

SESSION DETAILS

KEYNOTES

PEOPLE POWERED INNOVATION: OVERCOMING CHALLENGES TOGETHER

This talk is going to focus on new developments in professional development for staff using technology for learning, teaching and assessment. Maren Deepwell will explore trends across the sector from ALT's Annual Survey and the recently launched new accreditation pathways, focusing on the importance of professional recognition for staff and how that can enhance the student experience.

Maren Deepwell (Association for Learning Technology)

Maren Deepwell has been CEO of the Association for Learning Technology for 6 years, shaping the direction of education technology and driving the field forward internationally. She is a seasoned keynote speaker, conference convener, experienced chairperson and writes regularly for publications in Higher and Further Education as well as policy development. With a background in Anthropology, Maren's particular focus is on a critical perspective on the development and future of technology in education, professionalisation and skills in Learning Technology including development of the CMALT accreditation framework and leveraging technology to create greater equity in education. She currently collaborates with colleagues on projects including open policy development.

Chair: Alan Tait

KEYNOTE PANEL

ADVANCING THE STUDENT AND STAFF EXPERIENCE IN ONLINE LEARNING

Panellists:

Nichola Gretton (University of Leicester)

MOOCs: an unanticipated vehicle for changing academic practice

After a few key headlines from Leicester's six-year MOOC story, Nichola will provide an opportunity to review the 'MOOC to Mainstream' programme of activities she developed to enhance academic practice and digital literacy. This part of the presentation will involve a light-hearted 'think-pair-share' activity to provide a vignette of the 'MOOC to Mainstream' programme. The vignette will generate ideas that delegates may consider putting into practice and there are prizes to be won! The University of Leicester's MOOC story and vignette of the 'MOOC to Mainstream' programme will provide a holistic view and opportunity to review how the MOOC design process, content, data, pedagogical approaches and online learning spaces have been maximised - and in turn created an unanticipated vehicle for changing academic practice.

Nichola is Head of Digital Education in the Leicester Learning Institute at the University of Leicester (UoL). In 2015 she was awarded a University Distinguished Teaching Fellowship for her leadership in the design, development and delivery of innovative curricula and teaching and learning enhancement projects.

In recent years she has led the training, communication and policy development strands of the University's institution-wide implementation of lecture capture (2015/16) and Digital Learning Environment developments (2017/18). Nichola's educational leadership has been recognised by her Higher Education Academy Senior Fellowship.

Nichola's teaching philosophy and leadership style is rooted in building a Community of Practice, something she began to develop in her role at Laureate Online Education. Nichola has continued to apply these principles, especially during her work on the UoL's first tranche of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs); her first two curriculum designs achieved a retention rate above the international MOOC average (Forensic Science in the Criminal Justice System MOOC 39%. Average 5-10% (Jordan, 2015)). In recent years Nichola has begun to develop a MOOC to Mainstream programme of activities to develop academic practice and digital literacy.

David Lefevre (Edtech Lab, Imperial College London)

Online Pedagogy - What's next?

As the volume of online initiatives in the higher education sector proliferates, a number of commonplace approaches to the design of online courses have emerged. These online approaches will continue to evolve: but at what pace? This presentation will argue that significant

opportunities exist to enhance the quality of contemporary online learning and that this will lead to some sectors evolving at a rapid rate, and a fragmentation of the market for online education into specialist sectors.

David is director of the Edtech Lab at the Imperial College Business School which he helped create in 2005. His team has overseen a substantial increase in the use of educational technology at the School and currently delivers around 180 online courses a year to Imperial College students. They launched a Global Online MBA programme in 2015 and an online degree in Business Analytics in 2018. Recently the team received a silver award for Business Education at the 2018 QS Reimagine Education conference.

Current projects he is involved in include the adoption of holograms in the classroom, the development of an AI based tutor and a research project into predictive analytics.

