



Submission list

Paper index: [0086], [0221], [0459], [0520], [0599], [0849], [1207], [1222], [1265], [1396], [1420], [1719], [1968], [2257], [2271], [2482], [2512], [2547], [2630], [2690], [2774], [2902], [3188], [3304], [3377], [3531], [4136], [4205], [4591], [4592], [4596], [4688], [4851], [4925], [5391], [5645], [6182], [6590], [6719], [6796], [6894], [6937], [6954], [7020], [7260], [7528], [7866], [7932], [7937], [8136], [8437], [8639], [8844], [8864], [9328], [9693], [9748], [9933]

[0086] Puiyin Wong (Lancaster University / Queen Mary University of London). *Developing digital capabilities in a Networked Learning Community using Threshold Concepts* .

Abstract. In this session, I will discuss my research study on how a peer-led online learning environment can foster a networked learning community, consequently develop individuals' digital capabilities. I will also discuss how this research study has led to the development of a new learning activities design framework, combining the Networked Learning theory and the Threshold Concepts.

The framework uses the unique features of the Networked Learning theory to design online learning activities, with an emphasis on relationship building via online peer interactions. Meanwhile, the characteristics of Threshold Concepts are used to measure the individual's learning journeys and reflections. Both theories will be introduced in more depth and their appropriateness in the framework explained during the session.

Guided by this framework, I created a four-week online taster course mainly consisting of asynchronous learning activities. This was designed based on the Design Based Research tradition where specific conjunctures were set out to be proven right or wrong. 23 digital learning professionals participated in the course, as they could better evaluate the effectiveness of the learning activities in developing our students' digital capabilities.

Attempting to answer the overarching research question: "How can asynchronous learning activities develop a networked learning community that can support the development of the individual learner's digital capabilities?". The dataset comprises the participants' weekly interactions, responses and reflection to the questions asked throughout the course. Upon completion, eight randomly selected participants were invited to take part in semi-structured interviews, where they shared more in-depth accounts of their experiences.

Below are some key findings:

- Engaging in communication and participation in an online learning environment can facilitate relationship building, which are the building blocks of a networked learning community.
- Online collaborations can encourage learners to cultivate their critical voice, this might lead to them challenging their previous knowledge, and leading to new interpretations of knowledge.
- A supportive networked learning community can encourage learners to assume different roles, thus developing their different online identities.

Due to the relatively small sample size, the findings cannot conclusively answer my research question. However it suggests that a suitable online learning environment can help develop students' digital capabilities in specific areas.

You are invited to join me to discuss my findings and whether or not they might feel familiar to you in your own practice. You are also invited to explore how my framework might be adapted to your specific context, with the aim to support your students to develop their digital capabilities (without any restriction on subject disciplines).

Track: Research

Keywords: Digital Capabilities, Learning activities design framework, Networked Learning, Peer interactions, Threshold Concepts

[0221] Rae Bowdler (City University of London) and Elisabetta Lando (City of University London).

Empower City students to collaborate effectively in Teams spaces – an Evaluation and current practice.

Abstract. In September 2020 the adaptation of Microsoft Teams Sites, for learning and teaching, was promoted by City, University of London (City). Team spaces was viewed positively by both staff and students with many finding the platform user-friendly. The integration with Office 365 tools and the flexibility, offered by the Teams app, were also seen as major advantages. We carried out an evaluation where we interviewed a sample of academics and students and asked them to tell us about their experiences of using Teams spaces.

In this presentation, we will be looking at the evaluation through the lens of Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theories of learning and Dewey's (1938) concept of student-driven learning through engagement. Our focus will be on active learning and collaboration as key to an effective educational experience. Furthermore, a social constructivist approach, using platforms like Teams, has the potential to help students develop key digital literacy skills which in turn support employability.

We will also include current examples of Programmes using Teams Spaces to support Student induction and learning.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Evaluation, Digital Skills, Collaboration

[0520] Lyndsey Carmichael (University of Exeter (student)). *Preliminary Insights: Do we always need to be on-campus? - Exploring Flexibility and Hybrid Practices Among Postgraduate Researchers.* .

Abstract. In this study, I explore the experiences of postgraduate research students (PGRs) in both distance learning (DL) and in-person environments, focusing on how these settings influence their academic and personal life balance, and examining the potential benefits of a hybrid approach. This presentation highlights findings from a qualitative study that employs mixed methods, including a pilot survey and interviews, but concentrates on data from the pilot survey as this research is in progress. The pilot phase was essential for assessing the research methodology and obtaining initial insights to better inform the interview questions.

The study includes PGRs with additional commitments such as, employment, parental, or caring responsibilities, but also includes a broader range of experiences. It aims to explore the impact of learning environments on PGRs' ability to navigate their academic journey and manage personal lives. Additionally, the recent global shift to online practices demonstrates that combining online and in-person elements of the PGR journey, such as meetings, presentations, and conferences can potentially enhance the sense of belonging in their academic communities. Additionally, this move to a hybrid approach fits well with an increasing need for flexible working arrangements and plays a crucial role in strengthening ties within the academic community, showing the diverse advantages of this approach in a PGR context.

Early findings reveal a diverse range of experiences among PGRs. A notable insight is that on-campus presence may not always be essential for all PGRs, especially those with additional responsibilities, who find balancing a PhD with personal life increasingly challenging. The survey also brought to light the post-pandemic effects on DL students, particularly feelings of isolation when others returned to campus, contrasting the benefits of on-campus interactions with the advantages of DL, such as flexibility and balancing personal commitments.

In summary, this presentation will cover these initial findings and reflect on the practicalities of a hybrid approach for PGRs. I will briefly discuss the next phase of the research and make preliminary recommendations. These will focus on the critical need for flexibility and the importance of increased support and encouragement from supervisors and other stakeholders for PGRs who could potentially benefit more from a hybrid approach.

Track: Research

Keywords: Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs), Hybrid Approach, Flexibility, Sense of Belonging, Distance Learning (DL), pilot survey.

[0599] Sheriya Sareen (Indian Institute of Technology Jammu (IIT Jammu)) and Sayantan Mandal (Indian Institute of Technology Jammu (IIT JAMMU)). *Navigating the Barriers to Blended Learning in Higher Education: Resurgence of a Global North-South Disparity.*

Abstract. The widespread adoption of blended learning (BL), combining traditional in-person education with online learning, has surged in popularity. Despite this, various studies have pinpointed challenges within the BL framework. Notably, a literature gap exists, as there is a lack of a comprehensive study differentiating the barriers faced by key stakeholders—students, teachers, and administrators—in the global north and south. This research aims to address this gap while also considering the evolving global educational landscape, particularly in the context of the recent crisis. In its light, the present study addresses the following research question: (i) What are the barriers to implementing BL for students, teachers, and institutions? (ii) How do these barriers vary across the global north-south? (iii) How does the global higher education landscape account for the resurgence of the global north-south divide pertaining to the barriers to implementing BL?

To answer these research questions, a systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted, wherein we selected 39 relevant studies out of an initial pool of 642, strictly adhering to the PRISMA guidelines. Sixteen inductive categories were derived from clustering 37 sub-categories, informed by 238 codes from the selected literature (188 from students, 41 from teachers, and 9 from administrators). The findings revealed a prominent focus in the literature on issues related to passive learning, design constraints, and training deficiencies, with major exploration limited to online spaces only.

The study highlights a divide between the Global North and the Global South concerning the nature of BL barriers. In the Global South, major concerns involve the lack of clear purpose, design limitations, passive learning, digital connectivity challenges, content-related constraints, support deficiencies, and ICT infrastructure limitations. In contrast, the Global North faces resource management constraints, reinforcement issues, mental well-being constraints, limitations in socialisation, training deficiencies, compromised self-regulation skills, and difficulties in institutionalisation. Common concerns in both regions include issues related to human connection and individual paradoxes. The study suggests that the Global South has been primarily focused on addressing fundamental challenges, such as connectivity and ICT-related constraints, potentially delaying efforts to tackle deeper issues related to mental well-being, training, socialization, and more.

Thus, we note a resurgence of the global north-south divide through the heterogeneity in the nature of BL barriers faced across the regions. However, it is noted that largely the policy landscape is discriminantly cognisant of the BL contours across the global north-south, thereby not accounting for the regional diversities. It is also evident through the contracts and networking by the key policy players advocating, to a large extent, if not entirely, for technological determinism in higher education.

This study can serve as a valuable resource for identifying and addressing the challenges encountered by students, teachers, and educational institutions across the global north and south in the realm of BL, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of BL as a mode of instruction. It also underscores the need for policymakers to consider regional contexts when formulating BL policy imperatives.

Track: Research

Keywords: Blended learning, Higher Education, Systematic Literature Review, Global North-South divide

[0849] Victor Olugbenga Ayoko (**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**). *Analysis of Barriers Responsible for Students Dropout Rate from Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODeL) Institutions: In the Context of the Global South.*

Abstract. Open distance and E-learning (ODeL) is a System that enables many learners, who are unable to receive proper higher education due to various reasons, to receive university education and adopt a lifelong learning style for all learning needs. ODeL has grown into an important strategy in resolving problems of equity, affordability, and accessibility to quality and sustainable education all over the globe, especially in the global south. Despite the increasing growth of ODeL and its potential benefits, studies have shown that the rate of drop-out in open and distance learning systems is higher than drop-out in conventional learning environments due to issues that bother belongingness and well-being among others. There are many reasons why students drop out of school programs, these reasons may be unique for students who are enrolled in ODeL programs. This paper employed content analysis to select related papers from both print and online resources. The research approach looks at issues historically and holistically by addressing specific scenarios that give details on the why, when, how and what questions in line with the interpretive research paradigm. This paper therefore surveyed theoretical and conceptual issues about school dropout. In particular, it reviewed previous studies in relevant past literature to highlight the factors of school dropout especially from open and distance learning programs and the potential individual and institutional implications such as financial, time, instructional wastages and alternative forgone. This study suggested that policymakers, researchers, developmental partners, educational agencies and all stakeholders collaborate and formulate policies that will discourage the menace of school dropouts with special attention to the open and distance learning institutions.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Dropout, Open Distance, E-Learning, Situational, Institutional

[1207] Abigail Ball (**University of Warwick**) and Miriam Avena-Joint (**University of Warwick**). *ITT in the Digital Realm: Moving complex f2f teaching into asynchronous delivery.*

Abstract. The Centre for Teacher Education at Warwick University delivers postgraduate taught programmes to graduates looking to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). In September 2024 the new Initial Teacher Training (ITT) curriculum comes into effect and there is an expectation that students will have the opportunity to participate in Intensive Training and Practice (ITaP) activities on various aspects of the curriculum. ITaPs are intended to consolidate students' understanding of how evidence shapes teaching practice and increase the links between taught theory and practice in schools.

In September 2023 we successfully piloted a Behaviour Management ITaP on our face-to-face PGCE programme. This was developed by and co-delivered with CTE staff and teachers in several of our partner schools. Our students spent two days in CTE learning about the theory behind Behaviour Management and two days in partner schools where they had the opportunity to observe and reflect upon expert practice in relation to Behaviour Management. They were supported to understand what makes such practice effective and to think about how it could be embedded in their own teaching using role play activities, teaching practice opportunities and feedback from expert colleagues. The students then came back to CTE for the final consolidation and reflection activities on day five.

One of the challenges CTE faces is that we need to make the ITaPs available to our fully online international QTS programme. Unlike on our face-to-face programmes, our international students do not have access to collaborative partnerships with teachers in schools. Additionally, these students are usually in full-time employment, they are operating in varied time zones, and there is no expectation for their employing/placement school to provide anything beyond the opportunity to teach.

Building on the success of our work with Reusable Learning Objects (RLOs) we are re-evaluating our online ITaP delivery and looking to use a variety of technologies such as H5P to create a comparable and enriching online ITaP experience for our international students. In this online lightning talk we will demonstrate some of the RLOs we have created, and activities being developed. We are seeking feedback from participants and welcome discussion on how we might further develop the ITaP experience for this student cohort.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Online, Initial Teacher Training, Intensive Training and Practice, International, Teaching

[1222] Xie Jun ([Open University of China](#)) and Liu Xingguo ([Open University of China](#)). *Enhancing Online Education: Integrating Role-Playing and LLMs in Practical Course Implementation.*

Abstract. The advent of generative artificial intelligence represents a pivotal advancement in online education, introducing a dynamic method for incorporating practical learning into digital platforms. In designing the "Labor Contract Law" course, we selected two critical scenarios: conflicts regarding the formation of labor relations and debates over employees' rights to compensation for work-related injuries. We utilized Large Language Models (LLMs), enhanced by agents and Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) technology, to create an immersive, role-play based learning environment, particularly designed for remote learners. This method fostered active engagement and allowed for the customization of learning experiences, thereby enhancing cognitive growth. Throughout the course, we rigorously documented interactions between LLMs and users, ensuring detailed and methodical analysis. Expert educators conducted thorough, multi-dimensional evaluations of the LLM-generated content, assessing its accuracy, comprehensiveness, and practicality. Our findings strongly endorse the strategic application of LLM technology, especially with careful human oversight, as an effective approach to enriching the practical aspects of online education.

Track: Practice

Keywords: LLMs, Role-play based learning, Teaching practice online, Human-AI Collaboration

[1265] Clive Holtham ([Bayes Business School, City, University of London](#)), Martin Rich ([Bayes Business School, City, University of London](#)) and Linlan Huang ([Faculty of Law, Business and Social Science, Birmingham City University](#)). *Unfolding pathways for higher education pedagogy, technology and strategy.*

Abstract. Context

Our disciplinary background is in business and technology strategy and here we focus specifically on higher education institution-wide strategies, through identifying three stylised and contrasting pathways. These can help shape universities' strategic thinking and practice, particularly the need to take a holistic perspective across pedagogy, technology, and the capacity for and resistance to radical change. We refer to "unfolding" as this implies the interweaving of both planned and unpredictable events (Zimmer, 2019).

Approach

We draw together three overlapping pedagogic/technology research and development projects:

(a) High level pedagogy/technology insights post-pandemic, particularly the roles and limitations of video meeting technology, ad hoc classroom technologies, and VLE's going forward

(b) This led during 2022 to a year long project on "Orchestration of the Physical Classroom" (Dillenbourg, 2013) aimed at supporting staff in moving from transmission-dominated conventional pedagogy/technology, towards active and high engagement platforms, with learners using phones or tablets for in-class interactions.

(c) The rapid high-priority institutional short-term response to generative AI (GenAI) from early 2023 left a need still to explore, in particular, longer-term opportunities from GenAI (Sabzalieva and Valentini, 2023) which we address here:

a. To support active learning

b. To map the consequential personal development needs of faculty in particular

c. To experiment with innovative pedagogical tactics enabled by GenAI.

