

2021

## Just-in-Time Curriculum re-Design and Digital Delivery of Accredited Professional Development for Undergraduate Supervisors

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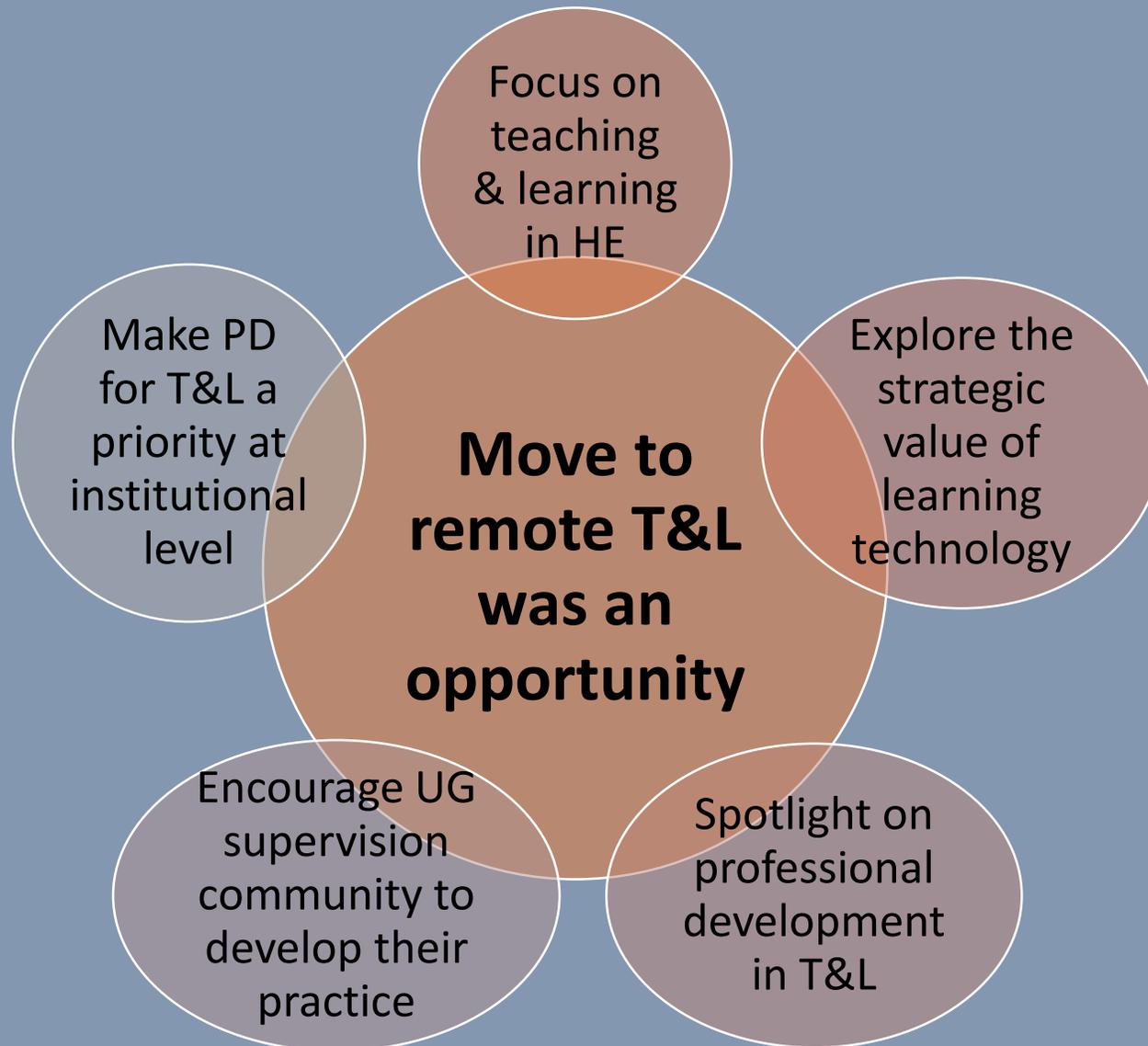
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# Abstract