He was co-founder and is now president of the Imperial College eLearning spin-out firm Epigeum (now a successful part of the Oxford University Press) and in 2018 he helped launch Insendi, a spin-out firm from the Edtech Lab focused on online learning platforms.

Jonathan Marshall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office)

Promoting the use of online learning in the UK's Diplomatic Academy, which works with twelve thematic "Faculties" to build knowledge and skills across a global workforce, has encountered three specific challenges. The first hurdle has been the reputational challenge of online learning, often seen as synonymous with early experiences of low-quality, mandatory e-learning units. The second hurdle has been in the pedagogy and learning design, with too many well-meaning attempts to "put things online" without rethinking and rebuilding the whole experience for the prospective learner. And the third challenge has been – with limited resources – to combine social learning with global access. Some success has been achieved with approaches such as blended learning programmes with local "self-facilitated" workshops, and two recent pilots of a Massive Open Online Course on diplomacy. These suggest it is possible to narrow the gulf in practice which had developed in the FCO between the private and official "digital realms".

Jonathan has been Head of Learning at the UK's Diplomatic Academy since its establishment in 2014. He has led various pilot digital learning programmes to help the Academy to reach a global workforce of 14,000 staff in 250 locations. The Academy's most recent innovation has been the course "Diplomacy in the 21st Century" on FutureLearn, working with Open University and SOAS University of London. Previous to this role he was Head of L&D in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and a Programme Director at the National School of Government. His diplomatic career included policy jobs in London, a posting to Athens and a secondment to the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit.

Panel Chair: Stylianos Hatzipanagos

PARALLEL SESSIONS (MORNING)

What information capabilities do graduates need, and what practices and policies will help them to achieve these?

David Baume (Centre for Distance Education)

The CDE project “Integrating Information Literacy” aims to successfully integrate (IL) skills into a wide range of international, including undergraduate, programmes. Literature on IL has been studied, and a variety of accounts of information literacy identified. Surveys and interviews have been undertaken with University of London Worldwide (UoLW) course leaders and with providers of information Services. These surveys and interviews have identified a range of current and emergent practices and issues. UoLW Course Leaders have also been supported on course design, by the project and by UoL Worldwide Library Services.

Issues identified so far have included:

- The different nature of information literacy in different disciplines and professions;
- The role of policy in supporting Information Literacy;
- The important, often leading, roles that libraries are taking with regard to Information Literacy and its development;
- The importance and the challenges of integration;
- The tensions, probably stronger in distance learning than in face-to-face education, between, on one hand, providing students with direct and ready access to the information they need for their studies, and on the other the development of students’ high-level information capabilities.

The session will explore participant views on information literacy requirements for graduates, the role of policy, and current practice and necessary future developments in IL provision and integration.

David has been an independent international higher education researcher, evaluator, consultant, staff and educational developer and writer since 2001, and a CDE Visiting Fellow since 2010. He was founding Chair of the UK Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA); co-founder of the UK Heads of Educational Development Group (HEDG); a founding council member of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED); and founding editor of the International Journal for Academic Development (IJAD). His contributions to academic development have been acknowledged by awards from SEDA and ICED. He represents the ICED on the Southern Africa Universities Learning and Teaching Forum (SAULT) and has worked on learning technology projects with Jisc.

David was previously a Director of the Centre for Higher Education Practice at the UK Open University. There, he led the production of courses on teaching in higher education; taught on the University’s Leadership Development Programme; researched the assessment of teaching portfolios; founded and led the University Teaching Awards scheme; and supported educational development projects for the Higher Education Funding Council for England’s Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP) and Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL).

Value creation framework to assess MOOC based learning for the global elimination of trachoma

Daksha Patel and Astrid Leck (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

In 1996 the WHO launched ‘GET 2020’, an international initiative to eliminate trachoma, an avoidable blinding eye disease, across 43 endemic countries. MOOCs provide an opportunity to address global health training challenges and uniquely supports access for interprofessional training that is pivotal for public health management. LSHTM created the first MOOC in ‘Eliminating Trachoma’ aimed at improving access to training, equipping and mobilising large numbers of eye care workers, from different cadres, to achieve ‘GET 2020’. Over 5000 people participated in the MOOC from a diverse range of professional cadres and disciplines, including: clinicians providing surgical services, programme managers, field workers administering antibiotics, teams implementing water and sanitation improvements.