What the audience will learn

This lightning talk briefly summarizes three stages of strategic development in learning and technology (Juran, 1995). We recommend that institutions deploy some variant of these in their pedagogic technology planning (Rogers, 2003):

1. “Grudgingly minimal” change
2. Step change
3. Breakthrough change

Link to conference theme/implications for policy/why it is significant/impact

We address the conference theme directly: specifically the “...but how” component of the title. It draws the attention of institutions to the risks of over-focus on selecting and deploying individual technologies and pedagogies, without sufficiently considering:

(a) The drawbacks of a fragmented approach to technology and strategy

(b) The need for a reflective rather than reactive strategic approach; in particular, reflection on the risks involved in neglecting explicit study of the appetites for change at key levels (Schneckenberg, 2009), and the existence of both overt and tacit resistances to change (Dannemiller & Jacobs, 1992).

References

Dannemiller, K. D., & Jacobs, R. W. (1992). Changing the Way Organizations Change: A Revolution of Common Sense. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 28(4), 480–498.

Dillenbourg, Pierre (2013). “Design for Classroom Orchestration.” *Computers & Education* 69 (November): 485–92.

Juran, J.M. (1995) *Managerial breakthrough*, McGraw-Hill, New York

Rogers, E.M. (2003) *Diffusion of Innovations*, Simon and Schuster.

Sabzalieva and Valentini, (2023). *ChatGPT and artificial intelligence in higher education: quick start guide*. Paris: UNESCO.

Schneckenberg, D. (2009). Understanding the real barriers to technology-enhanced innovation in higher education. *Educational Research*, 51(4), 411–424.

Zimmer, M.P. (2019) *Improvising Digital Transformation: Strategy Unfolding in Acts of Organizational Improvisation*. In: 25th Americas Conference on Information Systems (AMCIS), pp. 1–10

Track: Practice

Keywords: Innovation, HE_Strategy, GenAI

[1396] Shane Cavanaugh (Central Michigan University). *Using Digital Counter-Narratives to Advance Teachers’ Equity Consciousness in an Online Course*.

Abstract. The context for this proposal is an online masters course for teachers at an American university. The goal of the class is to advance teachers’ equity consciousness. The course was initially guided by articles on issues of educational inequity. Unfortunately, when teaching it online asynchronously, I was unable to engender the same impact of group discussions in face-to-face classes. The articles adequately explore the issues from an academic perspective, but the affective elements were lacking online. Without the emotional qualities of the human experience, it is difficult to fully empathize with those facing educational inequities.

My solution was to incorporate digital counter-narratives in the form of podcasts and videos which offered firsthand, moving accounts of students’, teachers’, and parents’ experiences with extreme educational inequity. The hope was to invoke the empathy required of true equity consciousness. Five digital counter-narratives (three podcasts, two short videos) were used as content along with fourteen academic readings.

Two theoretical frameworks, Equity Consciousness and Counter-Narrative informed my pedagogical change. Equity Consciousness refers to one's "awareness of the level of equity and inequity present" (McKenzie & Skrla, 2011, p. 12) and is "centered on the belief that traditional systems include barriers to equity that marginalize others" (Bukko & Liu, 2021, p. 3). Equity consciousness requires "educators' acceptance of the inequity built into traditional practices and routines of schooling and acknowledgment that these must change if achievement gaps are to close (McKenzie & Skrla, 2011, p.15). Along with gaining an awareness of the realities of educational inequity, empathy is an important tool for change. "For teachers, empathy can increase awareness of the experiences faced by marginalized groups and strengthen their relationships with students across lines of difference" (El Mallah & Pfister, 2022, p.1). One way to nurture empathy in teachers is to include Counter-Narratives to give "voice to previously silenced groups" (Miller et al., 2020, p. 273) and humanize inequity.

I have now taught the course using digital counter-narratives to 49 teachers. Written reflections show evidence that they have helped advance teachers' equity consciousness in terms of awareness, understanding, and empathy. As a final assignment, teachers responded to eight prompts (such as "I was surprised to learn.."; "I changed my attitude about.."); that referenced at least two pieces of course content. Even though there were far more articles (14 articles, 5 digital counter-narratives), all 49 reflections referenced the counter-narratives multiple times. The stories presented in the podcasts and videos left an impression on the teachers and roused their emotions. One teacher articulately summed up what many of her classmates also expressed when referencing a particular podcast, "this was eye-opening, and even a little gut-wrenching, much of what I learned will stick with me and altered the way I view education and achievement gaps". The digital counter-narratives appear to have personalized the inequities in American education and bring emotion and empathy to the issue.

The audience should leave with an understanding of equity consciousness, counter-narratives, and how they can be used to add emotional engagement to online courses.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Equity Consciousness, Teacher Education, Online Teaching and Learning, Digital Counter-Narratives

[1420] Olivia de Paeztron (ESMT Berlin), David Wood (Ivey Business School), Nai Li (Imperial College Business School), Niko de Silva (ESMT Berlin), Gavin Symonds (Imperial College Business School) and Josefine Raasch (ESMT Berlin). *An exploratory investigation into students' satisfaction and perceptions of online MBA programmes.*

Abstract. A presentation of preliminary findings from a study which aimed to explore the factors that influence students' satisfaction and perceptions of online and blended MBA programmes across three institutions: Imperial College in London, ESMT in Berlin, and Ivey Business School in Ontario, Canada. The three business schools are part of an alliance which all used the same bespoke Learning Management System (LMS). The study adopted a mixed methods approach, combining an online survey and individual interviews with a sample of MBA students from the three institutions. The study addresses the following sub-themes of the RIDE 2024 conference: emerging pedagogies and methodologies, belonging and wellbeing, and internationalisation and transnational education. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

What are the perceived strengths and weaknesses of individual MBA programmes across the institutions?

What are the common themes and differentiators across student populations, both within and across institutions?

How does student self-efficacy mediate the individual learner's satisfaction and perceived effectiveness of their programme, if at all?

What are the implications of the findings for pedagogical and institutional approaches to online MBA programmes, with an emphasis on improving the student experience?

The study is expected to contribute to the field of online and distance education by providing insights into the factors that shape students' satisfaction and perceptions of online and blended MBA programmes, as well as the challenges and opportunities for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of these programmes. The study will also inform future research directions in this area.

Track: Research

Keywords: online MBA programmes, student satisfaction and perceptions, mixed methods study, self-efficacy and learning outcomes, cross-institutional comparison, pedagogical and institutional implications

[1719] Olivia de Paeztron (ESMT Berlin). *'Time is of the utmost importance to them' An Ethnographic Exploration of Time Design in Online Part-Time Courses.*

Abstract. In this lightning talk I present findings from a dissertation project for the MSc in Digital Education at the University of Edinburgh. The research investigated how course teams at an international business school perceive and navigate the challenges of designing time for both teachers and students of an online MBA programme. This qualitative study employs ethnographic methods to explore and identify temporal structures that shape course design and delivery. A sociomaterial sensibility (Thompson, 2012) informs the project, in which participant observation and fieldwork are combined with semi-structured interviews with design team members and teaching assistants.

Course design teams are tasked with designing course materials that provide a quality experience to imagined future online students, incorporating activities, some of which are better thought of as emergent, in ways that differ considerably from faculty's experience in synchronous co-located classes. The study revealed challenges related to quantifying and estimating time for online learning and teaching, designing and pacing asynchronous learning activities and interactions, and whether the institution values them equally with more familiar synchronous classroom-based teaching. It also highlighted shifting and unfolding collaboration between designers, faculty and teaching assistants, raising questions about how to build resilient knowledge-sharing practices as the programme scales up. Colleagues navigate some of these challenges together; for others, solutions are still unclear, hinging upon teaching assistants as emerging actors in course provision, working against dominant temporal structures of the institution, and surfacing tensions regarding who has agency in online course design and delivery.

This talk relates to the conference themes: Emerging pedagogies & methodologies;

Emergent technologies

Track: Research

Keywords: online MBA programme design, ethnographic methods and sociomaterial sensibility, agency and value in online learning and teaching

[1968] Pedro Elston (Queen Mary, University of London Medical School), Gian Paulo Canale (Queen Mary, University of London Medical School), Nick Fisher (Queen Mary, University of London Medical School) and Chie Adachi (Queen Mary, University of London Medical School). *Delivering Educational Sessions using Virtual Reality.*

Abstract. Emergent technologies - practice strand

Queen Mary's Medical School has been using Virtual Reality (VR) in a number of its courses, including its new flagship blended medical degree supported by NHS-England. As a result so far we have had two papers accepted (and one further on the way), one on VR effectiveness in anatomy teaching, and another article on tips on how to teach using VR.

Drawing on the latter, we would like to run a workshop that includes: a short demonstration of the technology, presentation of key findings with questions, an opportunity to discuss in groups potential applications, issues, and other ideas in blended/distance learning, with a wrap-up exercise of how you might design a session utilising VR. We will seek to minimise the 'presenting' aspects and spend as much time on audience activity as possible.

Participants will come away with:

An understanding of the current landscape of VR in education

The ability to discuss pros and cons and key concepts of VR technology in blended/distance learning

The ability to design an educational session based on the technology

We believe this is important as extended reality is expected to command a 500 billion market cap in 5 years, from its current 110 billion. We are seeing its use amongst our students recreationally, with over 50% of our first year medical students having used it outside of education. Within education, it offers a number of advantages such as a safe space for practical skills, and immersiveness. The technology is widely used in simulation training, notably for decades in flight simulators, but also is seeing many applications in areas such as healthcare, engineering, and communication skills. We expect this trend to continue, and think it is important that educators consider this educational medium, especially in the fields of blended and distance learning, where it has the potential to bridge social gaps and foster the development of practical skills traditionally done face to face.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Virtual Reality, Blended Learning, Technology in Education

[2257] Xi Liu (Lecturer at the Open University of China (Qingdao), Visiting scholar at University of Cambridge). *How do educators perceive their own digital literacy in relation to artificial intelligence in the context of online, distance and digital education, and what gaps can be identified?*

Abstract. There has been historical interest and advocacy for fostering digital literacy since the last century, with the concept dramatically evolving alongside technological advancements. This is especially relevant for educators positioned at a critical junction of the didactic triangle, where technology significantly enhances the dynamics between teacher, student, and content across various educational facets. However, controversy exists regarding technology's adoption in education, suggesting deeper issues beneath the surface. This essay aims to survey UK educators in the fields of online, distance, and digital education to assess their levels of digital literacy.

The research adopts a Sequential Mixed Design, combining quantitative and qualitative methods for a comprehensive understanding of educators' digital literacy. Initially, the quantitative component offers an objective analysis on digital awareness, digital technology knowledge and skills, digital applications, social responsibilities, and professional development, followed by qualitative research for a more in-depth exploration of the subjective experiences and perceptions of the participants.

Highlights of the research include:

- 1) Adding new insights by incorporating advanced concepts of digital literacy, such as AI literacy.
- 2) Adopting the new N-lemma methodology for research, a tool for analyzing complex systems, applied to the Digital Teaching Professional Framework for a detailed approach to complex educational frameworks.
- 3) Shifting focus to educators in online, distance, and digital education rather than general higher education for digital literacy.
- 4) Using ChatGPT-4 to facilitate N-lemma analysis in policy analysis and literature reviews as an example of teachers' digital literacy trials with AI.

Teacher educators are not only striving to become technically proficient with digital technologies but also rethinking their course designs to use these technologies as instruments for critical pedagogies. Despite higher education institutions increasingly establishing environments like digital learning hubs to develop digital resources and skills, there remains a noticeable disconnect.

The research found significant variation in teachers' digital literacy perceptions, influenced by age and attitude towards technology. Senior educators often show more critical thinking in technology use compared to younger teachers. However, the younger generation, despite being eager to use technology, may struggle to integrate technological, content, and pedagogical knowledge effectively. These findings illuminate the latest educator perceptions, highlight gaps between policy and practice, and offer insights for targeted teacher training to enhance digital literacy in teaching and learning.

Track: Research

Keywords: digital literacy, teacher perceptions, technology in education, online distance and digital education, AI literacy, N-lemma methodology, targeted teacher training

[2271] John Brindle (Lancaster University / Edge Hill University), Puiyin Wong (Lancaster University / Queen Mary University of London), Brett Bligh (Lancaster University) and Franci Daluz (Lancaster University / Salem State University). *#TELresearchers: A community built from curiosity.*

Abstract. This proposal is for the "Belonging and wellbeing" sub-theme.

How do new researchers find their identity and sense of belonging in the TEL research community? The #TELresearchers webinar series was developed to help answer that question and many more around the world of research in the digital education sphere.

Hosted by two PhD students in collaboration with the Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning at Lancaster University, the #TELresearchers series builds a community and sense of belonging around research and research practice. It brings established educational researchers to a mixed audience of early career researchers, mid-career researchers and peers. The series invites these researchers to share insights into the interplay between their personal and professional lives, explaining how these dynamics have influenced their research focus and methodologies.

Through the series, we have gained valuable insights into the diverse approaches used in the field, such as employing multi-modality in data collection, linking research to the pursuit of change, and employing self-reflection through thinkers like Foucault. It underscores the transformative power of research practice, emphasising that research in the field can be both critical and an expression of enthusiasm for improving education.

In this session, we will reflect on our learning journey and share thoughts and feelings about past events. We aim to illustrate a reflective 'loop,' demonstrating how discussions with established researchers can contribute to the professional development of doctoral students, early-career researchers and practitioners. Join us to gain a deeper understanding of the diverse nature of TEL research and discover the wide and varied community and support network that makes the journey less daunting and more enjoyable. We welcome you to become a part of our #TELresearchers community.

Track: Practice

Keywords: TEL Research, TEL Researchers, Reflective Practice, Community of Practice, Learning Network

[2482] Professor Mary Bishop (Director of Learning, Royal Society of Medicine). *Using Immersive Technologies to Develop Educational Impact in Health Education.*

Abstract. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the session the attendees will understand

- the features/key benefits of using VR and AI for communication skills teaching and learning;
- the design methodology taken in developing the RSM/Bodyswaps Navigating Angry Conversations e-module;
- how this design methodology and pedagogic approach to immersive technology could be applied in other disciplines.

THE ISSUE

The doctor-patient relationship lies at the heart of healthcare. Yet a Survey shows high levels of abuse of UK doctors by patients | Doctors | The Guardian (accessed 21.11.2023) with over half reporting experience of patient abuse. Medics tell us that handling angry patients and relatives is one of their greatest challenges. With evidence that doctors who can communicate well experience less emotional burnout, feel more competent and receive fewer complaints, we also know the way professionals handle difficult interactions impacts the experience of the patient. This is a significant issue which affects both well being and retention in the current fraught context.

Developing an educational response

This presentation showcases an innovative project which addresses this issue using emerging technologies and new pedagogic approaches to develop and deliver a professional communication skills e-module for qualified/student medical practitioners. Designed in collaboration with Bodyswaps (expert edtech start up) the Royal Society of Medicine(RSM) took a research informed approach to designing a cutting edge education module offering 'safe space' professional communication skills practice which can be experienced through VR glasses(3D version), or online, distance and blended(2D version).