- The COVID-19 crisis led to the closure of Irish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in mid-March of 2020, and emergency transition from in-person to remote, online and/or blended forms of teaching and learning. However, the challenges faced have also unearthed opportunities, and this has proved a most opportune time to aim the spotlight on professional development (PD) in teaching and learning, to ensure its value is more fully understood and is supported at institutional level. The authors are members of a team that delivers an accredited PD masters programme, and were planning on delivering a module on supervision of undergraduate (UG) dissertations and projects in a face-to-face (f2f) mode, when those plans were interrupted by the pandemic. This presented a dual opportunity for the authors to engage in its redesign to increase the proportion of the UG supervision community actively enhancing their practice and engaging in their professional development, as well as enhancing online practices and approaches sought by undergraduate (UG) supervisors in the current climate.
- This paper will present the authors' thinking on adopting just-in-time curriculum redesign and its associated pedagogical practices and will explore the challenges they faced when delivering the module remotely in November-December of 2020. They will share their design and delivery approaches in aiming to empower the participants to take control of their supervisor development journey through both tutor and peer engagement, and discuss how multimedia-enabled authentic assessments can enhance their supervision practice. This is the authors' reflective contribution in supporting the professional development of UG supervisors, and it offers an exploration of the strategic value of embracing learning technology to enhance UG supervision. At a meta-level, it is hoped that this work will foster informal conversations on UG supervision at Programme, School or College level, through the formal engagement strategies of the module.

# Background (1)



# Background (2)

The module was validated in 2015, taking a team-teaching approach in its delivery

Academics supervising students undertaking a FYPD need support for this role  
(Healey *et al.*, 2013)

Coherence of LTA strategies & LOs -  
Constructive Alignment  
(Biggs, 2003)

Offered as CPD & as part of MSc Education – 1<sup>st</sup> of its kind in Ireland (2015)

Attracts participants across HE - supervisors new to role, and more experienced

Module had to evolve to meet participants' needs & still meet the LOs



# The Module re-design process

## Emergency Remote Teaching Environment Framework

(Whittle et al., 2020)

### 1. **Inquire**

Number of resources were searched or created based on their potential in a remote setting

### 2. **Classify** (*constants and variables*)

Constant – Active Learning

Variable – Different methods of representation

### 3. **Design** (educational experiences)

Opportunities for critical thinking, reflection & IBL

# Module Content



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In terms of the fully remote iteration of the module, the topics were closely linked to those explored in the f2f version of the module:

**Session 1:** Conceptions of Research; What is Good Research?; Why is an Undergraduate Research project important and how does it differ from Postgraduate?; What are new supervisors concerns?

**Session 2:** Supervisor's roles and responsibilities; Supervisors' strategies, styles and leadership; Undergraduates as researchers.

**Session 3:** Stages of supervision of an UG project; Priorities to consider about supervision (supervisor and supervisee perspectives); Project management.

**Session 4:** Research Ethics; Challenges of supervision; Setting expectations; Practical advice about writing, feedback, meetings, assessment, student wellbeing; Connecting undergraduate research to the curriculum.

**Session 5 (New concept):** Panel of Experts on UG Supervision and role-playing activity.

# Structure of Remote Sessions



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*The “Sandwich” method*



Asynchronous activity (video, reading, forum)



Synchronous activities



Asynchronous formative/continuous assessment (reflecting)



The synchronous portion aimed at creating a **supervisors’ learning community**

# Example of a synchronous session

## Session 4

When all multimedia types had been demonstrated, participants were asked to reflect on what they have learned and how that acquired knowledge might inform their ideas for developing their own artefact.

In the subsequent **synchronous class**, as part of an elevator pitch activity, participants were invited to share for approximately 5 minutes each on the:

- Purpose of the multimedia artefact: *making the artefact unique, interesting, noteworthy.*
- Audience for the multimedia artefact.
- Theme addressed by my multimedia artefact.



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# Diversion between the f2f & remote mode

Instead of having a workshop session for the development of the multimedia- artefact

4 sessions included a presentation of a multimedia mode, discussing its purpose, usefulness and sharing practical examples

Final session was practical - panel of experts from three disciplines, followed by role playing activities, carried out in pairs in Breakout rooms



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# Session 5: Role Playing

## ***Role Play Scenario 1***

- *WHEN: It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the project*
- *WHAT: The student has missed two meetings in a row and has not produced an annotated bibliography that was an expected Milestone. The project is of particular interest to the supervisor.*
- *HOW: does the Supervisor deal with the situation?*

## Role Playing Rules

You will be given a scenario (1 or 2)

