



## O2-A6 – GUIDELINES FOR LEADERSHIP SCHOOLS

Leadership development for leaders of digital  
transformation in higher education in Europe

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# Guidelines for Leadership Schools

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## 1. Executive Summary

This report was written in June-July 2017 after the implementation of two leadership schools: the first in Barcelona in November 2016 and the second in Nancy (France) in May 2017. It also takes account of the D-TRANSFORM MOOC, an open online course for digital leaders, whose 1<sup>st</sup> edition is being delivered on the POK platform of Politecnico di Milano in May-August 2017. In order to fit project deadlines this report had to be completed before that MOOC concluded, but a data snapshot of the first two months' activity was taken into account (see Appendix 5 of the Annex).

*This one-page Executive Summary is also available in French and Spanish.*

### *Guidelines for Leadership Schools*

1. The audience should be primarily Rectors and Vice-Rectors, plus Deans and Directors of relevant academic departments or operational units.
2. Duration should be two or three days.
3. The syllabus should cover the nine topics of: Universities disrupted; Models for opening up education; OER and MOOCs as innovation drivers; Academic libraries and learning spaces; Assessment and credits; Learning analytics; Overcoming academic resistance to ICT-enhanced teaching; Student digital literacy; and management tools for change management.
4. Speakers should be senior, predominantly (but not all) from Europe, and from institutions where the good practice they describe (including from beyond Europe) is refreshing, up to date and relevant to the majority of delegates and their institutional/national positions.

### *Statements of Best Practice*

1. Leaders should consider the use of benchmarking tools to measure progress in digital transformation and compare their progress with that of others.
2. Some key benchmarkable criteria are:
  - Institutions should develop and keep updated a **strategy for digital education** as part of their overall pedagogic strategy (on learning, teaching and assessment).
  - Institutions should ensure that the **digital skills** levels required by staff in the digital learning environment are ensured by a mix of staff development and staff recruitment.
  - Institutions should take steps to measure the **costs of their teaching and learning activities** and ensure value for money for students, government and other stakeholders, in the light of the complex mix of government funding, student fees and other forms of financial support (e.g. from employers).
  - Institutions should track and where feasible forecast **demand from students** for programmes at their institutions and comparator institutions, with especial care taken to monitor students from minority communities, part-time learners and those with non-traditional qualifications (including from informal learning).
  - Institutions should develop (if they are large institutions) or buy into a **staff development programme for digital senior leaders** – plus require and monitor attendance at this.

### *What leaders have to know something about*

There are five key D-TRANSFORM Intellectual Outputs relevant to leaders:

1. O1-A1 *Public Digital Policies in Higher Education – A comparative survey between Spain, France, Italy and the United Kingdom*
2. O1-A2 *Business models for opening up education – Sustainability of MOOCs, OER and related online education approaches in higher education in Europe*
3. O1-A3 *Open Educational Resource, a lever for digital transition of higher education?*
4. O1-A4 *Guidelines for governance of HE institutions*
5. O3 MOOC that explores the new positioning of universities in the digital age along with some selected innovation fronts that entered the higher education discourse.

## 2. Introduction, scope and definitions

This short report (10 pages) has five Chapters – followed by one page of References. There is also a separate Annex of additional material, comprising five Appendices.

Chapter 1 (the previous one) is the Executive Summary.

Chapter 2 is this one.

Chapter 3 describes the Guidelines that we have developed, based on two face-to-face programmes and one MOOC, on how to run Leadership Schools.

Chapter 4 summarises the principles by which leaders should measure the digital transformation of their organisations.

Chapter 5 summarises what leaders or their immediate staff need to know about the socio-technical environment in which their institutions reside.

There is a one-page section of References.

### 2.1 What are “Guidelines”?

In order to produce a short but useful report we have had to distil down the complexity of the D-TRANSFORM knowledge base.

We take the *basic* meaning of “guidelines” as: statements of best practice that senior management of institutions should aspire to, in order to best manage their institutions’ transition to a digital learning institution – or in some advanced institutions, their transition to higher levels of digitalisation. See Chapter 4.