The RSM carried out collaborative research with its 20,000 members, to identify the aspect of communications issues their members wanted addressed, this confirmed dealing with patient/family anger. We modelled solutions using immersive technology, developing Navigate Angry Conversations. Using bespoke avatars offering immediate AI powered feedback, with the USP of experiencing a 'bodyswap' allows the learner to be on the receiving end of their own communication.

Feedback is provided through software analytics/algorithms which measure the extent to which learners defuse or aggravate the patient or relative's anger through the composition of their speech and non-verbal communication, such as eye contact, pace, volume, intonation and hand gestures. At the beginning/end of the immersive module, learners are asked to complete a self-reflection questionnaire to gauge how their confidence levels and skills have improved from the training.

The e-module was made available in September 2023, it has received positive feedback from over 500 users so far.

Recent press coverage includes the British Medical Journal The official blog of BMJ Leader – Blog site for BMJ Leader and Computerworld: A flight simulator for the office: How VR is helping workers hone soft skills | Computerworld . Medical Futurist: 5 Ways Medical Virtual Reality Is Changing Healthcare (medicalfuturist.com)

NEXT STEPS

Leading subject matter expert in communications in health, Professor Dame Lesley Fallowfield was involved in script design and is now leading the RSM scholarly research into the use of immersive technology in medical education. This will lead to both conference and journal papers adding to the knowledge base in this emerging discipline.

Track: Practice

Keywords: digital pedagogy, innovative methodology, immersive technologies, professional communication skills, health education

[2512] Dominic Pates (City, University of London), Thomas Hanley (City, University of London), Miranda Melcher (City, University of London) and Candace Nolan-Grant (Durham University). *Implementing Digital Learning Design services in UK universities.*

Abstract. Following the pandemic lockdowns, several UK universities have set up or are in the process of setting up Digital Learning Design services.

In June 2023, the Digital Education team at City, University of London launched our service. This followed several successful pilot projects working with academics to bring learning design into the development and delivery of their teaching, from individual modules to full programme redesigns.

These pilots included the development of learning design storyboards, adapted from UCL's ABC approach and iterated across multiple feedback sessions with academics. Additional resources included guidance for academics on choosing educational technologies to meet their pedagogical goals.

Durham University responded to the first lockdown by rapidly expanding their digital learning provision, including creating the university's first central learning design team. The team developed a design framework and process that could be applied to online, blended and face-to-face modules and programmes, while building up their visibility in the institution. Post-pandemic, quite a few departments expressed interest in developing fully online programmes. A project is underway to develop institutional standards for online learning, recruit a Head of Online Learning Development, and devise processes to streamline online programme design, recruitment and delivery.

With the formal launch of these services comes a series of questions that we believe the whole sector must also be grappling with. How to get programme teams to engage with learning design? How to embed learning design services alongside existing formal processes? How to formalise the online programme development process institutionally? How to ensure that learning designers and educational technologists are meeting our academic colleagues where they are at, in ways that are helpful to them?

We want to convene this conversation as part of the Practice stream at RIDE 2024, as learning design is often especially important for teaching and learning that takes place beyond the traditional contexts of teachers and learners being in the same physical space at the same time. We know that the RIDE community has already begun exploring these questions and that there is valuable sectoral experience for everyone to learn from.

We envision this workshop as enabling participants to understand what other institutions are doing, or trying to do, in bringing learning design to academics, and perhaps come out of the session with cross-institutional connections and suggestions about ways to move forward. The workshop is primarily devoted to convening this conversation, through a series of questions, to generate facilitated discussion. The session will start with a very brief overview of where we're at in working with academics on learning design at City and at Durham, and then ask participants to discuss and feed back on:

- Why might there be low engagement from academics with learning design offers?
- What value do learning designers add to the existing module and programme work carried out by academics? How can this be effectively communicated to decision-makers?
- What can learning design services offer to meet the needs of academics?
- How do we balance academic creativity with institutional requirements and standards?

Track: Practice

Keywords: learning design, programme design, online programme development, service design

[2547] Patricia Gorak-Stolinska (LSHTM) and Natalia Bednarska (LSHTM). *Evaluation of interactive online technologies used to teach laboratory skills on a distance learning programme.* .

Abstract. A major disadvantages of online taught biomedical courses is the inability to acquire practical laboratory skills. To bridge the gap between the technical aspects of the course and theory, interactive laboratory videos have been shown to be an alternative way to teach (Chen S, 2022). The use of interactive video has shown cognitive benefits leading to a more effective learning (Schwan and Riempp 2004).

A module from the MSc Infectious Disease; "Bacterial Infections", - a course with extensive discussion of laboratory techniques, has been enhanced with interactive procedural videos, H5P Moodle content, podcasts and quizzes to allow immersive learning. The use of H5P is widely used for teaching of laboratory skills in chemistry, biological sciences, and engineering both alongside wet lab teaching or as standalone teaching, particularly during the COVID 19 pandemic (Unsworth and Posner 2022; Cresswell et al 2019; Jiang et al 2021).

The aim of this study was to assess the impact of educational multimedia and interactive activities on student engagement, satisfaction, and progression. This retrospective cohort study included data from students registered on the "Bacterial Infections" Module between 2019 and 2023 allowing us to compare completion rates and grades before and after introduction of virtual H5P materials in the 2021-22 academic year. These outcomes were analysed utilising both qualitative and quantitative data collected from multiple sources including VLE logs, student databases, module evaluations and feedback surveys. In addition, using an adapted value creation model (Wenger et al 2011; Patel et al 2019) in the form of a learning journey survey, the value that the interactive activities created when used for learning was assessed as well as individual value creations stories in "one-to-one" interviews.

Module satisfaction feedback surveys revealed that majority of students use Moodle revision resources in addition to hard copy materials. Particularly, students expressed their learning satisfaction with H5P quizzes as a preferable way to reinforce their learning after each session. Overall student responses confirmed that H5P enhancements helped to reduce intrinsic cognitive load of the course through well-structured teaching materials which connected the complex ideas and concepts into logical and easy to follow journey.

Preliminary data indicates that while assessment grades remain the same between cohorts, the proportion of students undertaking assessment in the “after” group was 0.6 to compare with 0.54 of the control group. Furthermore, 60% of the “after” group said that the interactive study resources gave them more confidence to enter for assessment. The learning journey survey also indicated how students utilised the interactive activities including navigation of the study material, as a framework for study, to improve and enrich their notes, but mainly for recall of knowledge and revision. Furthermore, the majority of students who had used the interactions reported positive experience and were of opinion that interactive activities should be made more widely available in the programme.

We will report on individual student value creation stories using an adapted value creation model (Wenger et al 2011; Patel et al 2019) as well as on a digital poverty.

Track: Research

Keywords: learning, technology, online, laboratory, value creation, journey

[2630] Nancy Weitz ([Bloomsbury Learning Exchange](#)), Tom Graham ([Bloomsbury Learning Exchange](#)) and Sarah Sherman ([Bloomsbury Learning Exchange](#)). *Is a PhD right for ME? A collaborative approach to meeting individual needs in a MOOC.*

Abstract. Belonging and wellbeing track

--

In 2022, the Bloomsbury Learning Exchange began creating a MOOC on the FutureLearn platform, *Is a PhD Right for Me?* The course aims to dispel misconceptions that potential applicants have about doctoral degrees from the moment they consider undertaking a PhD through to the first year into their doctoral studies.

The idea for the course was brought to the BLE by three of our partner institutions (Birkbeck, SOAS and LSHTM) with related concerns around recruitment of and support for doctoral students. Of particular note is a commitment amongst them all to widen participation and support for people from under-represented groups, in terms of ethnicity, class, nationality, stage of life, social background, age and disability.

Because the course was created by a collaborative organisation (the BLE), no single institution could set an agenda. We were free to be open, honest and unbiased in our approach, maintaining a student/learner agenda rather than an institutional one. At the heart of the course is care for the wellbeing of the learner.

What makes this course different to many other MOOCs is threefold:

- Even though the idea for the course came from institutional concerns, the course content was written by current PhD students for prospective and new PhD students, with input from a wide range of HE staff and supervisors.
- Consequently, the development and priorities are “grass roots”. The course offers a personal focus and authentic perspective on real issues and experiences that might not have been evident with a “top down” approach.
- The MOOC reflects not just the variety of the study-experience, but also the variety of life-experiences that potential students wrongly believe debar them, such as family life, social background, age and confidence.

Is a PhD right for me? Who exactly is that? What are the unique circumstances of each me? One size of PhD does not fit all. We brought coherently together many diverse threads across the whole spectrum of HE without reducing them to a “melting pot”, but rather preserving and even highlighting their variety, diversity, individuality, and unpredictability. There are many different voices speaking through our MOOC, and they don’t always mesh perfectly with each other - but that accurately reflects the nature of the PhD.

The MOOC demystifies the PhD process but not at the expense of simplifying it. It helps a potential candidate navigate a way forward through all the variety and unpredictability but in a way that is right for them personally, not in accordance with any universally accepted “correct way”. It is not only a “warts and all” look at PhD study, nor just a “guide to the PhD application process”, but in its form it embodies the breadth and variety of PhD experiences and the people involved in those experiences in all the different areas of HE.

In our presentation, we’ll look at how this concern for nurturing the individual and care for their wellbeing was established and embedded in the course planning and development.

Track: Practice

Keywords: PhD, Postgraduate, Wellbeing, Inclusion, Belonging, Collaboration, MOOC, Diversity, Individual

[2690] Anthony Basiel (Solent University) and Mike Howarth (Middlesex University). *Education Radio may inform HE hybrid classroom learning.*

Abstract. The paper reviews educational web video conferencing designs that enhance learning technology. These are working experiments evolved by the authors during the pandemic lockdown between 2021-22 in practical case studies addressing technical and pedagogic issues. An online multi-cam model provides insight into supporting quality one-to-one tutorials. The innovative camera set-up allow students to experience higher education academic skills using BBC education production 'soft skills'. A second webinar model scales up these ideas in a hybrid classroom layout. The authors have hands-on experience despite the pandemic. The hybrid classroom, uses a 360° immersive environment layout for a Socratic discussion experience first attempted in university by Anthony Basiel, subject to pandemic rules. The model was also informed by a full-scale trial for local residents using PTZ cameras, funded by a NHS digital village hall community health project, with Mike Howarth as consultant. They are able to demonstrate, in some detail, practical solutions to learning designs and technical set-ups that promote hybrid interactive teaching. The paper suggests rethinking the lecture podium, classroom desk layout and camera positions so they may enhance engagement and the making of eLearning resources.

Track: Practice

Keywords: hybrid classroom design, online tutorial strategies, Socratic discussion model, student engagement activities

[2774] Stylianos Hatzipanagos (CODE Fellow), Alan Tait (CODE Fellow), Michele Milner (CODE Fellow), Steven Warburton (CODE Fellow) and Cynthia Portalewski (CODE Student Fellow). *Managing academic integrity in online assessment in a post Generative AI world.*

Abstract. The shift to online assignment in higher education and the emergence of novel AI generative technologies have generated debates on the management of academic integrity. There has been a widespread rise in the number of academic offences, and an increased level of concern since COVID19 (Pauli, Iosad & Attewell, 2020). The concern is now reinforced by the recent ease of access to generative AI. Academic Integrity is based on commitment, even in the face of adversity, to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage and academic misconduct refers to practices that are not in keeping with these values and this commitment (QAA, 2020). Recent initiatives such as the longitudinal evaluation of the student experience at the University of London (Amrane-Cooper, Hatzipanagos & Tait, 2022) have evidenced the importance of understanding and managing academic integrity from equal perspectives of security and assessment design.

The presentation will discuss the outcomes of a project whose objectives were to:

1. establish what current approaches to the management of academic integrity in online assessment are being used in a representative range of programmes to develop assessments that are resistant to academic offences;
2. evaluate how strengths and weaknesses of approaches are perceived by key stakeholders;
3. investigate how these approaches match to those used in the sector
4. support innovation in programme assessment design by producing a mapping of good practice and recommendations for the next period.

The scope of the project was to investigate practices that are not in keeping with the values of and commitment to academic integrity: i.e. collusion, plagiarism, contract cheating, impersonation and how institutions through learning, teaching and assessment design can develop assessment plans that are resistant to these academic offences.

Our methodological approach included interviews with key stakeholders in a range of institutions: Programme Directors, contemporary assessment platform solutions representatives and staff with responsibilities in the area.

The findings of the project point to:

- changing perceptions of integrity under the influence of recent developments
- the centrality of building a culture of trust with students
- redesigning assessment as core to the support of academic integrity.
- assessment policy lagging behind developments, and not keeping up with changes and threats to academic integrity.
- generative AI applications transfiguring many aspects of learning and teaching, including assessment.
- little evidence that student views have been collected over the recent period about academic integrity, despite communication strategies that aimed to ensure that students were kept informed of relevant issues.

References

Amrane-Cooper, L., Hatzipanagos, S., & Tait, A. (2022) Developing Student Behaviours that Support Academic Integrity in Distance Learning. *Open Praxis*, 13(4), pp.378–384.

Pauli, M., Iosad, A and Attewell, S. (2020) Assessment rebooted. JISC/Emerge Education. Report. Available at: jisc.ac.uk/reports/assessment-rebooted (accessed 28 November 2023)

QAA (2020) Academic Integrity Charter for UK Higher Education. The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Track: Research

Keywords: academic integrity, online assessment, assessment for learning, generative AI

[2902] Verda Yousuf ([The Millennium Universal College](#)) and Verda Yousuf ([The Millennium Universal College](#)). *Transnational Education in Pakistan: An Evolving Landscape*.

Abstract. In an era characterized by unprecedented global connectivity, higher education is undergoing transformative changes marked by the twin pillars of internationalization and transnational education. This research delves into the multifaceted dimensions of these phenomena, aiming to unravel their impact on contemporary educational landscape in Pakistan.

The internationalization of education involves the integration of an international dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of higher education institutions. This includes fostering cross-cultural collaborations, attracting diverse student populations, and establishing global partnerships. Understanding the drivers, challenges, and outcomes of internationalization is crucial for educators, policymakers, and institutions navigating the complexities of an interconnected world.

Simultaneously, transnational education extends the boundaries of traditional education models, transcending geographical limitations. The rise of online learning, satellite campuses, and collaborative programs across borders exemplify the transnational paradigm. This research investigates the evolving nature of transnational education, examining its role in fostering academic accessibility, cultural exchange, and knowledge dissemination beyond national borders.