A ‘value-creation framework’ model was adapted to evaluate the impact of MOOC-based learning on trachoma elimination activities. Surveys were designed to capture ‘cycles’ of value creation both during participation in the MOOC and in the subsequent time period to the present day. A sample of survey respondents, from low-middle income countries (LMICs) endemic for trachoma, were interviewed to collect ‘value-creation stories’, capturing a unique insight into the value of the course to the individual and the communities affected by trachoma with whom they are engaging and towards the goal of elimination.

Daksha is a medical doctor and ophthalmologist by training and has worked across a range of clinical settings in East Africa. At the International Centre for Eye Health (ICEH) she leads the training programmes for Public health for eye care from 2000-13, initially at University College London and then at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). This globally unique course is focused on addressing avoidable blindness in low and middle income (LMI) settings at a population and health system level. Since 2013, Daksha has been involved in the development of an innovative approach in open education for eye health, which has the primary focus of addressing equity in global health education.

At present, Daksha is the e-learning director for the Disability and Eye Group (DEG) at LSHTM, involved in developing open educational practice and massive open online courses (MOOCs) in eye care. Since 2015, she has developed two MOOCs on the Future Learn platform (in Global Blindness and Eliminating Trachoma) and two open study courses on the LSHTM moodle platform (in ophthalmic epidemiology). She is currently working with a team of experts on a third MOOC, on diabetic eye disease.

Astrid is a microbiologist and research fellow at the LSHTM, working with the International Centre for Eyes & Disability and also part of the Open Education for Eye Health group.

Session Chair: David Baume

PhDs by distance learning: integrating 'new ways' of teaching and learning

Don Passey (Lancaster University)

The Department of Educational Research at Lancaster University has run online and blended PhDs for many years. This session explores how educational technologies are being and can be used to develop such programmes, with what have been referred to as 'new ways of teaching and learning'. These new ways, adopting a variety of forms of educational technologies, have variously been termed 'e-learning', 'online learning', and 'blended learning'. In this session I will examine these 'new ways' and will argue that there are key elements of technology, management and pedagogy that we must focus on if our future provision is to support both our educational intentions and learner expectations. Developing PhD provision by distance education and integrating 'new ways' of teaching and learning is a common concern for many institutions of higher education (HE) worldwide. I will explore this concern through a policy and practice analysis perspective, taking existing literature in the field as a conceptual and contextual basis, considering examples of blended learning practices, identifying key features that support effective outcomes, and subsequently considering these in terms of implications for wider global practices where 'massification' of education is being considered.

Don is professor of technology enhanced learning in the Department of Educational Research at Lancaster University, UK. He is the director of studies for the e-Research and Technology Enhanced Learning doctoral programme, which supports some 100 PhD students, largely online, at any one time. This innovative programme, one of a suite of four such programmes in the Department, has now been running for thirteen years, and supports students from across the world. Don's research investigates how digital technologies support learning and teaching, from early years through to adults, across the lifespan. His recent studies have explored innovative practices, in and outside classrooms, in home and community settings. His findings have informed policy and practice, for government departments and agencies, regional and local authorities, companies and corporations including the BBC. He has been a visiting scholar to universities in Mexico, India, Malaysia and the Philippines. He is vice-chair of the International Federation for Information Processing Technical Committee on Education, chairs their Working Group on Information Technology in Educational Management, in 2014 receiving an Outstanding Services Award and in 2016 the Silver Core Award for contributions to the field.