It is generally assumed, and fundamental to D-TRANSFORM, that such statements of best practice can to some extent be “taught”. Thus the *developmental* meaning of “guidelines” is taken to be: overall syllabus and pedagogic approach of training programmes for senior management, as informed by two instantiations of a Leadership School. This is the focus of this Intellectual Output – see Chapter 3.

It has also become clear that the intellectual outputs developed in Output 1 – on the external environment, policies and business models – are also guidelines of a sort. Thus the *contextual* meaning of “guidelines” is taken to be: overviews of changes in the external environment – social changes, business changes, university evolution and in ministries’ approaches (to policies, funding and fees) – that university leaders need to be aware of, in order to make good decisions in the digital learning environment. See Chapter 5 for a brief introduction.

### 2.2 The evidence base

These Guidelines have been elaborated based on the team’s reflections on the two events and the MOOC. Specific use was made of the **Leadership School Evaluation Report** for LSS1, published<sup>1</sup> in February 2017 and of a draft version of **Leadership School Evaluation Report for LSS2**, available on 26 June 2017.

In the Annex, see Appendix 1 for the Programme of Leadership School 1, Appendix 2 for the Programme of Leadership School 2 and Appendix 3 for the Programme of the MOOC; Appendix 4 contains summaries of the project outputs of most relevance to leaders.

Despite the first edition of the D-TRANSFORM MOOC being still under way, there is a data snapshot of the first two months of the D-TRANSFORM MOOC delivery. (See Appendix 5 of the Annex.)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://oae-test.univ-lorraine.fr/api/content/c:UL-Test:rk3NAA-YI/download/rev:UL-Test:Skx3VCCWKL>

### 3. Guidelines for running Leadership Schools

*“overall syllabus and pedagogic approach of training programmes for senior management, as informed by two instantiations of a Leadership School”*

The most important Guidelines can be split into five categories:

1. Audience
2. Duration
3. Syllabus
4. Speakers
5. Style of event.

#### 3.1 Audience

Discussions prior to the planning of the first Leadership School led to a realistic broadening of the proposed audience away from the original narrow focus on Rectors and Vice-Rectors to include Deans of Faculties and Directors of relevant operational departments. There were various detailed iterations but the brief for the second Leadership School is a good summary of the audience:<sup>2</sup>

1. Rectors (tier 1)
2. Vice-Rectors and other senior managers who directly report to the Rector (tier 2)
3. Directors (of operational units) and Deans of Faculties who directly report to a tier 2 person (tier 3)
4. Directors of relevant specialist units, such as libraries, student services, e-learning, and distance learning, at large or hierarchical organisations [who may be tier 4].

Our own experience and experience from other events indicated that going wider than the above leads to Rectors and other senior staff being uncomfortable when discussing their institutions and more junior staff becoming uncomfortable with the “management speak” from higher levels.

That is not to say that events cannot be organised for what are often called “junior leaders” – e.g. the **Empower Online Learning Leadership Academy** from EADTU<sup>3</sup> – but they are a different sort of event and not the focus of D-TRANSFORM.

#### 3.2 Duration

This was one of the most actively discussed issues. There were a number of constraints:

- The well-known reluctance of senior staff (Rectors and Vice-Rectors) to be out of the office for more than a couple of days – a surprising number of institutions have strict rules on time away especially during periods of organisational stress.
- The Erasmus+ funding constraint that any workshop had to last five days.
- The need to ensure a level of trust between delegates which seems to require a period of close proximity on both intellectual and social aspects.

In the event the first Leadership School ran from Monday afternoon to Friday lunchtime, allowing delegates (at least from nearer cities) to go there and back within the working week. The second Leadership School ran from Friday afternoon to Tuesday lunchtime – but with lighter duties and a more active social programme on Saturday and Sunday. Both events had a carefully constructed internal structure (each being really “two conferences in one”) so that delegates did not have to come for all five days to get value. Our conclusions are as follows:

- A 5-day event is too long for most senior staff except in unusual circumstances (such as senior staff coming from another continent and wanting to maximise value).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://dtransform2017.wixsite.com/ls2nancy>