This research explores Pakistan's perspective on Transnational Education (TNE) and assesses the progress made over the years up to 2022. TNE involves global collaborations, online education, and partnerships with foreign institutions, aiming to provide diverse educational experiences and address skill gaps. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) plays a pivotal role in developing regulatory frameworks to ensure program quality.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative analyses to capture the nuances of internationalization and transnational education. By examining case studies, survey data, and institutional strategies, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the synergies and tensions between these two trends.

Key themes to be explored include the impact of internationalization on curriculum development, student experiences, and institutional identities. This study examines the impact of TNE on the Pakistani education sector, emphasizing equity, cultural sensitivity, and technological infrastructure challenges. Additionally, the research delves into the evolving models of transnational education, addressing questions of quality assurance, and the role of technology in shaping global learning environments. Insights into the evolving landscape of TNE in Pakistan provide valuable considerations for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders shaping the future of international collaborations in higher education.

This investigation contributes to the scholarly discourse on the future of higher education in an interconnected world, offering insights that inform policy decisions and strategic planning for educational institutions navigating the complexities of a globalized academic landscape.

Track: Research

Keywords: internationalization, transnational education, curriculum, cultural sensitivity, policy, partnerships, global learning

[3188] Vickie Bates ([University of Liverpool](#)). *Improving assessment outcomes, student satisfaction and engagement for independent research modules in online postgraduate programmes.* .

Abstract. The University of Liverpool's online Master of Public Health (MPH) programme is available to students worldwide and is provided in collaboration with the university's e-Learning partner, Kaplan Open Learning. When a postgraduate student enters the dissertation or independent study project phase of a master's course, it is frequently noticed that they experience difficulties transitioning from structured, taught modules to independent learning and research. The reasons for this are poorly understood and under researched but is thought to be due to a number of factors including poor time management, being underprepared or not equipped with an understanding of the specific skills required for independent study and research. Studies have previously found that research skills for postgraduate study needs to be developed progressively. In response to faculty, student and external feedback relating to reduced pass rates and lower dissertation marks compared to taught module components, a dissertation preparation pathway (DPP) has been implemented for the online MPH programme. The pathway is formative and runs parallel to the taught modules. The pathway is divided into stages, with each stage focusing on key areas of the dissertation and research process. Synchronous opportunities are embedded within the pathway, allowing students to engage with classmates and faculty to share research ideas and present their research proposals for feedback. The pathway allows for progressive development of student research capacity and better prepares students for the change in learning and teaching styles required for the dissertation. It also allows the students to have a well-developed dissertation proposal ready to start their dissertation module. The DPP has been recognised as an example of innovative and best practice by external reviewers and has since been implemented by other online programmes. This presentation will explore if any changes in student assessment outcomes, student satisfaction and student engagement have been observed since its implementation and consider other opportunities for development.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Postgraduate, online study, research, dissertation, assessment outcomes

[3304] Fauzia Idrees Abro ([Royal Holloway, University of London](#)) and Larisa Grice ([University of London](#)). *Revolutionizing Distance Learning Education: Harnessing Innovative Technology for Cyber Security Students.*

Abstract. The University of London, in collaboration with the Information Security department of Royal Holloway, University of London (RHUL), introduced the pioneering online distance learning MSc in Cyber Security programme in 2022. This cutting-edge programme, hosted on the Coursera platform, features eleven modules designed to immerse learners in the realm of cybersecurity through innovative pedagogical techniques and emerging technologies. A defining element of this programme is the integration of hands-on lab activities embedded within several modules, leveraging the state-of-the-art Cyber Range platform. Crafted by RHUL's Academic Subject Experts (ASEs), these labs simulate authentic cyberattack scenarios, providing a dynamic and practical learning environment for professionals in an interactive, curated, and isolated space.

Undergoing rigorous certification by the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), the UK's national authority in cybersecurity, this programme aligns with NCSC standards, validating graduates' capabilities to excel in the cybersecurity industry. To ensure real-world relevance, extensive research led to the selection of the Cyber Ranges platform developed by CTSSTech. These tabletop style exercises simulate realistic cyber threats, offering students hands-on experience in identifying and responding to cyber-attacks.

In an effort to address the global landscape of cybersecurity, the programme incorporates interactive sessions that invite perspectives from diverse international students. These sessions explore the implications of security, privacy, legal/regulatory infrastructure, and emerging technologies in various countries and cultures, fostering a comprehensive understanding adaptable to diverse markets worldwide.

This talk will showcase several innovative technologies utilized in the programme, such as AI-assisted cyber range simulations, along with novel pedagogical approaches focused on internationalization. The aim is to illustrate how these advancements prepare future cybersecurity professionals in today's borderless world while conveying a broader message about how innovative technologies and pedagogical techniques can effectively teach complex topics within a transnational education programme.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Cyber range technology, Cyber security skills training, NCSC Accreditation, Borderless World

[3377] Catherine Steele ([University of Leicester](#)), Nellinne Ranaweera ([University of Leicester](#)) and Kazia Anderson ([University of Leicester](#)). *Compassion knowledge and training - is this the answer to improving both staff and student wellbeing? An exploration of DL PGT students and staff.*

Abstract. DL students often juggle multiple demands including work and family commitments alongside studying that can cause role conflict, fatigue and dissatisfaction. Barratt and Duran (2021) found psychological capital predicts burnout and engagement and that social support influences this relationship.

A review by Watts and Robertson (2011) revealed that in HE, staff exposed to high numbers of students, especially those involved in postgraduate tuition were vulnerable to burnout. Reasons for burnout in lecturers have been cited as unreasonable job demands, lack of classroom management skills and lack of social support.

Compassionate pedagogy is described as creating an environment for learning that notices distress for students and staff and takes active steps to reduce it. It's been shown to improve instructor student relationships and reduce stress for both groups (Meluch & Hannah, 2021). Compassion requires social interactions and human connection so with burnout in HE being linked to social support this research aims to explore if compassion could be an answer to improving wellbeing.

The science and practice of compassion is easily taught and recognised as an employability skill currently lacking in graduates (Maratos, Gilbert & Gilbert, 2019). Gilbert (2017) refers to micro skills of compassion that can be taught through effective group work and shows evidence of a correlation between the inclusion of compassion on the curriculum and enhancements to academic performance and wellbeing (Gilbert, 2016; Doolan et al, 2019).

Our ongoing research is investigating the concept of compassionate pedagogy in a distance learning context. We have completed a systematic review which is being finalised and are currently running a series of focus groups with staff and students to explore their understanding and experience of compassion in DL, PGT in Higher Education and its relationship with wellbeing. We will run 4 groups for students and 4 for staff with up to 10 participants in each group. Participants will be either registered as a student or teaching on a DL PGT programme. These focus groups will be completed and analysed by the end of February meaning we would be in a position to present the findings at the conference.

Track: Research

Keywords: Compassionate Pedagogy, Wellbeing, Postgraduate

[3531] Celine Llewellyn-Jones ([Coventry University Online](#)). *Designing guidance to promote Inclusive Virtual Reality (VR) educational experiences at Coventry University.*

Abstract. VR can create immersive and highly engaging educational experiences, with the potential to widen access to learning far beyond the classroom. It also creates unique accessibility challenges, often for those that would benefit from it most. There has been huge growth in the use of VR devices for teaching and learning across Coventry University, which mirrors the expanding adoption of VR in the consumer market. Whilst guidance on Accessible VR design is available across the internet, it is disparate, frequently overwhelming in scope and rarely tailored to educational contexts.

This project was devised by a cross-functional team comprising Learning Designers, Media Producers, Educational Technologists and Disability Welfare Officers at Coventry University. Using a design-based research approach, we have been working together to create a set of straightforward inclusive design guides and principles, tailored for specific stakeholder needs, that support the planning and implementation of new educational VR projects across the University. We aim to raise awareness of wider accessibility needs in both the development and use of VR, share good practices and encourage Inclusive VR design.

During the talk, you will learn about:

- Some of the Inclusive VR challenges, and key accessible design principles
- Value of cross-functional collaboration for inclusive design in emerging tech
- Formatting guidance to ensure it is accessible, just in time, straightforward, and tailored for different stakeholders and project stages
- Challenges of gathering feedback about emerging technology experiences

Track: Practice

Keywords: • Inclusive Virtual Reality Design, • Guidance design, • Virtual Reality learning experience, • Cross-functional collaboration, • Design-based research, • Accessible student experience

[4136] Katalin Hanniker ([University of Surrey](#)) and Irina Niculescu ([University College London](#)). *A framework for international curriculum co-design projects in higher education.*

Abstract. We are excited to share a discipline-agnostic framework which can be used as part of online, international, co-design projects, and which encourages collaboration between academics, and between students and academics.

In the presentation we propose to introduce the four stages of our framework. We propose to discuss the approaches we used to deliver our framework, the inspirations, and principles we drew on, the challenges we faced, and to reflect on our experience of the workshops and our understanding of their impact. Also, through discussion we hope to use this presentation to explore ways in which the framework could be relevant to different contexts.

The framework is based on two learning design workshops which took place as part of an international collaboration initiated by University of Surrey with four other universities in Iran, Mexico, Brazil and Spain. The workshops and framework were created by the two learning designers who are making this submission.

The framework is designed to:

- support equitable internationalisation by creating opportunities for participants to share and adapt educational ideas according to their contexts
- include people who might otherwise be excluded from learning design initiatives because of costs (travel, accommodation, etc)
- accommodate people's limited availability
- limit environmental impact by reducing unnecessary travel, etc.

Our framework is rooted in principles of internationalisation in education (Knight, 2013; Craciun, 2018), systems change approaches such as appreciative inquiry (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2003), educational theories including threshold concepts (Meyer and Land, 2006), Community of Inquiry (Garrison et al, 2004). It also draws principles from a number of learning design frameworks such as carpe diem (Salmon n.d.), ABC (Young and Perovic, 2016), and student-staff partnerships (Bovill, 2019; Cook-Sather, 2014).

The online delivery presented challenges in terms of workshop design because we wanted to generate potentially transformative dialogue, in online spaces, within a short space of time among participants who, in the main, had not met before and who potentially would have diverse expectations of the workshops. We wanted to create a space in which everyone felt able to contribute and which took into account their local educational contexts. In order to limit the risks of imposing a 'Western/UK education' bias (Tight, 2022), we encouraged participants to work in small groups to design and share a collection of learning activities and assessment ideas. At the end of the workshops, we summarised and disseminated the outputs so that participants could adapt the ideas to their own context.

Our reflections of the impact are based on our perceptions of: the quality of debate and outputs from the workshops; feedback from the participants; and one of our UK student partners was awarded SEDA Student Partnership Impact Award based in part on her participation in the workshops. For future iterations of framework we would recommend including a robust evaluation procedure and feedback cycles.

Track: Practice

Keywords: internationalisation, collaboration, co-design, framework, learning design, curriculum

[4205] Nicholas Fisher (Queen Mary, University of London) and Matthew Simmons (Queen Mary, University of London). *Removing barriers: Widening participation in medicine through a blended learning programme.*

Abstract. In September 2023, the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry at Queen Mary University of London launched the first year of an innovative blended learning graduate-entry medical degree. Students participating in the programme are able to access interactive asynchronous content in addition to face to face synchronous learning activities. Funding for this programme was provided by NHE England.

In conjunction with this initiative, CODE granted a Teaching and Research Award for 2023. This presentation will report on the interim findings of the CODE-funded research project into the blended learning graduate-entry medical degree.

Attendees will be able to:

1. Identify how switching to a blended learning programme has impacted learning accessibility and inclusion for medical students
2. Evaluate the impact of a blended of a blended learning on student outcomes
3. Identify how the implementation of the project has impacted staff and resources
4. Apply lessons learned from this project into their own learning initiatives

The drivers for this blended learning programme and associated research are threefold:

1. NHS England has identified that blended learning has the potential to improve learning outcomes and student engagement and promote the growth of a digitally literate workforce.
2. NHS England has also stated its commitment to a healthcare workforce which represents the local communities it serves and recruits from previously under-represented workforce from lower socio-economic and minoritised backgrounds. Queen Mary draws a significant proportion of students from inner-city communities in East London.
3. The government has announced that numbers of medical school places will be expanded yearly with over 200 places for academic year in 2024.

The presentation will include examples of the asynchronous and synchronous content in the blended learning programme, student feedback on their experiences gained from in-course questionnaires and focus groups and lessons that have been learned by the Learning Innovation Team at QMUL, the designers and developers of the learning content.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Blended learning, Medicine, Widening participation

[4591] Rita Schmallegger (Tiffin University/University of Maryland Global Campus). *Redefining Online Design and Delivery: Insights from a ChatGPT "Student"*.

Abstract. We all want our students to succeed, but how can they when we make it so easy for them not to? Puzzled and intrigued by the potential and limits of AI in the spring of 2023, a group of distance education staff from a small U.S. Midwestern university set out to see if it was possible to pose as fictitious students and pass a university course using ChatGPT to create all submitted work. Three of the five passed with an A. While the study was a "success", , if "success" can be defined by the ability to pass a course without learning anything, what one researcher learned has forever changed how she teaches online and what she looks for when building online courses. In this lightning session, this educator/learning designer/researcher will share the experiences and challenges of using ChatGPT to complete assignments along with how this can (and should) modify one's approach to online course delivery and design.

Track: Practice

Keywords: online education, AI tools, distance education, instructional design, learning design, ethical AI use

[4592] Halima Shuaibu (Ahmadu Bello University, Distance Learning Centre). *AI- Enhanced Feedback Systems and Student Learning Outcomes in Distance Learning*.

Abstract. AI-Enhanced Feedback Systems and Student Learning Outcomes in Distance Learning.

By

Halima Shuaibu

Distance Learning Centre

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Halima.shuaibu@abudlc.edu.ng

+2348069807220

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of AI-enhanced feedback systems on student learning outcomes in distance education, focusing on the dimensions of personalization, adaptability, timeliness, multimodality, context awareness, and engagement strategies. The theoretical framework integrates the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Cognitive Load Theory (CLT), and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). The study involves students enrolled in the distance learning programs at Ahmadu Bello University, exploring how the AI-enhanced feedback dimensions influence their academic performance and overall learning experience. The research objectives include assessing the influence of personalized feedback on student learning outcomes, examining the relationship between the adaptability of feedback systems and academic performance, investigating the impact of timely feedback on comprehension and progression, analyzing the role of multimodal feedback in student engagement, exploring how context-aware feedback influences relevance and targeted learning, and evaluating the contribution of engagement strategies to student motivation and academic success. With a population of 4,500 MBA students, the chosen sample size of 426 provides a representative subset for analysis and the research employs regression analysis to explore the relationships. The findings revealed that higher levels of personalization, adaptability, timeliness, multimodality, context awareness, and engagement strategies in AI-enhanced feedback systems positively correlate with improved student learning outcomes. The findings of this study aim to contribute to the understanding of how AI-enhanced feedback systems was optimized to enhance the distance learning experience at Ahmadu Bello University and potentially inform the broader field of distance education. The outcomes provide valuable insights for educational institutions seeking to leverage technology to improve student outcomes in remote learning environments.