You will also be given a Student profile (A, B or C)

You will act that scenario as both the Supervisor and the Student

You will have 10 minutes to role play the scenario

You will then have 10 minutes to debrief and take written notes

You will then repeat the process but change role, Student-to-Supervisor and Supervisor – to- Student

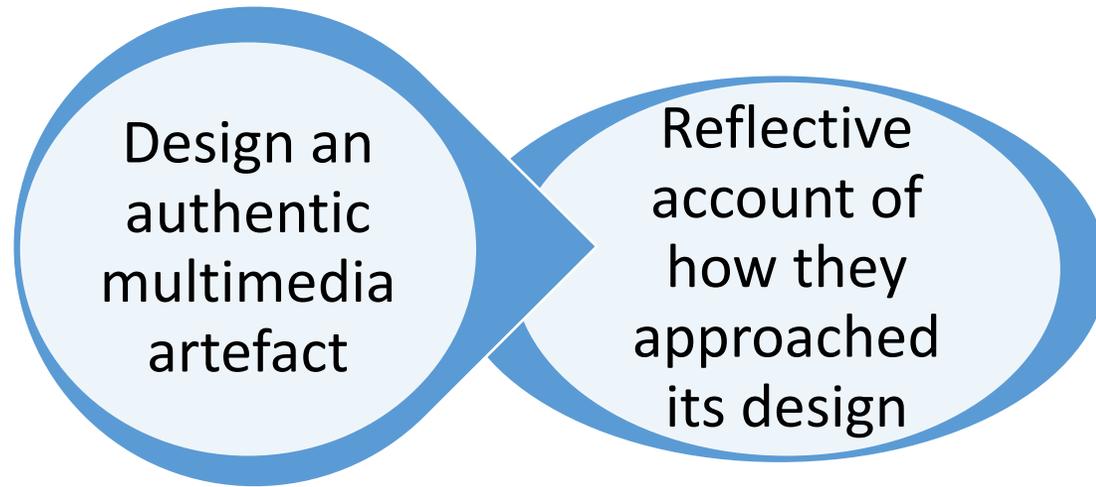


Activate Windows  
Go to Settings to activate Windows

## **Student A**

- The student is struggling with academic writing
- The student has major problems with the wifi connection at home
- The student is lonely
- The student does not like the supervisor

# Assessment (Not revised)



Examples	
	Infographic
	Mind Map
	Screencast with audio
	Narrated PowerPoint
	Interactive Poster
	Website, blog or video

- Multimedia Artefact supports participant's supervision practice, exploring the module themes
- Additional support and guidance for UG students for their dissertation/project journey
- Can facilitate a consistent department/school-based approach to UG supervision

# Assessment example: Infographic



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# Undergraduate Dissertation (Languages)



Extended piece of research on a single subject



## RESEARCH AREAS

- ✦ Linguistics & Applied Linguistics
- ✦ Intercultural Studies
- ✦ Erasmus Experience
- ✦ Film Studies
- ✦ Literature
- ✦ Current Affairs
- ✦ History
- ✦ Visual Arts

## STRUCTURE

8,000-10,000 words

Literature Review  presentation, classification & evaluation of what has been published on a particular subject

Chapters  based on the chosen topic

Referencing style  Modern Language Association (MLA)

