? 👍 0 👎 0

N Nicolae R. Verified learner   02/10/21
⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Very useful course

I enjoyed learning this course, I learned a lot of new information about the technology that is available for me that will help me for my future studies.

↪ Share | Was this review helpful? 👍 0 👎 0

L Labriola F. Verified learner   01/10/21
⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

It was a wonderful course.

It was a wonderful course. It helped me with tools and tips to learn how to survive and keep going with the online studies. Now I feel even more ready to start.

↪ Share | Was this review helpful? 👍 0 👎 0

M Marina P. Verified learner   01/10/21
⭐⭐⭐⭐☆

The course was good and

The course was good and informative, I'm not giving 5 stars because at some point it did feel a little derivative.

↪ Share | Was this review helpful? 👍 0 👎 0

V Valentina V. Verified learner   01/10/21
⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐

Well-rounded course with the essential

Well-rounded course with the essential tools to affectively improve your online learning. Easy to access and understand, it helps in thinking about your learning style and what can be more beneficial for your.

↪ Share | Was this review helpful? 👍 0 👎 0

J Jean D. Verified learner   29/09/21

★★★☆☆

Bit underwhelming. Would assume many

Bit underwhelming. Would assume many 6 year college students would know most of this already before next stage of first year at university.

Share | Was this review helpful?   👍 0   👎 0

S Shauna C. Verified learner   30/09/21

★★★★★

The Essential Info

This course did a fantastic job at highlighting the tips and tools new students require in college.

Share | Was this review helpful?   👍 0   👎 0

P patricia I. Verified learner   27/09/21

★★★★★

Great course for connected students.

It was perfect. You don't go into online learning without the basics but this showed you where you have to update your skills and use the available software and tools.

Share | Was this review helpful?   👍 0   👎 0