Keywords: AI-enhanced feedback systems, student learning outcomes and distance learning

Track: Research

Keywords: Ai enhanced feedback systems, Student learning outcomes, Distance Learning

[4596] Kate Daubney (Freelance, and co-lead on a project with the University of London), Linda Amrane-Cooper (University of London), Gemma Kenyon (City, University of London) and Aranee Manoharan (aranee.manoharan@kcl.ac.uk). *Developing employability inclusively through curriculum: recognising opportunities and barriers.*

Abstract. This workshop draws on a recently created Toolkit to support inclusive employability development in curriculum. The Toolkit, funded by a grant from the Quality Assurance Agency's Collaborative Enhancement Project fund, supports academic educators and careers educators to develop employability inclusively through curriculum, and draws on practice-led and research-led expertise and experience of educators and careers professionals.

Using curriculum as a means for employability development ensures that all students benefit and no student is excluded (Manoharan 2020, Rossi, 2023). This is particularly important in distance education where the study and employment contexts of students may vary widely, as will the way in which they want to deploy their education for career progression or development (e.g. Farrow 2020). Every student should be enabled to develop employability in a way that is relevant to them, but each will experience their own barriers (e.g. Walker 2015, Morina and Biagiotti 2022, Tai 2023). However, in some respects, we might see that the experience some academic colleagues have of learning to teach online and to distanced student cohorts has many similarities with their experiences and perceptions of developing employability through curriculum: this is something unfamiliar that they recognise objectively as necessary and valuable, but which presents challenges to their existing practice including fulfilling possibly unfamiliar roles beyond pedagogical specialism (e.g. Mihai, 2013).

For many educators, developing employability is in itself an emerging pedagogical priority so to embed it inclusively is important, and reflects the "but how" element of this year's conference theme. So this workshop has been designed to build delegate understanding of inclusive employability development through curriculum, and will give delegates the opportunity to use content and tools from this innovative Toolkit. During the workshop, delegates will:

- Be introduced to core principles of inclusive employability development through curriculum
- Engage in reflective discussion on their own understanding of and experience of employability development through curriculum, including barriers and opportunities
- Reflect on the barriers students might experience to developing their employability in any context
- Audit their curriculum for existing employability development
- Engage with a showcase of approaches to and evaluation of inclusive employability development in curriculum

Delegates will therefore complete the workshop with:

- a stronger understanding of principles of inclusive employability development through curriculum
- a stronger understanding of their own practice with respect to inclusive employability development through curriculum
- a strong understanding of the needs and barriers for student employability development
- access to tools and information to help them develop their practice of inclusive employability development through curriculum

Track: Practice

Keywords: employability, inclusion, curriculum

[4688] Nathan Page (University of York) and Dinah Sackey (University of York). *The IRF Discourse Framework: A Tool for Analysing Collaborative Online Learning.*

Abstract. In this session we will show how a discourse pattern identified in the field of language education - the 'Initiation, Response, Feedback' cycle or IRF - can be productively applied to researching communication in online learning, particularly in the sense of evaluating collaborative online learning.

Walsh (2002) showed how in English language classrooms, although there is some pedagogic value to the common verbal discourse pattern where a teacher initiates, a learner responds and then the teacher feeds back on the response (IRF), ultimately this is not conducive to sustained learning over time. This is due to a lack of peer interaction and a limited pattern of discourse which does not accord with open dialogic learning.

We will demonstrate an application of IRF analysis to educational discourse in our own learning context, namely fully online masters degrees at the University of York. These programmes are designed to include frequent collaborative activities, typically presented via discussion board tools. We keep these activities under review, both in terms of the numbers engaging and whether the resulting interactions demonstrate peer interaction and collaborative learning where that was originally intended by the learning design.

Our initial examination of a sample of learning interactions showed that IRF is a common discourse pattern in the sense that 'initiation' is the task instruction itself, the 'response' is the students' response to the task and the 'feedback' is a comment by the tutor. Having identified this as a common feature, we tracked its frequency in the sample and looked for exceptions to it: cases where peer interventions and/or ongoing discussion with the tutor meant that a more complex interaction pattern and greater collaborative learning had taken place.

This approach builds upon existing research methodologies which 'map' interactions in online learning spaces (e.g. Heckman and Annabi, 2005; Page et al, 2020) by applying discourse labels to posts and evaluating patterns of interaction relative to a specific model. The method is a simple but effective way of studying online collaborative learning, and leads to productive critical thinking around IRF with its benefits and limitations. Attendees will be able to apply the method to analyse collaborative online learning in their own contexts, and to evaluate any innovations which are designed to enhance it. We will identify some preliminary findings from our own context, by highlighting factors in learning design and tutoring practice which we found to be associated with relatively deep collaborative learning. The session is intended to facilitate critical reflection, question formation and discussion with the audience around our method and in these areas of pedagogical practice.

References

Heckman, R. and Annabi, H. (2005) A Content Analytic Comparison of Learning Processes in Online and Face-to-Face Case Study Discussions. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*,10,2.

Page, N., Matykiewicz, L. & Wood, D. (2020). Facilitating Inclusive and Engaged Learning in Fully Online Masters Programmes. University of York Learning and Teaching Conference Presentation.

Walsh, S. (2002). Construction or obstruction: teacher talk and learner involvement in the EFL classroom. *Language Teaching Research*, 6(1), 3–23.

Track: Research

Keywords: Online Learning, Discourse Analysis, Collaborative Learning

[4851] Jennie Golding (UCL IOE). *Academics engaging in formative peer assessment of reflective scholarly accounts of supervision* .

Abstract. I draw on ongoing design research developing a series of online collaborative workshops for experienced doctoral supervisors, originally within UCL and now expanding across sub-Saharan Africa. Such workshops are intended to support colleagues in developing personal, recent, analytical, example-based, scholarly and systematic reflective accounts of their supervision, in preparation for submission for UKCGE recognition, should they want that. Here, I largely focus on the first iteration in southern Africa (South Africa, Namibia and Zambia), where I as a UCL academic facilitated formative peer review of draft such accounts. The review process was introduced in response to challenges UCL academics had encountered in interrogating their own practice in the required ways. We used reflexive thematic analysis of written, structured formative peer feedback and participants' final evaluation surveys, to answer, 'In what ways can formative peer assessment, as assessor or assessee, support or hinder experienced academics' development of critical scholarly reflection on their supervision practices?' I shall show that in the context of this demanding task, cultural constraints and norms, as well as variable depth of engagement, can impinge on the benefits experienced – but that the process was nevertheless highly valued in ways which are largely consistent with the evidence base for undergraduate learners.

The literature suggests formative peer review can be a largely productive process across education phases, including in Higher Education, and including in southern Africa. However, in the study context, 'students' were experienced academics, and the facilitator in many ways an academic peer, although from the global north. I share evidence that southern African colleagues widely professed themselves unused to critical or scholarly reflection on their own practice; that they reported the peer review process highly challenging as both assessor and assessee, and that they often struggled to fully act on the feedback given. However, in the medium term, evidence of the benefits and challenges of formative peer assessment experienced had much in common with that found in the wider literature, including pointing to the centrality of task design that scaffolds assessment, active 'teacher' participation in the process, and 'teacher' modelling of feedback. Significant challenges for most participant southern African participants that were not replicated in the next, UCL, iteration included reluctance to critique accounts suggesting a collaborator's greater experience, and a common disjuncture between feedback given and the response to that in the final submission. In both UCL and southern African contexts, understanding the expected quality of reflection, even after peer formative feedback, was commonly experienced as difficult to achieve. However, working remotely, and with a range of colleagues not previously encountered, were apparently not barriers to effective assessment for learning. The findings are significant for extending the evidence base around formative peer assessment to mature, experienced academic learners and in ways which are comparative across cultures. Taken across settings, they also suggest that academics' critical scholarly reflection on their supervision practice, arguably a pivotal contribution to the future of academia and to high-level engagement with knowledge, might not be as widely embedded as one might hope.

Track: Research

Keywords: formative peer assessment, supervision, critical reflection, comparative study, southern Africa

[4925] Matthew Moran ([The Open University](#)). *Emotional AI in education: applications and implications*.

Abstract. This lightning talk will share some initial findings from research for a MSc dissertation into emotional artificial intelligence and its possible applications and implications for education. The current discourse on AI in education focuses on rational software agents such as GPT-4, and narratives of automation and productivity with broadly negative implications for learning and academic integrity (Cotton, Cotton and Shipway, 2023; Eke, 2023). There is, as yet, very little attention being paid to 'emotional AI' or affective agents, although research and development of 'affective' computer systems able to recognise and respond to, and simulate, human emotions, goes back to the 1980s (Minsky, 1985; Picard, 2000). This lightning talk will briefly summarise the current state of emotional AI research, present examples of uses of social and emotional agents in education, and highlight potential of emotional AI to enhance learners' cognitive functions (including decision-making and problem-solving skills) and their social and emotional wellbeing. It will also consider some of the social and ethical implications of emotional AI for education.

Track: Research

Keywords: GenAI, Emotional AI, Artificial Intelligence, Wellbeing, Learning efficacy

[5391] Chie Adachi ([Queen Mary University of London](#)) and Jo Elliott ([Queen Mary University of London](#)). *Enlivening authentic assessment and feedback online – a case of institutional reform*.

Abstract. Assessment practice and policy within higher education sector have been heavily impacted by the rise of Generative AI such as ChatGPT (Lodge et al., 2023). The increased availability and use of generative AI is not only changing the way in which our students and educators learn and engage with assessment, but also raising more questions around academic integrity and putting what constitutes student original work at risk (Gilson et al., 2023; Kung et al., 2023). Looking forward to the future world of work, the use of AI is a necessity in most workplaces, and there is a concerning narrative that some professions are at the risk of becoming obsolete (Aoun, 2017).

Given this background, this presentation will explore a case study of transforming digital assessment and feedback practice that addresses the critical questions of academic integrity and authentic assessment design online. Implementing Cadmus, an 'Assessment for Learning' platform, the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry at Queen Mary University of London embarked on the reform of digital assessment and feedback practice at the institutional level. A total of five modules from both postgraduate and undergraduate programmes have been selected to redesign their online assessment tasks for authentic learning and to improve student learning experiences, engagement and outcomes. The evaluation framework for the pilot project has been co-constructed with the academic programme teams and the vendor Cadmus. Its findings will be shared at the conference, following data collection and analysis in February. Along with the results of the evaluation of students' and educators' experiences with the redesign process, the presentation will report on how digital education innovation projects might be established to bring about change in teaching and learning practice. This presentation is well aligned with the conference sub-theme of assessment for learning, through which participants will be invited to reflect on their own views and practices on digital assessment design and engage with the latest literature on the subject.

Reference

Aoun, J. E. (2017). *Robot-proof: higher education in the age of artificial intelligence*. MIT press.

Gilson, A., Safranek, C. W., Huang, T., Socrates, V., Chi, L., Taylor, R. A., & Chartash, D. (2023). How does ChatGPT perform on the United States medical licensing examination? The implications of large language models for medical education and knowledge assessment. *JMIR Medical Education*, 9(1), e45312. <https://mededu.jmir.org/2023/1/e45312/>

Kung, T. H., Cheatham, M., Medenilla, A., Sillos, C., De Leon, L., Elepaño, C., Madriaga, M., Aggabao, R., Diaz-Candido, G., & Maningo, J. (2023). Performance of ChatGPT on USMLE: Potential for AI-assisted medical education using large language models. *PLoS digital health*, 2(2), e0000198.

Lodge, J. M., Howard, S., Bearman, M., Dawson, P., Agostinho, S., Buckingham Shum, S., Deneen, C., Ellis, C., Fawns, T., & Gniel, H. (2023). *Assessment reform for the age of artificial intelligence*.

Track: Practice

Keywords: digital assessment, feedback, authentic assessment, design, innovation, institutional change

[5645] Sophie Odgers-Roe ([University of London Distance and Flexible Learners Career Service](#)) and Rae Roberts ([University of London Distance and Flexible Learners Career Service](#)). *Skills mapping: everywhere but how?*

Abstract. Surfacing skills has grown in importance in global employability strategy and practice within higher education and the workplace (PWC, Global Workforce Hopes and Fears Survey, 2023). The last 5-6 years has seen a growth in demand and scale of HE TNE provision as a potential solution to navigate this context (Brassington & Coursera, 2022) with initiatives relating to embedding employability within programmes emerging (Mello & Wattret 2021).

As individuals increasingly recognise the importance of illustrating their skills to employers, universities recognise the need to make skills development through higher education as explicit as possible to their learners (Brassington & Coursera, 2022). Many federation partners across the University of London have adopted new approaches to make the skills development of their academic programmes more emphasised, and embed employability within programmes (Mello & Wattret, 2021), such as through the extracted employability approach at Kings College London, which helps students reflect on the skills they already have (Daubney 2021).

Skills mapping has been used broadly across federation partners within the University of London to identify transferable skills that students gain during their degree such as emotional intelligence and complex problem-solving. 10 employability skills were identified by research undertaken by the Careers Group within the University of London (2021) based on findings by the World Economic Forum (2020) and the Future of Jobs Report, Skills for the Future (2019). These were adaptability and resilience, collaboration, communication, complex problem-solving, creativity and innovation, decision making, digital skills, emotional intelligence, leadership and persuasion and negotiation.

These skills have relevance across multiple UG and PG programmes for 45,000 students across 180 countries at a wide range of career stages which the University of London Careers Service supports.

Within Postgraduate Laws (PG Laws) and Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences (EMFSS) at the University of London, Careers Consultants have been undertaking forward facing work to map transferable skills across programmes in order to improve students' awareness of employability.

In PG Laws, significant investment has been made in the skills mapping programme, with 33 subject matter experts mapping the 10 employability skills across 33 specialisations (including Maritime Law and Human Rights Law). Within EMFSS through instruction from the Programme Directors every module undergoing annual review is being mapped to identify the three key employability skills by the lead academic with 12 modules now featuring skills tags on the VLE and in the course descriptors for over 16,000 students).

In this workshop we will invite participants to consider the challenges and weaknesses of introducing and implementing a skills mapping approach through reflecting on their own lived experience of their students' awareness of skills development. We will also introduce and discuss some next stage plans for the UoLCS skills mapping approach with the opportunity for participants to reflect on how they could use skills mapping in their own contexts.

