

A hackathon as a form of professional learning: Reflections on organised chaos

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Full-day hackathon for DCU Academic Staff in May 2022.

The **objectives** were to:

- Provide first-hand hackathon experience;
- Highlight potential value and application of hackathons;
- Offer opportunity to design authentic and sustainable assessment



What worked well!

- Planning and preparation as a joint effort
- The CBL framework, structure, and guidance
- Student ambassadors for immediate feedback
- Standing in the shoes of students
- Opportunity to discuss perspectives with colleagues
- Leaving the teams on their own to kick start the process
- Judges' comments

What did not go as well!

- Prizes and competitive element was questioned
- Acoustics: noisy discussions made it hard to hear!
- More time alone - for downtime and reflection
- More reflection time overall
- More guidance for participants on how to make best use of mentors



Top Tips!

- Plan to plan - the work needs to be in your diary
- Be flexible on the day
- Respond to last minute changes as they emerge
- Recognise group dynamics - academics just like students!!
- Put the focus on the learning process (not the product/solution)



<https://www.dcu.ie/teu/hackathon>