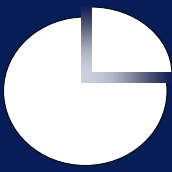# EU-EADTU Summit on Open and Online Learning and the Modernisation Agenda for European HE

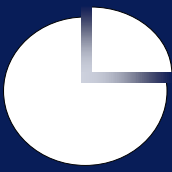# Reflections on Empowering Universities for Online and Flexible Education
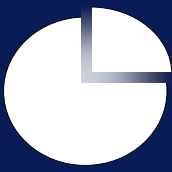
## Seamus Fox, Oscail, Dublin City University

### 2nd  October 2013

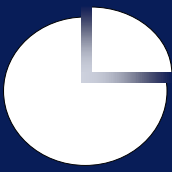Dublin City University

Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath

- **Perspective of traditional on-campus university**
- **Case Study of Dublin City University**
- **Current position**
- **Future plans**
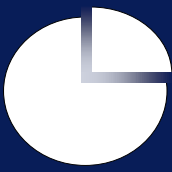- **Facilitators and Obstacles**
- **Policy Issues**

OSCAIL

- **Dublin City University**
  - **Founded 1980**
  - **In QS Top 50 under 50**
  - **~12,000 students**
  - **Currently integrating three teacher training colleges**
  - **3U Alliance with RCSI and NUIM**
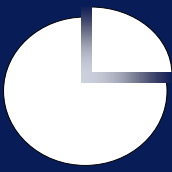- **~ 90% of DCU students are on-campus**

- **Oscail – DCU  Online Education**
  - **Founded 1982 as National Distance Education Centre**
  - **First credit programme in 1986**
  - **Currently four undergraduate and five postgraduate programmes**
  - **Online student centred pedagogy**
  - **Transition from traditional distance education to online**

OSCAIL

- Introduction of VLEs (1998 onwards)
- Online Submission of Assignments (2002 onwards)
- **Range of Online Pedagogical Techniques (2003 onwards) - student centred**
- **Integration of online resources especially DCU Library (2005 onwards)**
- Online applications and registration (2006 onwards)
- Development of screencasting videos and other online resources including OERs (2007 onwards)
- First fully online programme (2009)
- Synchronous webinar systems for tutorials (2011 onwards)
- ePortfolios (2012 onwards)

- Oscail
- School of Electronic Engineering
- School of Nursing and Human Sciences
- School of Education Studies
- DCU Business School
- School of Physics
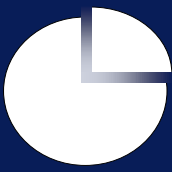- Considerable Capacity and International Links

**By 2012**

- Over 100 staff trained
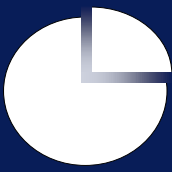
**By 2013**

- 15 programmes blended
- Each faculty

**By 2016**

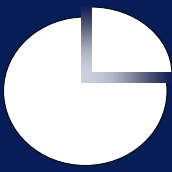- >80% of programmes blended
- 300 staff trained

- DCU President, Professor Brian MacCraith, - The Future will be Blended
- Institute of Digital Learning
- Fitting of all large lecture theatres for lecture recording
- Production of cross-platform multi-media materials (OERs/MOOCs)
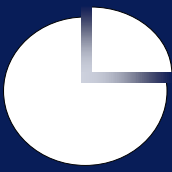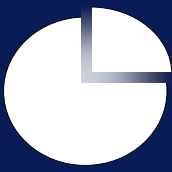- Simulations and Game-based Learning
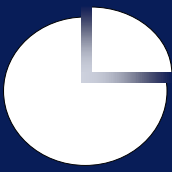
- Flexibility

- Quality

- **Responding to upskilling/reskilling agenda**
- **Variety of access routes e.g. Springboard**
- **Increasing student numbers with fewer staff**
- **Importance of online pedagogies**
- **New business models**
- **Goal is no distinction between on-campus and off-campus**
- **Ensure that strategic subject areas are protected**
  - **Blended extends catchment area**
  - **Online entails a potentially worldwide audience**
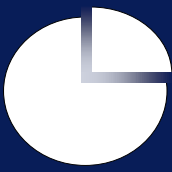

# Pedagogical Quality

- **Student expectations – Smart learners**
- **Much greater quality can be achieved online?**
- **Much greater quality can be assured online**
- **Graduate Attributes**
  - Creative and Enterprising
  - Solution-Oriented
  - Effective Communicators
  - Globally Engaged
  - Active Leaders
  - Committed to Continuous Learning

- Policy Issues
  - Especially upskilling/reskilling agenda
  - Funding especially in countries w/o open university
- Culture Change within Universities
  - Role of online learning (smarter rather than harder)
  - Business models
  - Accountability (eportfolios)

- Cost Issues
  - Cost & Quality are co-joined twins
  - Importance of scale and scope

- Pan-European partnerships
  - Joint Programme provision
  - National/international
  - Credit recognitions
  - Virtual mobility

- Importance of empowering the universities with expertise in open and flexible learning

# THANK YOU!

# GO RAIBH MAITH AGAIBH!