Track: Practice

Keywords: skills mapping, employability education, transferable skills, extracted employability, embedded employability

[6182] Christina Howell Richardson (CODE, University of London), Gwyneth Hughes (University College London) and Matt Phillpott (CODE, University of London). *Resetting the Discussion Forum: exploring uses of Generative AI in online learning.*

Abstract. The workshop aims to facilitate a conversation on enhancing peer learning and criticality in asynchronous online discussions prompted by/ based on the work of the CODE Resetting the discussion forum (RDF) project. The RDF project proposes an alternative format to the traditional online discussion forum, focusing on the development of disciplinary inquiry methods, critical thinking, and digital literacies, including guided practice in the use of generative AI as a study aid. The RDF approach potentially provides opportunities for intensive engagement with literature and evidence, exploratory discussion of methodologies and findings under the guidance of a tutor and within a pedagogy of contingency.

Proposed Workshop format

Part 1 – 20 minutes: Presentation on the RDF project approach to asynchronous online discussion. We will report on the conceptual framework for this pedagogical approach and present our findings on the potential and challenges of using AI as a study aid as identified in our analysis of two pilot studies conducted within colleges of the University of London.

Part 2 – (20 minutes). Small group discussions (20 minutes).

a) Participants are asked to exchange narratives, ideas, or experiences of including use of Gen AI as a tool in support of student learning in their own practice. Each group is asked to focus on 1 or 2 examples: (12 – 15 minutes)

Q1: How have you included Generative AI tools as a tool for student learning?

or

How would you use Generative AI tools as a tool for student learning?

Q2: 2- 3 main observations/ thoughts on the potential and challenges/limitations?

b) Consolidation - Groups collate their key ideas on paper /PowerPoint slide to share in plenary. (5 minutes)

Part 3- Facilitated plenary where emergent key themes are identified and discussed.

Track: Practice

Keywords: asynchronous discussion forum, critical thinking, peer learning, Generative AI

[6590] Giacomo Occhipinti (UAL), Jhon Benavides Navarro (UAL) and Kirsty Nevett (UAL). *Interdisciplinary Collaboration for Online Course Design in Strategic Fashion Marketing*.

Abstract. Conference Format: Presentation

Track: Practice Focus

Sub-themes: Emerging pedagogies & methodologies

Abstract: This case study presents an innovative interdisciplinary collaboration model between subject experts, learning designers, and content developers for the design and implementation of an Online Course in Strategic Fashion Marketing at the University of the Arts London. We integrated an evidence-based approach drawing on the science of learning, subject matter expertise, and institutional experience to foster a culture of innovation and experimentation in online course development.

Over three 10-minute sections, we will provide an in-depth look at our collaborative design process focusing on:

- 1) Designing an engaging and supportive student journey through principles of experience, engagement, and evolution. This involved careful planning of each touchpoint in the weekly learning sequence.
- 2) Fostering individual connections to course content along with a shared sense of community belonging among peers. Activities promoted reflection, dialogue, and co-creation of knowledge.
- 3) Continual development of cutting-edge pedagogy and learning design based on the latest research and our evaluation of what worked well versus challenges faced.

To make the session experiential, participants will engage in interactive activities replicating elements of our learning design approach and pedagogical theory. For example, a drag and drop exercise to design an ideal weekly learning journey.

The session will conclude with an open discussion of key outcomes from this collaboration model, including: directly informing ongoing course improvement, providing a framework to expand interdisciplinary partnerships across the institution, and producing research publications to disseminate best practices in online learning design.

Track: Practice

Keywords: learning design, co-design, evidence based design, flat hierarchy, rapid iteration

[6719] Matt Cornock (University of Leeds). *Applying systems thinking to design-led online education and digital accessibility*.

Abstract. In online education, digital accessibility and inclusive learning design are fundamental to enabling all learners to succeed. There exist a range of models to influence practice, from highly technical standards, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (W3C, 2023), to frameworks for instruction and learner engagement, for example Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2018). Bringing a clearer design focus, Rossi (2023) provided a model for inclusive education underpinned by values which branched into context, content and assessment. However, some learning design methods risk focusing on just the learning and teaching activity, leading learning designers to miss the broader context of the learning experience within both the setting of the educational institution and the personal circumstances of learners, and subsequent implications for administrative process and practical engagement. These considerations sharpen specifically in the design of online learning experiences that are consciously prepared for disabled students, where the approach taken must surpass reasonable adjustments typical of educational providers meeting legal obligations and puts accessibility and inclusivity as integral to course quality.

This presentation uses the example of developing a new postgraduate online degree programme in disability studies to explore and define the holistic student experience of online education. Drawing on ideas from systems thinking, by analysing the relationships between component parts of the 'online education system' at various levels (Tamim, 2020), it was possible to identify barriers and opportunities for disabled online learners. In preparing this programme, insights from specialist user testing demonstrated how adhering to standards alone, without consideration of learner context and pedagogy, can lead to misconceptions and assumptions of how students will experience the course. Further, by considering the full experience of institutional processes and platforms alongside individuals' own learning spaces, underlying issues were surfaced that either a technical accessibility or inclusive pedagogical approach alone would not have identified.

The application of systems thinking in design-led online education is relatively unexplored, yet systems thinking approaches provide a means for exploring complex 'human-centric' design challenges (Darzentas and Darzentas, 2014). The intention of this presentation session, relating to the conference theme 'Emerging pedagogies & methodologies' will stimulate further discussion on systems thinking for accessible and inclusive design in online education, and to connect learning designers with the holistic student experience on degree programmes.

References

CAST (2018). Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.2. <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>

Darzentas, J. and Darzentas, J. (2014). Systems Thinking in Design: Service Design and Self-Services, *FormAkademisk*, 7(4).

Rossi, V. (2023). *Inclusive Learning Design in Higher Education: A Practical Guide to Creating Equitable Learning Experiences*. London: Routledge.

Tamim, S. R. (2020). Analyzing the Complexities of Online Education Systems: A Systems Thinking Perspective, *TechTrends*, 64, 740-750.

W3C (2023). WCAG 2.2. World Wide Web Consortium Web Accessibility Initiative. <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>

Track: Practice

Keywords: Systems thinking, Learning design, Online education, Digital accessibility, Inclusive design

[6796] Liz Marr (CODE University of London/EADTU) and George Ubachs (EADTU). *Belonging at a distance: can the retention problem in distance education ever be solved?*

Abstract. Since their inception, open and distance higher education institutions have struggled with student retention. Indeed, there is almost an acceptance that the 'irreducible minimum' in this form of provision is inevitably lower than for face to face. As more institutions move towards online and blended learning approaches, there is a risk that this mode of delivery is seen as less than ideal, increasing pressure to move back to traditional face to face provision, losing sight of the affordances that digital tools can bring and undermining the benefits that open and distance education deliver.

A recent task force established by the European Association for Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU) has been taking a fresh look at the retention challenges members face, utilising a student lifecycle model as a framework. However, this begs the question of whether a standard lifecycle model is appropriate in a context where non-traditional students follow non-traditional pathways into and through their higher education journeys. Should we instead create a new and more appropriate model and use this to re-think our approaches?

The terms 'drop-out' and 'success' are also problematic – defined, as they are in the main, due to the requirements of regulators, legislators and educational policy makers. Elibol and Bozkurt (2023) in their mining of the distance learning research literature suggest that one issue relates to the way drop out is interpreted but also note that there is neither a single factor nor a single formula to address attrition. Similarly the OU UK identified that the very reasons students chose to study with the Open University, such as caring or working, for example, are often the factors which make it difficult for them to continue study in a linear fashion. Should we seek to re-define drop out, and its corollary, success, within the context of a new lifecycle model?

Two themes in current thinking about success in HE also stand out – motivation and sense of belonging. Elibol and Bozkurt (ibid) see motivation as being a critical factor, as did Simpson (2013) before them. Within the mainstream literature on retention in the UK, (see Thomas et al, 2017 for example), the importance of a sense of belonging has become and still is a key theme. As with motivation, how is this to be created when students are studying remotely and often in isolation?

This workshop will explore three questions:

1. Is there a better and more useful way of modelling the open and distance student learning lifecycle?
2. Can we define drop out and success in more appropriate ways?
3. If motivation and a sense of belonging are indeed critical to student success, however defined, where do these fit in the model and how do we foster them in an open and distance environment?

Track: Practice

Keywords: Retention, student lifecycle, motivation, sense of belonging, open and distance higher education

[6894] Tim Hall ([Online Education, University of London Worldwide](#)) and Jonathon Thomas ([Online Education, University of London Worldwide](#)). *AI Teaching Assistant Pilot – Retrospective & Future Directions*.

Abstract. Informed by the University of London's pilot with Noodle Factory's Walter, this presentation delves into the insights gained from our exploration of AI assistance as a scalable solution in global education. Focused on the outcomes and impacts on student performance, engagement, and educator feedback, the session provides a comprehensive update on the effectiveness of the Walter tool.

Track: Practice

Keywords: AI Tutoring, Global Education, Student Engagement, Formative Assessment, Scalability, Educational Technology, Future of Education

[6937] Charlotte Stevens ([University of Warwick](#)) and Jess Humphreys ([University of Warwick](#)). *Learning through doing: Developing technology-enhanced learning practice through a project-based initiative*.

Abstract. Digital technology is now an integral part of education. Indeed, the prospect of embedding technology into teaching and learning practice presents us with endless possibilities in an ever-changing world (Selwyn,2017;Neuwirth et al.,2021). However, integrating technology into practice not only requires openness to new tools but also a consideration of the way we teach (Bower,2017). It also requires courage, skills development, plus time and space to consider and reflect on ours and our students' experiences, to experiment, to plan, design, deliver and evaluate interventions.

The University of Warwick's Postgraduate Award in Technology-Enhanced Learning (PGA TEL) is a practice-based course providing an opportunity for staff to undertake research-informed projects focused on developing the use of technology to support learning and teaching. Participants from professional services and academic departments bring to it a range of different experiences and digital capabilities and are invited to consider different topics: the student experience, digital pedagogy, educational theory, design for learning, the role of the tutor, scholarship of teaching and learning and evaluation and ethics. Guided through a learner-centred, design thinking approach, consideration is given to the challenges and opportunities technology-enhanced learning can bring (Ferrell et al.,2018;Brown & Katz,2011;O'Toole & Kelestyn,2021).

For Beetham & Sharpe (2020), 'the scope and style of pedagogy changes as the technology changes'. Whilst participants develop innovative projects utilising a range of new and different technologies, they also demonstrate emergent pedagogies and methodologies adaptive and responsive to the student experience. Projects are as diverse as developing virtual learning environments to support induction, to exploring the potential of using VR in teaching science; from creating virtual site visits, to introducing gamification on language modules. What links the projects is a commitment to developing practice, and the student voice.

Successful completion of the award leads to Advance HE fellowship; participants are also encouraged to disseminate their work through conferences and scholarship. Many continue their work beyond the course, embedding their knowledge and learning into wider practice through sharing with others and engaging in further professional development opportunities.

This session will share insights into the range of projects completed on the PGA TEL. Focusing on an exploration of projects completed pre-, during and post-COVID-19, it will explore themes such as student-centredness, approaches to online and hybrid teaching, the importance of community and a sense of belonging. It will be of interest to those who are looking to develop similar practice-based initiatives, or those generally interested in the shifting sands of technology-enhanced teaching and learning practice.

References

Beetham, H. & Sharpe, R. 2020. *Rethinking pedagogy for a digital age: principles and practices of design*. New York: Routledge.

Bower, M. 2017. *Design of Technology-Enhanced Learning: Integrating Research and Practice*. Bingley: Emerald.

Brown, T. & Katz, B. 2011. Change by Design. *Journal of product innovation management*, 28(3), 381-383.

Ferrell, G. Smith, R. & Knight, S. 2018. *Designing learning and assessment in a digital age*. London: JISC.

Neuwirth, L.S., Jović, S. & Mukherji, B.R. 2021. Reimagining higher education during and post-COVID-19: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 27(2), 141-156.

O'Toole, R. & Kelestyn, B. 2021. Teaching design thinking in a research-intensive university at a time of rapid change. *Design and Technology Education: An International Journal*, 26(4), 239-255.

Selwyn, N. 2017. *Education and technology: key issues and debates*. London: Continuum.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Technology-enhanced, learning, pedagogy, practice, digital, innovation

[6954] Joanne Elliott (Queen Mary University of London) and Chie Adachi (Queen Mary University of London). *Internationalising digital health through co-creation of an online open course*.

Abstract. The importance and value of transnational education (TNE) in creating accessible, high-quality educational experiences for learners across the world, is increasingly acknowledged (e.g., Ilieva et al., 2022). TNE allows education and training institutions across the world to collaboratively create educational experiences that draw on the different strengths, areas of expertise, resources and networks of each party, and allows learners to benefit from these collaborations. The two world-renowned Medical Schools of Queen Mary University of London and Ain Shams University in Cairo recognised the potential benefits, for staff, students and the institutions, of collaboration in developing the rapidly advancing area of digital health across the globe.

Supported by the British Council's Global Impact Grant, the collaborative, year-long project aimed to develop a four-week, online open course on digital health. With ever-growing pressures on our healthcare systems, digital health is an increasingly important field of knowledge for healthcare professionals and for communities (Mesko & Györfy, 2019). Targeted at practicing and prospective healthcare professionals, the course is designed to provide an introduction to digital health and the affordances and challenges digital health technologies and practices offer, through empirically grounded case studies from the two countries examining their effective, ethical and successful use. With a focus on social learning, the course enables global learners to surface and explore the complexities of digital health and equip learners to meaningfully and effectively engage with current and future digital health systems and practices within their own context.

This presentation will illustrate our experiences of developing the online open course, with international collaborators, for an international audience. We will outline the processes through which we brought together a multi-disciplinary, international team of experts to co-design a course to meet the needs of an international audience. We will discuss the benefits, challenges and lessons learned from this collaborative, co-design process. We will also share preliminary findings from an ongoing research project into learners' experiences of the course and their motivations and needs related to digital health education and training.

References

Ilieva, J., Healey, N., Tsiligiris, V., Ziguras, C., Killingley, P. and Lawton, W. (2022). The Value of Transnational Education Partnerships. British Council. <https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/he-science/knowledge-centre/transnational-education/value-transnational-education>

Mesko, B., & Gyórfy, Z. (2019). The Rise of the Empowered Physician in the Digital Health Era: Viewpoint [Viewpoint]. *J Med Internet Res*, 21(3), e12490. <https://doi.org/10.2196/12490>

Track: Practice

Keywords: digital learning, open education, collaboration, co-design, innovation, institutional change

[7020] Sam Brenton (University of London). *Learning Design: Reflections on the University of London Café Model*.

Abstract. Although it is not a new practice, over recent years 'learning design' has become recognised as central to the successful design and development of online courses and degrees.

There are various learning design methodologies in circulation. Typically, they involve either a learning designer and an Academic subject expertise working in partnership to design a course, or an academic subject expert engaging directly with some tool or method to make pedagogic design choices in the development of their course.

At the University of London we collaborate with our partners to develop online courses and degrees. We do this at scale, with many thousands of hours of learning produced each year.

