

MIC Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Protocol

This protocol is informed by and written in support of the College's [Digital Teaching and Learning policy](#). The purpose of the VLE is to enhance teaching and learning by providing students with ongoing access to programme information, activities and learning resources in face-to-face, blended and online courses. In online/blended programmes, the VLE is the gateway and face of the College. This underscores the importance of a coherent virtual learning experience for students on blended/online programmes. The purpose of this protocol therefore, is to provide MIC staff with guidelines on the use of the VLE and to clarify roles and responsibilities in the management and support of the VLE.

1. VLE Administration and Support

- 1.1. MIC requires the use of a single institutional VLE for all foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Currently, this VLE is Moodle.
- 1.2. The VLE is jointly managed by ICT Services and the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) team in the Learning Enhancement and Academic Development (LEAD) Centre. ICT provide technical maintenance, account management, and student support. LEAD manage the VLE application administration and work with staff to provide pedagogic and technical advice, support and training on the use of VLE.
- 1.3. This document recognises the following uses of the Moodle VLE within the College:
 - 1.3.1. Programme – VLE course instances associated with an entire programme or course of study which are accessible to students across all modules that comprise the programme.
 - 1.3.2. Module – VLE course instances associated with a specific taught module.
 - 1.3.3. Administrative – VLE course instances associated with other College functions that directly support teaching and learning activities – course instances include academic information resources such as the College Libraries, Faculty Offices, year/departmental teaching resources, and Moodle Support areas.

2. VLE Integrations/Complimentary Digital Technologies

- 2.1 MIC does not preclude the use of other digital technologies to support teaching; however these technologies must be procured in compliance with relevant ICT and Information Compliance policies, protocols and procedures.

2.2 In order to ensure a consistent student experience, all other digital learning technologies should, where possible, be accessed from the VLE and there must be a strong pedagogical rationale for using such technologies.

3. Teaching and Learning Materials

3.1 Lecturers should ensure that teaching and learning materials are accessible to students on the VLE for the duration of the full academic year, including for the period of repeat examinations. Lecturers are responsible for storing and updating original copies of their teaching materials (outside of the VLE).

3.2 Lecturers should ensure that course content on the VLE, as far as possible, adheres to the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and adheres to the MIC Equality Policy. LEAD is responsible for providing professional development on the Principles of UDL to programme teams and departments.

3.3 Lecturers should ensure that the learning materials added to their course pages do not infringe confidentiality, copyright or the intellectual property rights of others. Please refer to relevant guidelines, policies and procedures on the College [Information Compliance](#) and [Library](#) webpages.

3.4 In line with College policies on data protection, the storage of student data, including assignment submissions, must be limited to the period stipulated in the [MIC Records Retention Schedule](#), after which the data will be removed from the VLE. This will be managed by ICT Services through Moodle archives.

4. Course Management

4.1. Lecturers are responsible for updating course pages to ensure the contents and activities are accurate and relevant for each stage of the semester.

4.2. The 'Teacher' and 'Non-editing Teacher' roles in the VLE course context should normally be assigned to MIC lecturing staff only.

4.3. MIC lecturing staff are responsible for managing the enrolment of additional teaching staff on Moodle course pages.

4.4. The [MIC Moodle Course Baseline](#) is a set of quality blended and online teaching and learning standards to enhance consistency, usability, accessibility, and ultimately, student engagement in the blended and online teaching and learning experience. The MIC Moodle Course Baseline should be used to inform the design of all VLE courses and, where possible, a VLE course page template should be used to ensure consistency on course pages across an academic programme.

5. VLE Access and Usage

- 5.1. VLE accounts and access are managed by ICT Services; therefore all requests for same should be emailed to ICThelpdesk@mic.ul.ie.
- 5.2. External examiner access to the VLE should be managed in compliance with the *External VLE Access SOP*.
- 5.3. In order to ensure only students registered for specific modules can access the corresponding Moodle courses, guest course access is not permitted.
- 5.4. In order to facilitate access for UL students to MIC Moodle courses, a Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) integration is used. This is jointly managed by ICT Services and LEAD.
- 5.5. All MIC staff using the VLE will comply with the Acceptable Use Policy, ICT Security Policy, Responsible Computing Policy, Access Policy, Academic Integrity Policy, Assessment and Feedback Policy, Digital Teaching and Learning Policy, Electronic Copyright Material Policy, Equality Policy, Intellectual Property Policy Statement, Privacy Policy, Data Protection Policy and the Information Compliance policies, Quality Assurance and Continuous Quality Improvement Policy.