<sup>3</sup> <https://eadtu.eu/news/20-general-news/322-empower-online-learning-leadership-academy>

### **Guidelines for Leadership Schools**

- A 1-day event is too rushed especially for a pan-European audience who are not likely to be close colleagues already – there needs to be at least one overnight stay and ideally two.
- By accepting some restrictions on coverage it is possible to get good value from an event covering at most 3 elapsed days (e.g. Monday afternoon through to Wednesday lunch) – this is a typical “international short conference” that staff are used to anyway. The LSS2 programme on 19-21 May 2017, the Learning Analytics days on 22-23 May or the “Rectors days” of 16-18 November are good examples.
- We are also aware that other consortia have flagged this issue and that for the new KA2 Call, the minimum number of days is now 3.

### **3.3 Syllabus**

The list of topics to be covered was the subject of much discussion since summer 2016 and should be regarded as a key achievement of earlier work. The MOOC perhaps puts this in the clearest form with seven “innovation fronts” which clearly go beyond the usual focus on “teaching and learning”:

1. Universities disrupted
2. Models for opening up education
3. OER and MOOCs as innovation drivers
4. Academic libraries and learning spaces
5. Assessment and credits
6. Learning analytics
7. Overcoming academic resistance to ICT-enhanced teaching.

However it is useful to add an eighth focus on student digital literacy and a ninth on management tools (as was done in LSS1), even though they did receive somewhat less attention in LSS2. This provides nine containers into which more detailed topics can be poured.

Universities disrupted	Changes in the external environment. Lessons that can be learned from innovative providers, challengers and game changers. Lessons from providers outside Europe.
Models for opening up education	Business models for traditional and non-traditional learning. The business case for accredited HE distance learning and the merits or otherwise of collaboration with the private sector.
OER and MOOCs as innovation drivers	The case for MOOCs, for both institutions and consortia. MOOCs and OER are a matter not only of providing access to resources and courses, but also of opening up to the outside world, which entails a variety of interaction and collaboration opportunities beyond university boundaries among teachers, learners and society.
Academic libraries and learning spaces	Digital libraries and digitally enabled learning spaces: blending service provision across physical and digital infrastructure, accounting for new paradigms (e.g. peer learning, flipped classroom) and for digital literacy skills to assess the quality of content. Viewing this as more than just a library issue.
Assessment and credits	New approaches to assessment especially online: automation, authentication, etc. Digital badges. The concepts of assessment and credits and how they are challenged in a digitally enhanced setting. Validation of non-formal learning, recognizing certificates and credits obtained via non-formal learning experiences. Techniques that support online personalized assessment.



### **Guidelines for Leadership Schools**

Learning analytics	The potential that data hold to address strategic challenges facing higher education today. Including data analytics e.g. from library and classroom usage.
Overcoming academic resistance to ICT-enhanced teaching	Change management issues. Staff development.
Student digital literacy	Understanding the latest thinking on Millennials, digital visitors and digital natives. Assessing and developing student digital literacy.
Management tools	Benchmarking progress towards digital learning. Adapting the institutional quality assurance regime within the national and European contexts to encompass digital learning. Change management techniques that derive from business theory and good practice but have worked in European higher education institutions.

Inevitably for a 2- or 3-day event there will have to be some restrictions on the range of topics covered.

#### **3.4 Speakers**

Great care was taken with the selection of speakers for both the events. A number of speaker selection principles were used, which we formalise as follows:

1. Mostly, speakers should be from institutions where the good practice they describe is relevant to the majority of delegates and their institutional/national positions.<sup>4</sup>
2. In particular for a European audience, care should be taken not to overuse US and speakers from developing countries. (This is a statement made irrespective of funding restrictions.)
3. But it does depend on the topic; for example we had an excellent presentation from MIT with many lessons that other universities could learn from, and from the Open University of Indonesia on Cloud and Office 365 aspects.
4. We almost completely avoided paying fees to speakers (of course expenses were reimbursed if they asked) – we feel that this gave a more “academic” feel to our events
5. Speakers should themselves be senior – not necessarily leaders (though it is often particularly authentic if leaders with relevant expertise can be found) or senior managers, but full professors and/or leading experts.
6. Research results must be explained in terms of their relevance to managers making decisions on *operational* matters.