We have used and experimented with various learning design methodologies over the last few years, and found advantages and challenges with each of them. Specifically, the process is bounded by considerations of time, money and volume, and this can pose problems for designing for successful learning at scale.

We have therefore created our own learning design methodology, designed to be simple, repeatable, and versatile: the 'Café Model'.

In this session we will expand on the genesis and development of the model, and reflect on early impressions of the model in use.

Track: Practice

Keywords: learning design, scale, pedagogy, partnership

[7260] Patricia Perlman-Dee (University of Manchester). *Developing peer-to-peer feedback and digital skills in formative assessment by using OneNote*.

Abstract. This lightning talk will present an innovative practise in educational technology for post-pandemic classrooms, by showing how integrating digital tools and technologies enhances formative assessment. Building on from the pandemic response, the session will share how OneNote is used for formative assessment. This was further developed to be 100% assessed by peer-to-peer feedback. The final development of using technology, led to additional peer-to-peer learning experience for students. The approach can be applied in any higher educational setting that includes group work, and/or build on a theoretical framework that is practically applied or implemented.

The innovative practise

The lightning talk will present how groups of students were asked to complete two separate formative assessments. Each assessment included a practical application of two studied frameworks. The assessment output in each assessment was a 2-page document (word or PowerPoint). The student groups were asked to upload their piece of work in a shared OneNote folder by the specified deadline.

As part of the assessment, students were asked to provide constructive feedback (according to a rubric) on two other groups uploaded assessment within a specified deadline.

The method

In the full-time MBA program at University of Manchester, in the first consultancy course, the MBA students are divided in 20 groups with five or six students in each. The groups complete a consultancy project for a not-for-profit organisations, facing a real business issue.

In the initial supporting lectures of the course, students are taught two specific frameworks, which are essential in both identifying and answering the consultancy question.

After a brief introduction to the frameworks, the students attempt to apply them to their specific client problem. It is worth noting that each consultancy project and client situation is different. The students have between four and eight days to complete the application of the framework and upload to OneNote. The students then have another five days to provide feedback to two other groups uploaded framework application assessment.

Benefits and learning

The benefits and learnings are multiple:

- Students will receive two receive separate views of feedback on each submitted piece of work.
- Students will learn how to provide feedback according to a set rubric
- Students will engage in reflection (compare and contrast) on their own submission in relation to the two pieces they have assessed and provided feedback on.
- Students will benefit from peer-to-peer learning as all submissions are uploaded and shared in the course.
- It enhances students' digital skills

Literature

Using OneNote Notebook as a learning resource is established. (Bamforth, S., Perkin, G. and Flint, J. 2019), Using OneNote for assessment and feedback have been practised in other subject areas, for example Chemics as discussed by Gooneratne, S. and Elkington, S. (2021). The innovative practise, not discussed in the literature, is to use OneNote for students to provide peer-to-peer feedback according to a specified rubric on numerous other student group assignments.

Track: Practice

Keywords: OneNote, Formative Assessment, Feedback, Peer-to-peer learning, Digital skills

[7528] Kiran Gawali ([Imperial College](#)) and Chiandra Jayasekera ([Imperial College](#)). *Enabling assessment diversification: A case study contrasting delivery on two platforms.*

Abstract. Background

The online MSc in Machine Learning and Data Science (MLDS) flagship programme was launched in the academic year 2020. This master's programme is delivered online over two years and encompass thirteen modules plus a research project undertaken in the summer term of year two.

The programme has approximately 50 UK and international students. All learners on the postgraduate course are in full time employment and professionals returning to study on a part time basis. The modules use a diverse range of assessment approaches including peer reviews, capstone assessments, technical labs, and group assignments.

Approach

Research suggests that as an assessment strategy, peer review 'brings several advantages over classical methodologies' (Serrano-Aguilera, et al. (2021) including deeper understanding of course material and contribution to the students' meta-cognitive skills such as critical reflection, preparing constructive feedback and problem solving.

In our exemplar module students are expected to submit a piece of written work each week. Once students have submitted their own review adhering to deadline, they are expected to review two peers' submissions within an allotted deadline. Students use pre-defined criteria to write and review work anonymously. The top five marks are taken of the six submissions for calculating the mark each student receives. Peer marked written pieces make up 15% of the total grade for the module and 5% of this comes from each part of the module.

This assessment approach has also facilitated learning everywhere for this vastly outside London and international cohort, in part supported by the time lapse between their own submission and deadline for reviewing their peers' written pieces.

Impact

Initial data shows high engagement with peer review process which may partly be attributed to the weekly structured approach of the assessment which is consistent across all parts of the module. Having anonymous reviews of peers' submissions has been attributed to their effectiveness in engaging learners as well. Meeting these pedagogical needs was crucial for delivering the module on two different platforms, using Coursera for the first group and Blackboard for a second group of students. Learning from delivering the module on the Coursera platform fed into the other. The Ed Tech team was able to work with constraints in each, to facilitate the sought experience across both platforms. This was aided by having design processes in place ensuring transferability and being forward oriented (Dimitriadis, 2013).

Audience gains

We will share insights from an Ed Tech perspective of delivering the module on two platforms and explore the benefits and challenges of supporting peer reviews contrasting delivery of those.

To make the presentation interactive we will use polling to understand ways in which the audience adapts or reuses assessment designs on different platforms for different audiences and share our approaches. We hope to engage in an open discussion with participants about the issues we set out to address so the group can learn more about current practices to inform planning for online degree assessment across different institutions.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Peer Review, Online Assessment design, Ed Tech platform support

[7866] Jane Secker (City, University of London) and Luis Pereira (City, University of London). *Developing digital literacies and open practices during the remote teaching period.*

Abstract. Since 2018 City, University of London have offered a 15-credit level 7 course as part of the Masters in Academic Practice, which is a teaching qualification in higher education offered to teaching staff. Typically there are 100 students on the programme overall each year and around 15 students take this module. The module EDM122 Digital Literacies and Open Practice explores digital and information literacies of staff and students, including dispelling the myth of the 'digital native' and how to embed various literacies into academic programmes. The module also helps develop staff understanding of Open Educational Practices (OEP) (Cronin and MacLaren, 2018) and how these relate to copyright literacy (Morrison and Secker, 2022). In addition to being offered to academic staff, it is an elective module for students in the Library and Information Science (LIS) department and has been completed by several members of professional services staff. The module webinar series is available to anyone to join and recordings and resources are shared on the module blog: <https://blogs.city.ac.uk/dilop/>

In this session we reflect on the experience of teaching this module for the past 6 years and the impact it has had on staff practices, with a special focus during the lockdown periods. We will report on findings from an ongoing research project on staff attitudes towards technology enabled teaching and its relationship to open practices (Secker, 2020). We collected data in 2019 from 6 interviews with academic staff and these have been followed up with an additional 13 interviews undertaken in Summer 2023. The research used phenomenography to explore their variation in experiences and in the most recent research we also asked staff to take part in a reflective writing exercise.

We will share our findings from this research and discuss the impact of the pandemic on staff attitudes to their own and students' digital literacies and to their understanding of the value of OEP. Finally, we will consider how best to provide training and support to staff and the role of a formal module in contributing to staff understanding of these issues. The findings are relevant for those supporting staff who teach online and distance learning.

References

Cronin, C., & MacLaren, I. (2018). Conceptualising OEP: A review of theoretical and empirical literature in Open Educational Practices. *Open Praxis*, 10(2), 127-143. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.5944/openpraxis.10.2.825>

Morrison, C., & Secker, J. (2017). The Publishing Trap. Retrieved August 3, 2021 from: <https://copyrightliteracy.org/resources/the-publishing-trap/>

Morrison, C. & Secker, J. (2022). Copyright Education and Information Literacy. In: Navigating Copyright for Libraries: Purpose and Scope. (pp. 285-318). Walter de Gruyter. ISBN 3110732009 doi: 10.1515/9783110732009 <https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/28858/1/>

Secker, J. (2020). Understanding the role of technology in academic practice through a lens of openness. In: INTED2020 Proceedings. (pp. 5363-5368). Valencia, Spain: IATED. ISBN 978-84-09-17939-8

Track: Research

Keywords: Digital Literacies, Open educational practices, staff development, online learning, Covid-19

[7932] Mira Suryani (Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation Universitas Padjadjaran), Anne Nurbaity (Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation Universitas Padjadjaran), Mohamad Fahmi (Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation Universitas Padjadjaran), Ira Mirawati (Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation Universitas Padjadjaran), Dani Rizali Firman (Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation Universitas Padjadjaran), Ryan Hara Permana (Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation Universitas Padjadjaran) and Jimi Narotama Mahameruaji (Center for Teaching and Learning Innovation Universitas Padjadjaran). *Navigating Between Potential and Challenges: The Use of Large Language Models in Higher Education and the Perspective of Universitas Padjadjaran Students.*

Abstract. In the digital era, technological advancements, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based Language Models (LM) or Large Language Models (LLM), have significantly impacted various aspects of life, including education. LLMs have been widely utilized as effective teaching aids in various contexts such as chatbots, translators, and personal assistants. However, alongside the potential benefits, ethical challenges arise that may violate academic standards. This research focuses on the use of LLMs, specifically ChatGPT, within the environment of Universitas Padjadjaran and its impact on learning. Survey results from 207 Universitas Padjadjaran students depict their understanding and perceptions of LLM applications. The majority of respondents are from the medical faculty (33.3%) and at the undergraduate level (52.7%). A significant portion, 54.6%, claims awareness of AI applications like ChatGPT, which stands out as the most popular (86.7%). Despite the majority's awareness, a considerable percentage (45.1%) has never used LLM applications, with 33.6% using them only occasionally. Nevertheless, 41.6% of respondents report LLM applications being moderately helpful in completing assignments, while an equal percentage (41.6%) indicates assistance in enhancing comprehension of learning materials. There is substantial agreement regarding the academic benefits of LLMs, such as facilitating exams (32.7%), improving scientific writing skills (40.7%), and effectively reducing study burdens (48.7%). However, a portion of students (38.9%) remains uncertain about the overall impact on academic performance. The high percentage of respondents aware of the consequences of LLM usage (63.7%) and supporting campus policies on LLM usage (80.5%) reflects an awareness of the importance of regulating this technology. Respondents' suggestions highlight the need not only for rules governing AI use but also for fundamental changes in the learning system, shifting focus from theoretical tasks to field analysis. This research emphasizes the necessity for open dialogue and a profound understanding of the positive and negative impacts of LLMs in an educational context. In response to survey findings, it is recommended to organize continuous webinars and workshops addressing the wise and effective use of LLMs at Universitas Padjadjaran while emphasizing academic ethics, involving the entire academic community. Additionally, policy development related to LLM application usage should be a focal point to ensure ethical and beneficial utilization in the academic world.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Academic Challenge, Academic Ethics, Academic Life, ChatGPT, Learning Language Model, Potential Academic

[7937] Marie-Luce Bourguet (Queen Mary University of London). *Showing the Benefits of Study Regularity to Learners for Keeping them Engaged .*

Abstract. The transnational education programmes delivered by Queen Mary University of London in China are built on a model similar to the "block teaching" model, where intense periods of live teaching (often in person) are separated by extended online self-study periods with minimal interaction between teachers and students. Many students struggle to adjust between these two learning modes, and keeping students engaged during the self-study periods is a challenge. Similarly, for a course to be effectively flipped, students must possess robust self-regulated learning skills, especially good time management and effort regulation. This is because, before attending in-person or synchronous sessions, they need to be proactively involved in pre-class learning activities.

The study I will present focuses on a flipped course for around 240 undergraduate telecommunication engineering students. To maintain engagement and to encourage students to prepare for the live sessions, the course proposes 65 online learning activities within the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). These activities include readings, interactive videos, quizzes, and worksheets. Students are required to complete these activities before attending the live lectures and tutorials. In 2021 and 2022, I collected learners' digital traces weekly, noting when students engaged with the activities and how they performed. Using learning analytics, I then tracked students' "learning pathways"—the route a student takes through the online materials.

In 2021, while I recommended weekly engagement in the online activities, the learning process was largely self-directed. Students had the freedom to decide the timing of their engagement or opt not to participate entirely. For the course's 2022 iteration, students received comprehensive guidance regarding the expected timing of their engagement with the self-learning online activities. Each activity's anticipated completion date was explicitly highlighted on the VLE, and only activities completed by that date would be flagged as such. Visuals of learning pathways from the previous year were used as illustrative examples of effective and non-effective learning behaviours. These adjustments were designed to promote timely engagement with the activities.

In 2022, the distribution of student learning behaviours was as follows: regular learners made up 89% of students (compared to 20% only in 2021), a striking improvement compared to the previous year. A comparative analysis of course results from 2021 to 2022 reveals a marked improvement in 2022. There was an increase in top performers, with 31.14% of students securing an A grade (a score of 70% or above) in contrast to 23.14% in 2021. At the same time, the failure rate saw a decrease, dropping from 9.92% in 2021 to 5.98% in 2022.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Study regularity, Self-regulated learning, Learning behaviours, Learning pathways

[8136] Marni Baker-Stein ([Coursera \(Chief Content Officer\)](#)). *The Progress and Promise of Generative AI: Lessons from the Online Classroom.*

Abstract. Connecting with the 'emergent technologies' theme, I propose to explore how distance learning platform providers have been leveraging the emerging capabilities of generative AI to improve equity, access, and teaching quality for learners in the online classroom. With access to over 136 million registered learners, many of whom have struggled to access higher education via traditional pathways, Coursera has spent the last year engaging in one of the world's largest experiments in utilising Generative AI to provide further, higher, and lifelong learning provision at scale, and it would be a privilege to share our emerging findings and learnings with RIDE's audience.

In particular, I propose to touch upon how online learning providers, drawing upon generative AI's content creation capabilities, are seeking to strike the fine balance between bringing high-quality learning content to millions of learners in more accessible formats and with greater efficiency, while also ensuring that an emphasis on rigour, ownership, legitimacy, and substance is not neglected. In the course of this discussion, I would raise for discussion, critique, and improvement Coursera's Responsible AI Principles, developed in collaboration with our partners and Board, which are specifically designed to provide a template for other learning providers to utilise this technology in a way that serves to benefit learners. As one of the world's largest online learning providers, I believe that this section of the session would offer especial value for RIDE's conference delegation, allowing them to engage with principles for utilising generative AI that are influencing tens of millions of learners.

In addition, I will offer insights on how we have moved at speed to experiment with generative AI's potential to move us closer to meaningful personalized learning in the distance classroom, and how we have used the technology to support faculty in curriculum creation and administration. In doing so, I intend to offer practical, replicable insights on how institutions engaging in distance learning might use generative AI throughout the educational delivery process - from content and course creation, to content delivery and improving online pedagogy. This session would thereby offer opportunities for conference delegates to engage with, and respond to, concrete applied instances of generative AI's use in educational delivery, informing pedagogical developments for both delegates and Coursera, in collaboration with the 190 universities that partner with us to bring quality education to more students as content partners.