On your marks, get set... study! Preparing students to be digitally-ready for learning

Sarah Sherman (Bloomsbury Learning Environment)

Over recent years, UK national agencies such as Jisc and UCISA have written much about how to best prepare students for the digital workplace (UCISA 2014). In 2015, Jisc noted that 'developing learners who can learn and thrive in a digital society is a key role for universities and colleges'. Where we cannot deny the importance that higher education institutions have on preparing learners for their careers, the presentation here will describe a project which focuses specifically on equipping students with some key capabilities required to learn and successfully achieve their qualifications.

This ongoing collaborative project therefore aims to address learners' digital skills before they start their studies at university. The members of the project's development team work for six separate higher education institutions who have come together with a shared vision of a pre-enrolment course to support all learners whether undergraduate, postgraduate, distance or campus-taught. Our pre-enrolment course has been developed initially as a proof of concept for the six partners but will be offered as an open course for use beyond the collaboration in its second phase. Much of the material incorporated into the course has been repurposed from open content authored elsewhere.

Sarah began her professional career working as a primary school teacher and educational researcher. She has worked in the field of e-learning for over 18 years and currently manages the Bloomsbury Learning Environment (BLE) - a shared digital education service for six London-based Higher Education institutions. Sarah is responsible for managing the coordination, implementation and development of Technology Enhanced Learning across the BLE partners, helping to support the use of the Virtual Learning Environment and associated technologies, such as lecture capture and web conferencing software

She is involved in supporting the development of staff digital capabilities particularly in the use of learning technologies. She has first-hand experience of designing, developing and launching an online course to support teaching staff acquire practical skills in learning technology within a pedagogic framework. In Bloomsbury, she coordinates an annual scheme for staff who work with technology to achieve Certified Membership of the Association for Learning Technology, which offers professional recognition for the work they do. In 2017, she co-edited and published an ebook containing a collection of research papers, essays and case studies regarding innovative practices in technology-enhanced assessment and feedback in both taught and distance education.

Sarah is a Trustee of the Association for Learning Technology, a Fellow of the CDE, a member of the UCISA Digital Education Group and coordinates several regional, national and international e-learning user groups.

Session Chair: Jonathan San Diego

Educational Innovation and research in BSc Computer Science

Marco Gillies and Matthew Yee-King, Goldsmiths, University of London

BSc Computer Science is a new undergraduate programme developed by University of London Worldwide and Goldsmiths together with Coursera. It is the first undergraduate programme in the track C framework and the first undergraduate programme on Coursera. The programme team are aiming to create a highly innovative programme that pioneers new ways of teaching computing online. This talk will focus on new approaches to computing pedagogy that are enabled by online learning, particularly the use of interactive exercises and simulations. These include Sleuth: an online detective themed game for learning programming, a simulation of a CPU and a hands-on beginners' introduction to Machine Learning, which has previously been considered one of the most advanced areas of computing. These innovative approaches also open up many possibilities for research aimed at understanding the effectiveness of new learning technologies. We will describe some case studies from the programme and outline our major research questions.

Marco is a Reader in Computing and Academic Director: Distance Learning at Goldsmiths, University of London. His work covers a range of areas of Computing including Virtual Reality and Human-Centred Machine Learning. He helps develop the interdisciplinary Creative Computing programme at Goldsmiths and has pioneered educational innovation both on campus and online. Together with Matthew Yee-King and Mick Grierson, he taught "Creative Programming" one of the first set of MOOCs developed by the University of London, and has since taught MOOCs in Web Development and Virtual Reality. As Academic Director: Distance Learning he is responsible for developing online learning at Goldsmiths, including the new BSc Computer Science with University of London Worldwide and Coursera.

Matthew is an academic in the department of computing at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is the programme director for the BSc Computer Science online degree, which launches in 2019 on the Coursera platform. Back in 2013, he delivered the first MOOC from an English HE institution on the Coursera platform, attracting an enrolment of 97,000, and his various online courses have since been taken by tens of thousands of students. As a researcher working on the €3m PRAISE research project, he managed the development and trialling of innovative education technology, including media annotation and AI systems. He has also carried out research into signal processing and creative applications of machine learning, including a series of commissioned musical AI systems that have performed alongside human musicians on BBC national radio and at venues such as the Wellcome Collection. He has worked as an electronic musician, releasing solo and collaborative recordings on Warp, Rephlex and Accidental records and touring internationally in Europe, Japan and even Venezuela.