#### **3.5 Style of event**

For such events there needs to be a careful blend of presentations with plenty of time for interaction and for work and non-work events.

LSS1 worked a little better in terms of interaction than LSS2 because the agenda was completely under D-TRANSFORM control and the number of speakers was kept to a minimum.

Some key points are:

1. Timetabling is crucial, especially maintaining the integrity (especially length) of refreshment breaks and lunch breaks.
2. With a shifting population of delegates it is important that each morning new delegates have a chance to introduce themselves to their colleagues at the event.

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<sup>4</sup> Thus for example care should be taken with presentations from MOOC aggregators such as Coursera where the vast majority of universities in the audience will be ineligible to join, or from pure distance learning providers where the lessons might not be perceived as relevant to campus institutions.

### ***Guidelines for Leadership Schools***

3. It is important that all delegates get time to interact with the other delegates in the formal sessions, not only in the informal sessions; Chairs need to be made aware of this need.
4. Workshops are very important – the final workshop in LSS1 was particularly successful.
5. These events are not “conferences” therefore there should not be the same pressure to stuff speakers into every slot.
6. In most situations the use of videoconferencing to bring in remote speakers is not successful with an audience of senior staff – one cannot seem to get the amount of interaction required. To be fair, this was done only when it was essential – all speakers were invited to attend physically.
7. A wide range of social activities is wise – not just formal dinners and congregating in bars – both LSS had a varied range of social events.
8. Although the wide range of institutional and national contexts means that not every topic can be gone into in the same depth as at a national event, the international networking aspect brings many benefits, including wider perspectives and seeing one’s own country in a broader context.
9. It was particularly useful to record speakers – the majority of the videos in the MOOC were recorded during LSS1) allowing world-class experts to be used for the MOOC, without additional costs.



## 4. Benchmarking of progress in digital transformation

This is a very short chapter eliciting the basic meaning of guidelines, in the sense of:

*“statements of best practice that senior management of institutions should aspire to, in order to best manage their institutions’ transition to a digital learning institution”*

There is a range of benchmarking instruments focussing on digital transformation of pedagogy that European institutions can deploy. Institutions are able to make use of European benchmarking schemes such as E-xcellence<sup>5</sup> (from EADTU) or Pick&Mix (as presented in LSS1)<sup>6</sup> to check their progress. Specialist help is available.<sup>7</sup> Those European institutions who wish to compare themselves in such matters with institutions in other continents can use benchmarking schemes such as Quality Matters<sup>8</sup> (very popular in the US) or ACODE (popular in Australasia/Pacific and recently used by delegates to an event in UK).<sup>9</sup>

It is useful if statements of best practice are “benchmarkable”. This is a complicated concept but in essence it means that best practice can be graded on a numeric scale in an unambiguous way.<sup>10</sup>

Some of the benchmarkable statements that institutional leaders may wish to consider are:

- Institutions should develop and keep updated a **strategy for digital education** as part of their overall pedagogic strategy (on learning, teaching and assessment).
- Institutions should ensure that the **digital skills** levels required by staff in the digital learning environment are ensured by a mix of staff development, personal development and staff recruitment.
- Institutions should take steps to measure the **costs of their teaching and learning activities** and ensure value for money for students, government and other stakeholders, in the light of the complex mix of government funding, student fees and other forms of financial support (e.g. from employers).
- Institutions should track and where feasible forecast **demand from students** for programmes at their institutions and comparator institutions, with especial care taken to monitor students from minority communities, part-time learners and those with non-traditional qualifications (including from informal learning).
- Institutions should *develop* (if they are large institutions) or *buy* into a **staff development programme for digital senior leaders**, plus require and monitor attendance.