Track: Practice

Keywords: generative AI, equity, inclusion, personalized learning, curriculum curation

[8437] Samantha Ahern ([University College London](#)). *When Navigating the Future meets Higher Education Futures.*

Abstract. During the literature review phase for the CoDE project Navigating the Future, the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Digital Education published Higher Education Futures scenarios.

In this workshop participants will co-create a series of short stories exploring the interconnect between the Higher Education Futures Scenarios and the scenarios developed as part of the Navigating the Future project with regards to online and distance education.

This activity will be framed an introductory presentation introducing the two projects, why this is of interest and key findings identified in the Navigating the Future literature review and participants' professional practice.

By participating in the workshop, participants will develop a broader view of key issues relating to the future of Higher Education and in particular, online and distance education.

Track: Research

Keywords: futures, co-creation, distance education

[8639] Matt Phillpott ([CODE](#)), Amy Urry ([Central Saint Martins](#)), Sarah Leontovitsch ([Central Saint Martins](#)) and Damien Borowik ([Central Saint Martins](#)). *Sharing Practices and Ideas for course design on Moodle.*

Abstract. Moodle is a widely used virtual learning environment (VLE) in higher education (HE) institutions, but there is no one-size-fits-all approach to using it. Different HE institutions use Moodle in various ways, and structure their courses and modules differently. Those working on the courses have different ways of designing and structuring content to make it as accessible and inclusive as possible, whilst ensuring that content is discoverable and easy to navigate and use. In many cases, Moodle is also used to provide other content that is not necessarily part of a specific course, but useful to support student learning.

Additionally, there is often the need to find ways to use and integrate third party tools to expand what is possible with distance and blended learning using Moodle. For example, embedding Padlets, creating interactive activities using H5P, using Panopto for assessment submissions, and connecting applications such as Teams or Zoom.

There are lots of creative solutions out there, but we rarely have an opportunity to discuss them or share ideas.

This workshop aims to provide a space for Moodle users to exchange practices and insights on designing learning activities and/or courses on Moodle. Whilst far from being an emergent technology (it was first released in 2002), Moodle remains for many institutions the core part of their digital provision. In an era where online and blended education has become more important (and expected), how we use such a core tool, the pedagogies that we employ, and how we link it to other technologies, needs room for discussion.

This workshop will start with 20 minutes of presentations, sharing some practices at the University of London and Central Saint Martins, University of Arts London. We will then go into groups to discuss and chat about Moodle design, before coming together again to reflect and learn from each other.

The presentations will focus on:

Matt Phillpott (CODE) – Designing a professional development course on Moodle for tutors in Mexico and using H5P for interactive and practical learning activities on a PGCert and to support dissertation study.

Sarah Leontovitsch, Damien Borowik and Amy Urry (Central Saint Martins) - The CSM Digital learning team focus on inclusivity in their Moodle design, in an art and design context. They will discuss breaking down barriers to learning by incorporating accessibility best practice and improving navigation with Bootstrap.

The workshop is designed for anyone who is interested in learning design on Moodle, whether you are teaching, a learning technologist, from professional services, or a course administrator. Our focus is to provide a forum for discussion around sharing experiences and challenges, and to get inspired by new ideas and possibilities to enhance and improve the learner's experience.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Learning Design, Course Design, Moodle, Digital Learning Tools

[8844] Bunmi Banjo ([The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro](#)), Mobolaji Abati ([The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro](#)), Seun Dokunmu ([The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro](#)) and Ganiy Kareem ([The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro](#)).

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN DISTANCE LEARNING EDUCATION AND PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN SOUTH-WEST NIGERIA.

Abstract. Education is a fundamental human right for all including students with special needs. Information Technology has made access to education more accessible especially the Distance learning program where a student does not have to be physically present at school. The present study examines the contemporary issues in distance learning education and people with special needs in South-West Nigeria. This study's populations are Distance Learning operators and students with Special needs across South-West Nigeria. There are 137 special needs schools in South West Nigeria with 35 schools in Ogun, 55 schools in Oyo, 24 schools in Osun, 15 schools in Ondo and 8 schools in Ekiti States. This study made use of a mixed research method, combining interviews with questionnaires. The Multistage and purposive sampling methods were used in this study to select 150 students who were administered a questionnaire and 10 Distance learning operators who were interviewed. The research instruments used were a questionnaire and an interview guide. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 25.0 to analyze data collected using the questionnaires while information from interviews was analyzed using Content Analysis. The paper explores the hurdles and challenges encountered by students with special needs when accessing online educational resources. The report concludes and makes necessary recommendations as solutions to issues being faced by special students in their bid to make use of Distance learning educational resources.

Track: Research

Keywords: Distance learning, Education, Special Needs, Students, Technology

[8864] Hiu Fung Jimmy Lo ([University of Greenwich](#)), Hiu Fung Jimmy Lo ([University of Greenwich](#)) and Hiu Fung Jimmy Lo ([University of Greenwich](#)). *Rethinking University Education and Future Employability: Human-AI Collaboration and Distinctively Human Skills.*

Abstract. In the era of generative artificial intelligence (AI), universities face an unprecedented challenge in preparing students for a rapidly changing workforce (McKinsey, 2023). Many existing skills could become obsolete and new ones need to emerge rapidly to avoid technological unemployment (Keynes, 1933). Hence, universities play a critical role in preparing students for this ever-changing landscape by providing them with the relevant skills to adapt and thrive in an AI-driven workplace (Office for Artificial Intelligence, 2023). This presentation critically examines how universities should rethink their curriculum design in two domains: human-AI collaboration and distinctively human skills.

Generative AI is a powerful tool that can augment human capabilities and create new opportunities for human-AI collaboration in sectors such as education, business, healthcare, and the content industry (Nah, 2023). This presentation discusses how universities should foster an understanding of generative AI as a collaborative partner and integrate generative AI into their teaching, learning and assessment. Moreover, universities should adopt AI ethics and pedagogy in curricula (Borenstein and Howard, 2021), and protect human values as generative AI surpasses human capabilities in multiple domains (Bostrom, 2014).

Despite the advancements in generative AI, some attributes and capabilities are distinctively human and will remain essential in future (Aoun, 2017; Chomsky et al., 2023; Santoro and Monin, 2023). Human skills involving perception and manipulation, creativity, and social intelligence are less susceptible to technological disruptions (Frey and Osborne, 2017). Therefore, universities should prioritise the development of these skills across disciplines and embedding them into curricula (Southworth et al., 2023).

References

- Aoun, J. E. (2017). *Robot-proof: higher education in the age of artificial intelligence*. MIT press.
- Borenstein, J., & Howard, A. (2021). Emerging challenges in AI and the need for AI ethics education. *AI and Ethics*, 1, 61-65.
- Bostrom, N. (2014). *Superintelligence: Paths, dangers, strategies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chomsky, N., Roberts, I., & Watumull, J. (2023). Noam Chomsky: The False Promise of ChatGPT. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/08/opinion/noam-chomsky-chatgpt-ai.html>
- Frey, C. B., & Osborne, M. A. (2017). The future of employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation? *Technological forecasting and social change*, 114, 254-280.
- Keynes, J.M. (1933). *Economic possibilities for our grandchildren (1930)*. *Essays in persuasion*, pp. 358–73.
- McKinsey & Company. (2023). *The state of AI in 2023: Generative AI's breakout year*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/the-state-of-ai-in-2023-generative-ai-breakout-year#/>
- Nah, F., Zheng, R., Cai, J., Siau, K., & Chen, L. (2023). Generative AI and ChatGPT: Applications, challenges, and AI-human collaboration. *Journal of Information Technology Case and Application Research*, 25(3), 277-304.
- Office for Artificial Intelligence (2023). *National AI Strategy*. UK Government. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-ai-strategy>
- Santoro, E., & Monin, B. (2023). The AI Effect: People rate distinctively human attributes as more essential to being human after learning about artificial intelligence advances. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 107, 104464.
- Southworth, J., Migliaccio, K., Glover, J., Reed, D., McCarty, C., Brendemuhl, J., & Thomas, A. (2023). Developing a model for AI Across the curriculum: Transforming the higher education landscape via innovation in AI literacy. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, 4, 100127.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Generative artificial intelligence, Generative AI, ChatGPT, Human-AI collaboration, Human skills, Employability, Curriculum design, Learning technology, Technological disruption, Technological unemployment, Employment, Creativity, Social intelligence, Future workplace, AI readiness, AI literacy, AI ethics, Authentic assessment

[9328] Luis Pereira (City, University of London / CODE Fellow) and Jude Dunkwu (UCL / CODE Fellow). *Evaluating online distance learning: why and what ways?*

Abstract. When we were tasked to evaluate an open online training course, the first challenge we faced was to find a suitable model to apply. For this initial step, we conducted a short literature review. In this presentation, we will discuss the framework we built for this particular project.

Furthermore, we want to reflect on the importance of evaluating distance learning courses. With the rise of distance learning prompts, it is fundamental to delve into successful strategies and best practices to gain insights into how evaluation ensures quality, adapts to diverse learner needs and shapes the future of online education.

Online distance learning may appear like a standardised process, however, different contexts have unique elements. Therefore, our presentation offers insight into evaluating online distance learning through the prism of legal studies and transnational education.

Having explored multiple models and perspectives as well as our interactions with various stakeholders before building our framework, we approached our work based on the constructionist orientation that places value on researchers' experience. This is based on our belief that our personal experiences in relation to online learning and teaching are not only relevant but cannot be isolated.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Evaluating Distance Learning, Transnational Education, Literature Review, Models for evaluation

[9693] Adetola Akanbiemu (National Open University of Nigeria). *Cultivating a Culture of Belonging: Strategies for Open Distance and eLearning Institutions.*

Abstract. Abstract

Background: Open distance and eLearning (ODEL) institutions face the challenge of creating a sense of belonging and community among their diverse and dispersed learners, who may experience isolation, alienation, and marginalization in their online learning environments. This paper explores the concept of belonging and its implications for ODeL institutions and proposes a framework of strategies to foster a culture of belonging, inclusivity, and engagement among ODeL learners, based on the literature and best practices from various contexts.

Methods: The paper adopts a conceptual and analytical approach, drawing on the theories of social presence, community of inquiry, and cultural dimensions, as well as empirical studies and case examples of ODeL institutions that have implemented initiatives to enhance belonging and engagement among their learners.

Results: The paper identifies four dimensions of belonging in ODeL: cognitive, affective, social, and cultural, and suggests corresponding strategies for ODeL institutions to cultivate a culture of belonging, such as: designing inclusive and interactive courses, providing personalized and timely feedback, facilitating peer-to-peer collaboration and support, and promoting intercultural awareness and sensitivity.

Conclusion: The paper argues that cultivating a culture of belonging is essential for ODeL institutions to achieve their educational goals and to enhance the quality of the online learning experience for their learners. It also offers some recommendations and directions for future research on this topic.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Belonging, Culture, ODeL, ODeL Institutions, Wellbeing

[9748] Michele Milner (Director of Learning and Wellbeing, Royal Veterinary College), Veronica Brewster (Head of Educational Development, Royal Veterinary College) and Victoria Lindsay-McGee (Programme Coordinator for MSc in Equine Science & BVM&S Horse Husbandry Teaching Fellow, University of Edinburgh). *What's next? Blended learning frameworks in healthcare curricula: Supporting innovation post-pandemic.*

Abstract. During the pandemic, teaching and learning was transformed at speed, requiring teaching staff who may have been unfamiliar with concepts in distance and online learning to change their practice and adopt new ways of working. Many institutions developed frameworks to guide and support their staff in this change, but these now need to be revisited. The challenges in developing approaches to blended learning curricula at health institutions are unique due to their reliance on place-based learning, clinical placements and the need for students to develop hands-on clinical skills. Given the unique features of clinical curricula, what does/might a 'good' blended learning health curriculum look like? What kind of staff support is needed to deliver high-quality learning experiences? This presentation reports on a staff survey undertaken at the Royal Veterinary College which asked staff about their support needs to be able to plan and deliver flexible learning opportunities in place-based curricula. It reviews to what extent staff felt empowered to make changes, and their confidence to make changes in terms of digital skills.

References

Barber, M. (2020) 'Gravity Assist: Propelling Higher Education towards a brighter future' London: Office for Students.

Jones-Devitt, S. (2020) Essential frameworks for enhancing student success: Flexible Learning, York: Advance HE.

QAA (2022) 'Made Digital; Exploring Student Engagement and Performance during the shift to digital teaching, learning and assessment.

Track: Practice

Keywords: Blended learning, healthcare curricula, flexible learning opportunities

[9933] Lizzie Holden ([University of Huddersfield](#)). *If you were setting up today, what choices would you make?*

Abstract. Lightning talk: Track 2 (practice)

Theme: Belonging and wellbeing and Emergent technologies.

Details of submitting team

Name: Lizzie Holden (plus an additional team member from the instructional design team, either Matthew Arm-Riding or Vidya Kannara).

Role: Digital Learning Architect

Organisation: University of Huddersfield

Email: e.holden@hud.ac.uk

Title: If you were setting up today, what choices would you make?

Focus: Using systems influenced by inclusive design practices to promote curiosity and well-being within the set-up of a new department.

Overview: As a newly set up distance learning unit within the University of Huddersfield we are in the privileged position of considering the how and the why behind how we set up our systems, practices and values.

Abstract: This lightning talk would like to test out the experience of designing systems to enable wellbeing within that set up. As a newly set up department within a Higher Education organisation we are aiming to do this through the following aims and methods;

- Curiosity and development: creating a practitioner curious team
- Approaches to design: being an inclusive design department which contains a senior role for inclusion and accessibility)
- Systems to support (key focus of the talk): Current prototyping of automating systems (folder structures and design templates) that will hopefully streamline builds leaving more time for creativity and reflection in the design process.

This lightning talk is focused on the details of set up rather than one looking at broader aims and values. The core focus of the talk will be about how systems will support this, with a particular focus on supporting systems, folder structures, capacity documents and content template automation prototypes that we are investigating. This will mean the talk has a focused example for the test bed element, which demonstrates the wider theme of wellbeing and belonging. How this can build a sense of professional curiosity and eagerness to create intentional design experiences for learners.

We are a new team, set up in Jan 2023 and by March 2024 will only have been a complete team for 6 months so this will be an excellent opportunity for peer sharing and sector feedback on the approaches we are taking.

Sector relevance: This will also be a good opportunity to reflect on the realities of setting up and trying to develop prototypes whilst also delivering as a small team, it will also enable a reflective point for other practitioners in terms of their own approaches to teams design and course design, whether the systems support the design and the holistic learner experience. There is an opportunity here for cross sharing in a period of expansion and further set up within Higher Education institutions).

Track: Practice

Keywords: Well being, Curiosity, Systems