

# Learning to Learn

Have you ever sat in a lecture wondering what on earth the lecturer was talking about and fighting your every urge to nod off?

**A NEW PIONEERING PROGRAMME DEVELOPED** by National Learning Network in partnership with the Institutes of Technology in Blanchardstown (lead partner), Carlow and Tallaght, may be the answer to your problems and to the problems encountered by many third level students. Entitled "Learning Style Theme", it helps the colleges' students identify their learning styles and adapt the way they learn to improve their performance.

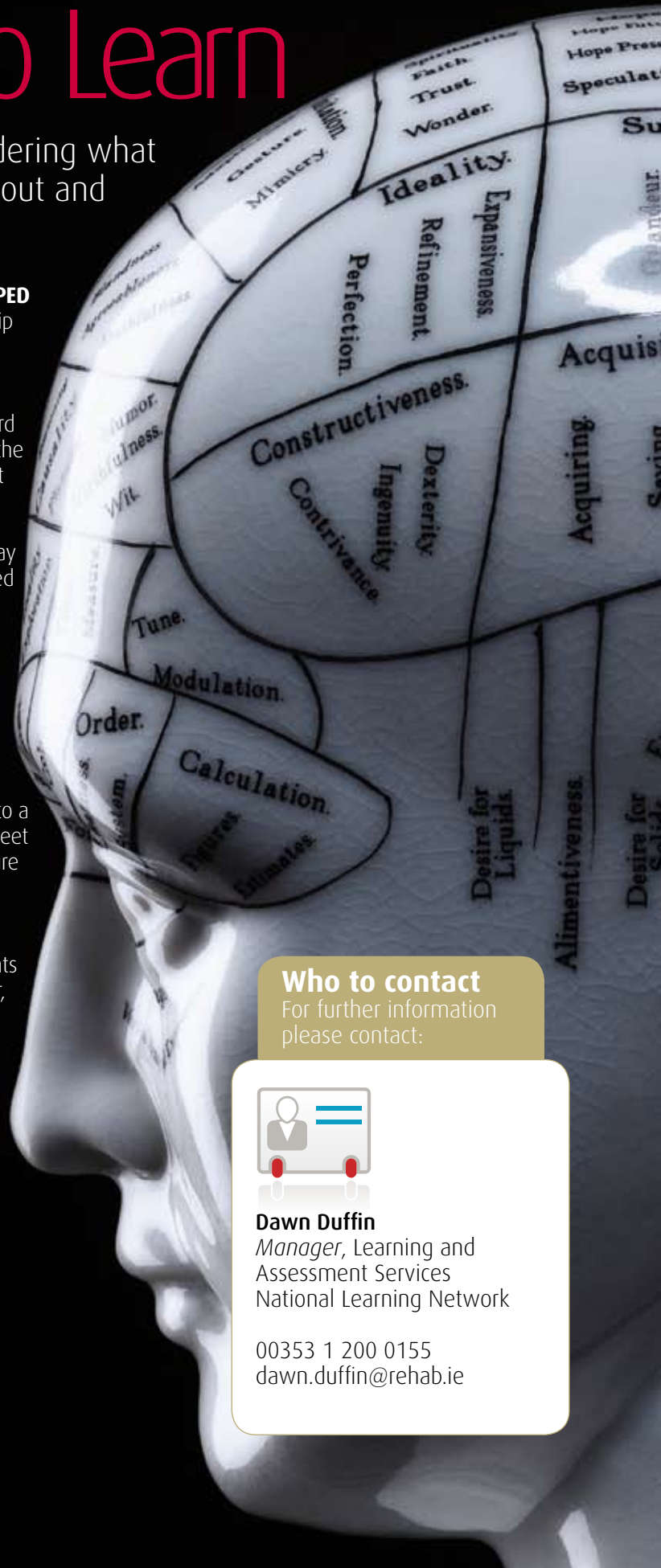
Everybody learns in different ways. While one person may learn well using visual aids, another may be better served by a course based on class discussions and the spoken word. Interestingly, most people learn naturally through practical tasks.

The role of the lecturer in supporting the student to achieve the best possible outcomes is well-recognised. This programme is innovative because it also works with lecturers to investigate how they learn themselves and analyses how they deliver courses. They are introduced to a variety of new tools to adapt their course materials to meet the specific needs of each group of students and to ensure their courses are enjoyable.

The initiative has been extraordinarily successful after only two semesters with considerable improvements in both achievement and attendance levels. One lecturer, recognising that members of her class were primarily visual learners, replaced the traditional essay with an experimental photo journal. Another included an online competitive forum, encouraging student engagement beyond the classroom. Yet another lecturer altered her PowerPoint slides to make maths more attractive to students.

Administered by the Higher Education Authority, this project is just one scheme funded under the Strategic Innovation Fund which will provide €525 million between 2006 and 2013 to support new approaches to enhancing quality and effectiveness within higher education and research.

Seems like grabbing 40 winks in lectures might be a thing of the past! ■



## Who to contact

For further information please contact:



### Dawn Duffin

Manager, Learning and Assessment Services  
National Learning Network

00353 1 200 0155  
dawn.duffin@rehab.ie