

# **Empowering European Universities in their Transition to New Modes of Teaching and Learning**

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**EADTU-EU Summit 2015**  
**23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015**





# High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education



OCTOBER 2014

REPORT TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON  
**New modes of learning and  
teaching in higher education**

“We believe absolutely that improving the quality of teaching and learning in higher education can bring about a sea-change for Europe’s future” (p. 6).



MARY McALEESE

*Chair of the EU High Level  
Group on the Modernisation  
of Higher Education*

# Outline...

1. Background
2. What we have done
3. What we plan to do next



# 1. Background...

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The **objective** of the EMPOWER project is to support policy reform in European higher education with regard to the transition of European higher education to new modes of teaching and learning.



# 1. Background...

- EMPOWER was launched in December 2014
- 40 experts from across Europe attended a two-day workshop
- Distinctive for the way EMPOWER is driven by expert educators for educators
- Adopts a unique flat or **horizontal model** of capacity and capability development
- Mobilises expertise within Europe to exchange the latest on new modes of teaching and learning



## **2. What we have done...**

## 2. What we have done...

- Launched the EMPOWER website



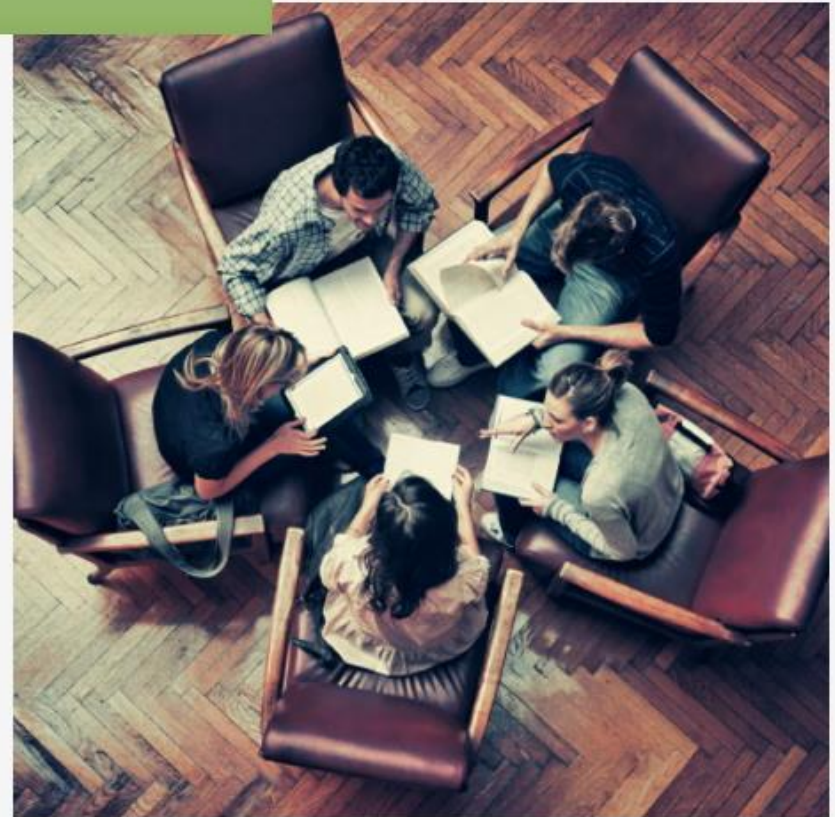
## 2. What we have done...

- Successfully established expert pools and an EMPOWER task force in specialist areas:
  - Course and Curriculum
  - Knowledge Resources
  - Student Support
  - Assessment
  - Institutional Support
  - Policy Developments
  - Transnational Education
  - Open and Flexible Education
  - OERs and MOOCs

[Course & curriculum](#)[Knowledge resources](#)[Student support](#)[Assessment](#)[Institutional support](#)[Policy development](#)[Transnational education](#)[Open & flexible education](#)[OERs & MOOCs](#)

## New modes of teaching and learning

New modes of teaching and learning create new opportunities for enhancing the quality of the learning experience in on campus programmes, reaching out to new target groups off campus and offering freely accessible courses nationally or worldwide through the internet. They enhance the quality, visibility and reputation of the institution 



[Course & curriculum](#)[Knowledge resources](#)[Student support](#)[Assessment](#)[Institutional support](#)[Policy development](#)[Transnational education](#)[Open & flexible education](#)[OERs & MOOCs](#)

## OERs and MOOCs

MOOCs and OER have raised tremendous interest by higher education institutions worldwide. They are seen as a means to increase the accessibility and quality of higher education. The European Commission expects that open education will be a means to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and to address the problem of early school leavers and high rates of unemployment (of younger adults).

Marco Kalz (OUNL) on OERs & MOOCs

[Continue Reading](#)



## 2. What we have done...

- Successfully launched **communities of practice** of expert peers in specialist areas to:
  - Be at the leading edge of the field
  - Share and contribute new knowledge
  - Shape the direction of future developments



[Course & curriculum](#)[Knowledge resources](#)[Student support](#)[Assessment](#)[Institutional support](#)[Policy development](#)[Introduction](#)[Meet the experts](#)[Tools & Resources](#)

## Institutional policy development for new modes of teaching and learning

The future is uncertain. More than ever we need to develop the right types of institutional policies and strategies for a constantly changing world. When done well policy can be an important enabler that helps us to envisage different future scenarios and make explicit the choices we face in shaping a better future. It can also constrain those choices unless we develop the right architecture for our respective institutional cultures. Therefore it needs to live within the institution and should be seen as both an iterative process and outcome.

Mark Brown (DCU) on Policy development





## 2. What we have done...

- Established a link and strategic partnership with ECIU to support institutional leadership and capacity development:
  - EMPOWER Institute
  - Targeting Key 'Institutional Keepers'
  - High-level Leadership Development



**ECIU**

European Consortium of Innovative Universities

**CHALLENGING CONVENTIONAL THINKING**

### **3. What we plan to do next...**

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- Identify and work with **partner universities** following a demand driven model to:
  - Support modernisation
  - Undertake needs analysis
  - Develop an institutional roadmap
  - Design and implement an action plan
  - Evaluate progress against key indicators



### 3. What we plan to do next...

- Continue to share expertise
- Develop research platforms
- Publish toolkits and guidelines
- Explore other strategic partnerships
- Look for further funding opportunities



## In summary...

- EMPOWER is unique
- Seeks to harness, broker and grow existing expertise
- Builds an organic expert network to support and scaffold modernisation



# Questions...



“A prudent question is one-half of wisdom”

Francis Bacon