Running up that hill: how do distance-learning students learn quantitative skills and how do we help them?

Kathleen O'Reilly (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

Learning quantitative skills via distance learning may present challenges in addition to those typically encountered. For example, threshold concepts are frequently encountered and it is unclear how students tackle these challenges. At the LSHTM mathematical modelling of infectious diseases is an increasingly popular module for students to select within the MSc in Epidemiology, and here we identified a need to engage with students to understand what resources were used to learn key concepts and learn more about the student experience. We asked students to participate in an online survey and short structured interviews. Twelve students participated in the study, with a response rate that is comparable to other surveys. The survey responses illustrated that students learnt a great deal from the module, used a variety of resources and their experience was largely a positive one. The interviews revealed that the module was for most a challenge, but one that they relished, and a thematic analysis illustrated that learning mathematical modelling evoked surprisingly strong language. The findings of the study will be used to further develop the module and the approaches may be useful when assessing other quantitative modules.

Kathleen is an epidemiologist who specialises in the use of statistical and mathematical models to assist in developing control strategies for infectious diseases. She is particularly interested in working on infectious diseases at the edges of elimination and eradication, and currently in polio eradication and vector-borne diseases such as Zika and dengue virus. SHE IS an active member of the Centre for Mathematical Modelling of Infectious Diseases (CMMID).

Her research team are the modelling partners of Unicef within the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. This intends to provide support for policy decisions via mathematical modelling and the analysis of data. Prior to LSHTM she was at Imperial College London where she held an MRC methodology research fellowship that focussed on development of statistical methods applied to polio eradication and other vaccine preventable diseases. This research was in collaboration with the WHO Polio Eradication Initiative, and it has been a valuable opportunity to contribute to a global health priority. She is an Associate Editor for the journal *BMC Infectious Diseases*.

Session Chair: Ayona Silva-Fletcher

WORKSHOP SESSIONS (AFTERNOON)

Exploring factors that influence the impact of MOOC learning on participants' professional practice

Myrrh Domingo (University College London)

Our research project draws on data from a MOOC aimed at teaching professionals in the field of EFL/ESL teaching. We employed a mixed-method study including a survey disseminated to all learners on the MOOC, ten semi-structured interviews with learners and course analytics obtained through the Coursera platform. The survey focused on the following areas: participants' background variables, the perceived benefits of different MOOC activities, and the extent to which participants applied knowledge from the MOOC or implemented activities from the MOOC in their practice. The interviews were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the relationships among these three areas. Course analytics were triangulated with the survey and interview data to achieve a more refined understanding of potential links between learner background variables and MOOC activity patterns.

We will present key findings and their implications for future research and design of MOOCs. We will highlight which participant background variables were key predictors for application of learning to professional practice; which MOOC activities (e.g., tutor video lectures, discussion forums, readings) were perceived to influence participants' continuing professional development; and also the ways in which participants on our MOOC applied their learning to their teaching practices.

The research for this project was conducted by an interdisciplinary team from the Department of Culture, Communication and Media at UCL Institute of Education, led by Dr Myrrh Domingo.

Myrrh is an Associate Professor in Contemporary Literacies and Head of Undergraduate Provision. Her work focuses on three main areas: technology-mediated learning and teaching; multimodal and ethnographic methods in researching digital and data environments; and language and literacy research. Her co-workers are **Dr Amos Paran**, **Dr Andrea Révész** and **Alessandra Palange**, all from University College London.

