

## Supporting Virtual Communities (5 ECTS)

Module Code: LTTC 5808

### Indicative content

**Aim:** This module aims to explore the development of a virtual community of practice by equipping practitioners with the knowledge, competencies, experience and confidence to perform the complex role of an eTutor in an online environment. Sustaining this will be exploration of a number of relevant design frameworks for creating and supporting eLearning communities.



### What will I learn?

Upon successful completion of this module, participants should be able to:

- Explore access and motivation issues to initiate online discussion
- Develop strategies for managing and facilitating online discussion
- Develop discussion strategies and activities to promote knowledge construction
- Update their skills to access and use online conferencing for facilitation online learning and in undertaking a range of collaborative tasks online
- Experience and build confidence in using the online conferencing system as a key resource in building an online learning community
- Design effective activities for students to undertake individually and / or in groups in an eLearning environment
- Monitor learner progress and engagement in learning communities
- Design timely and effective feedback and support for students participating in eLearning collaborative activities as a manageable part of your tutor workload
- Critically evaluate peer asynchronous and synchronous discussion designs
- Create, develop and sustain the necessary environment and climate for a successful virtual community
- Reflect on personal learning experience as an online student and utilise this knowledge to inform practice as an eTutor.

### How will I learn?

The module is delivered wholly online using Webcourses. It is offered over an intensive four week period and has been designed to provide time and space to think through complex issues, identify how they impact on the participants' own work and make plans for future developments in practice. It is activity based, supported by module texts and by specially developed online resources. Each week participants will work through guided readings, record their thoughts online, share their work with others in the group, discuss their own work and that of other members of the group, and analyse and summarise findings. They will also be required to maintain their ePortfolio.

### When?

Tuesday mornings 10am-1pm e.g. from January 27<sup>th</sup> for 5 weeks or March 3<sup>rd</sup> for 5 weeks.

### How will I be assessed?

The module will be assessed in two parts:

- A collaborative group activity
- A critical reflective report of the student's own online participation (involving contributions from self, peers and the module tutor), with examples. Word guide (2,000 – 2,5000)

**Are there any pre-requisites?** No specific pre-requisites but participants will be expected to have an interest in supporting online communities within their practice.

**How do I apply?** Complete the application form available online from the LTTC website:

<http://www.dit.ie/lttc/programmes/shortcoursescpd/>