Several of these are already included in Pick&Mix – the others can be added as additional Supplementary Criteria.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <http://e-xcellencelabel.eadtu.eu>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.dtransform.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/16Nov\\_Bacsich-Benchmarking-session-final.pdf](http://www.dtransform.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/16Nov_Bacsich-Benchmarking-session-final.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.academia.edu/13029695/The\\_Distance\\_Learning\\_Benchmarking\\_Club\\_Final\\_Summary\\_Report](https://www.academia.edu/13029695/The_Distance_Learning_Benchmarking_Club_Final_Summary_Report)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.qualitymatters.org>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.open.ac.uk/acode-uk/>

<sup>10</sup> For example Pick&Mix criterion 10 on “Training” is graded on a 1–6 scale as follows:

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|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. No systematic training for digital teaching</li><li>2. Some systematic training in digital teaching, e.g. in some projects and departments</li><li>3. University-wide training programme for digital teaching, but little monitoring of attendance or encouragement to go</li><li>4. University-wide training programme for digital teaching, monitored and incentivised</li><li>5. All staff trained in digital teaching, with training appropriate to job type – and retrained when needed</li><li>6. Staff increasingly keep themselves up to date in digital teaching on a “just in time, just for me” fashion except in situations of discontinuous change</li></ol> |
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<sup>11</sup> [http://www.dtransform.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/16Nov\\_Bacsich-Benchmarking-session-final.pdf](http://www.dtransform.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/16Nov_Bacsich-Benchmarking-session-final.pdf) slide 25

## 5. What leaders (and their staff) have to know

This is a short chapter on the *contextual* meaning of “guidelines”, which are taken to be:

*“overviews of changes in the external environment – social changes, business changes, university evolution and in ministries’ approaches (to policies, funding and fees) – that university leaders need to be aware of, in order to make good decisions in the digital learning environment”*

These include:

- Increasing concern from employers regarding the lack of employability skills of graduates.
- Increasing need to develop and update digital literacy skills of the population, including students going through university.
- Slow but compelling move in an increasing number of countries to high fees for international students (“international” = those not in the European Fees Area – EU, EEA, Switzerland).
- Continuing confusion and lack of development of adequate fee and government support arrangements for part-time students and distance students in particular.
- Slow and often almost invisible (to governments) move towards teaching in English, especially at Masters level and in private universities.
- Increasing numbers of private universities in most European countries, often with higher fees and less regulation than the public sector and often allegations of quality problems.
- A range of lifelong learning policies in many countries recommending increased activity in Accreditation of Prior Learning and adult education, but usually very little funding for such.
- Compared with the US, and despite the predictions of many experts, a very slow move towards unbundled provision and public-private partnerships, except in the UK.
- Compared with the US and Canada, little interest or activity in free open textbooks – but increasing interest and activity in open access journals for researchers.
- A very patchy pattern of government financial support for OER or MOOCs, except in a few countries (France and Germany mainly, Netherlands partly).
- A very patchy development of MOOCs across Europe with only a few highly active (France, UK, Germany, Spain), and a sustainable business model in only a few countries (France, UK).
- An almost complete lack of sustainable business models for OER in higher education.

Even for specialists there is a great lack of up to date relevant reports on such topics, except in a few Member States. Worse, several of these reports, from EU and national agencies, are not public.<sup>12</sup> (Some of the main public ones are listed in the References.) However, there are some databases and blogs for experts to draw on, including:

- OER World Map – <https://oerworldmap.org>
- POERUP wiki – <http://poerup.referata.com>
- Open Education Working Group – <https://education.okfn.org>
- A selection of Eurydice reports – <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/>

In general, leaders will have to task their specialist advisors with keeping them up to date. Usefully (in our view) D-TRANSFORM has produced several reports for leaders<sup>13</sup> on policies and business models, mainly oriented to France, Spain, Italy and UK, but with notes on other countries. See Appendix 4 in the Annex for more details.

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<sup>12</sup> Such as the many OBHE market research country reports on open/online/distance education – see e.g. [http://www.obhe.ac.uk/documents/view\\_details?id=1067](http://www.obhe.ac.uk/documents/view_details?id=1067). It should also be noted that DG EAC and its agencies are often very slow to publish relevant reports.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.dtransform.eu/resources/>

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<sup>14</sup> He spoke at LSS1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umvwR5xl1HA&t=3033s>

<sup>15</sup> She spoke at LSS1 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVwC7BTcsy0>