Amos is a Reader in Second Language Education. His main research and teaching interests are reading in a foreign language and the use of literature in foreign language teaching, as well as different aspects of Open and Distance Education. **Andrea** is an Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics. Her research interests lie in the area of second language acquisition, with a special emphasis on the role of tasks in second language learning. **Alessandra** is a PhD candidate and Research Assistant. As part of her doctoral research, she is exploring the civic and political dimensions of two community-based Islamic educational initiatives online. More broadly, she is interested in online grassroots education (formal and informal) and political activism.

The Digital Educator Project findings - What you need to know to prepare for the future

Jon Gregson (CDE, University of London) and the Digital Educator team

The Digital Educator Project started in May 2018 with the aim of identifying major trends that support technical and pedagogical innovation in distance education looking towards the next 2-5

years. The project has included a review of literature covering new technologies, teaching tools, learner practices, sector trends, and broader industry trends. This was followed by a foresight process, looking at different future scenarios that could be relevant to the digital educator depending on the student context. We then conducted a survey of academics involved in distance education to explore their awareness of different technologies, gauging their perspectives on the importance and relevance of the technology, and their willingness to adapt to use it. Finally, we ran a workshop involving academics from different backgrounds, and developed some 'technology roadmaps' for different subject thematic groupings. These set out the status of the technology usage for that thematic group under headings of 'established', 'low uptake', 'unexplored pedagogy' and 'emerging technology'. At this session we will share with participants the headline findings from each stage of the study, highlighting some of the steps needed to develop skills to equip academics to be working at the cutting edge, as digital educators prepared for the future.

Other members of the Digital Educator project team include **Marco Gillies** (Goldsmiths, University of London; see above for biography); **Jonathan San Diego** (King's College London), Tony Sheehan and **Christine Thurairaja-McKeever** (Royal Veterinary College).

Jon is Director of Development Dreamers Ltd, currently based in UK. The Jon was one of the founding fellows of the University of London Centre for Distance Education, and he has a keen interest in mobile learning, MOOCs, OERs and capacity development for distance education in developing countries. He now works as an international development consultant, focusing on the role of distance learning, and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in addressing development goals. Since 2002 he has been a tutor, research supervisor and examiner on the University of London postgraduate degree programme for international distance learning students. He currently has responsibility for the 'Managing Knowledge and Communication for Development' module offered through the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS).

His past roles have included Director of Global Networks and Communities for University of London which included overall responsibility for the online learning strategy, and Head of the Knowledge Services Department at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex.

In 2015, Jon led an IDS team on a research project, using foresight methodologies, to explore future scenarios for 'The future of Knowledge Sharing in a Digital Age', and he subsequently organised a CDE workshop with SOAS exploring scenarios for the future of distance learning.

Jonathan is a Lecturer in Educational Technology and Healthcare Informatics at the Faculty of Dentistry, Oral & Craniofacial Sciences, King's College London. He is a Fellow of the Centre for Distance Education, University of London. His main research interests are examining how digital technologies influence cognition, reasoning and learning, particularly on how new technologies affect students' understanding and knowledge in the healthcare education context. He has a degree in Mathematics Education, taught Maths and Computing courses for four years at the HE level, after five years of secondary school teaching in the Philippines. He came to the UK and earned two degrees at The Open University: MSc in Research Methods and a PhD in Educational Technology. He joined King's in 2008, taking on roles that developed his academic career as an educational technologist, from the Institute of Education, UCL, as a Research Fellow in Learning Design. He has over 25 years teaching experience and has been at the cutting edge of the use of educational technologies throughout his career. He currently teaches digital professionalism and supervises education research projects at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. His current leadership role as the Director of the iTEL Hub involves leading the strategic development of digital education.

Tony is a director of Composite Mind, a digital learning consultancy advising a range of higher education clients. He is a former Associate Dean at London Business School where he led the development, delivery and continuous improvement of the School's digital learning strategy. Previously, he was Director of Learning Services at Ashridge Business School, where he led the team responsible for providing digital technology solutions to both Ashridge programmes as well as direct to over 150 global corporate clients. Before joining the education sector, he spent 20 years as an engineer; he has a degree in metallurgy from Oxford University and an MBA from Loughborough University. He has a particular interest in the design of effective learning solutions in an age of information overload, and actively researches, teaches, facilitates and coaches in areas of knowledge management, technology strategy, e-learning, ed-tech, social media, and innovation.