## EXPECTATIONS

Student selects  topic

 Autonomous learning

 Time management  dedication

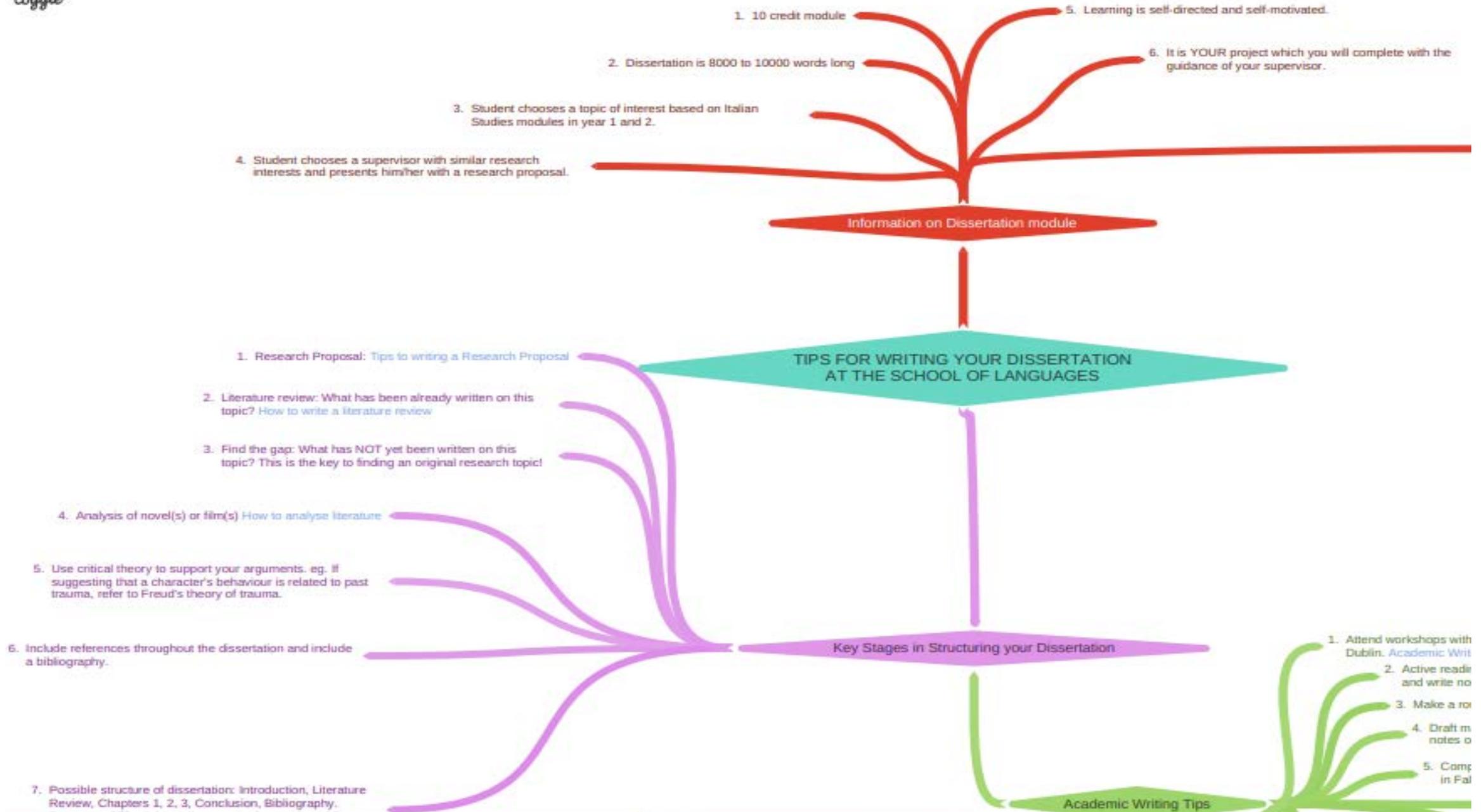
 Regular meetings with supervisor  work timetable

 Progress assessment



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# Recommendations (1)

## Design opportunities that that empower participants' engagement

- Check in regularly with participants and offer them chances to speak or type
- Be explicit in a running commentary and narrate what you are doing
- Avoid making assumptions about digital skills
- Think how the design enables interaction & solicits participant views

## Design with Inclusive Learning principles in mind

- Get a sense of how students prefer to interact
- Supervisors should adjust their style to better meet their needs/preferences

# Recommendations (2)

## Socialise the cohort into the online space

- Establish a shared sense of group norms for how the cohort will interact online
- We discussed netiquette, which can be part of orientation where the group designs its own netiquette

## Set an active tone but provide thinking space

- Introduce active learning from the start of the live webinar  
e.g. through asking for posts in the chat, or poll participation
- If making use of chat, consider introducing the role of a chat champion to moderate
- Balance is needed in the online space; provide space to think and reflect

# Recommendations (3)



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## Facilitation Strategies: Weave, Summarise, Question

- Bring together different contributions, provide feedback and highlight the connections between and overall contribution to the cohort's understanding.
- Online this is a way to recognize contributions, from the chat and video.
- Another facilitation technique is questioning/probing students' initial contributions to encourage them to think more deeply.
- When asking questions online do not fear silence; let students consider the question as you would in the f2f context.



THANK YOU  
for listening