Christine is the Director for Distance Learning Programmes at the Royal Veterinary College and is responsible for the academic and strategic leadership of the Programmes. Her education research interests are mainly in learning design for science-based courses, and in enhancing the student experience and improving retention, particularly in areas relating to student support, tools to support student engagement and international institutional partnerships to support students.

Session Chair: Daksha Patel

Plagiarism in distance learning: causes and measures for control

Ayona Silva-Fletcher (Royal Veterinary College) and Clare Sansom (Birkbeck, University of London)

The University of London is increasingly concerned about plagiarism in its distance-learning programmes, quoting an increase in reported cases of 274% between 2011 and 2016. We report on a CDE project set up to address this concern. This was divided into two parts: a review of the literature addressing the causes of plagiarism in higher education and interventions to prevent it, and a survey of distance-education practitioners at the University of London.

The literature survey showed that plagiarism is a common concern in undergraduate and postgraduate teaching worldwide, and that this encompassed verbatim copying, absent or inadequate referencing and self-plagiarism. The most common causes reported were a lack of knowledge, pressure to succeed and language and cultural barriers. Compulsory, interactive exercises seemed to be the most effective methods for controlling it.

We sent an online questionnaire to 26 senior academics involved in distance-learning programmes at the University of London and received fifteen responses (57.7%). Five of these then undertook an additional interview. Both the causes and the types of plagiarism noted were similar to those reported in the literature. The recommended strategy for combating plagiarism involves a combination of clearly visible warnings; compulsory teaching materials that are easily located, interactive and interesting; and improved communication between lecturers and students.

Ayona has been a member of the CDE since 2008 and Chair of the Fellows group since 2014. She is a veterinarian with a PhD in ruminant nutrition and an MA in Medical Education, and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, UK. After several teaching positions in Sri Lanka, the UK and the Netherlands she joined the Royal Veterinary College in 2002 as the Director of Distance Learning Programme and moved to the Lifelong and Independent Veterinary Education (LIVE) team there at the RVC. She developed the MSc in Veterinary Education in 2009, the first discipline specific educator-training programme for the veterinary and para-veterinary sectors and offers academic leadership to the programme. Her main research areas are in faculty development, online and distance learning pedagogies and Asian elephant health.

In 2012, Ayona was awarded the National Teaching Fellowship by the UK Higher Education Academy for her contributions to scholarship and pedagogy in veterinary education at national and international levels.

Clare combines teaching postgraduate biomedical science, with a particular emphasis on distance education, with science writing and editing. She has worked in open and distance education for 20 years and was one of the first CDE Fellows to have been appointed in 2005.

She has worked at Birkbeck in the University of London since 1998, coordinating a distance-learning course in the principles of protein structure which forms the first module in an innovative MSc in Structural Molecular Biology. When this course was launched in 2000 it was the first MSc course in the life sciences in the UK to be run fully online. She is also an Associate Lecturer for the Open University, teaching mainly on the MSc Medicinal Chemistry. Recent innovations on that course have included the introduction of an assessed group work project in which remote students work together to design a novel molecule to be tested as a potential drug.

She combines her professional interests as a writer and an educator by reporting on events and blogging for the centre website. Her educational research interests include social media, virtual worlds and the role of distance education in development; she has worked as a distance education consultant for several institutions including the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

A multitude of modes: considering 'blended learning' in context

Leo Havermann (University College London)

Discussions of mode in higher education tend to contrast face-to-face teaching with distance education, while acknowledging that somewhere in between these poles, some students are engaged in a somewhat mysterious practice of 'blended learning'. Blended learning is generally taken to indicate that a combination of face-to-face time in the classroom with the use of digital/online platforms is in use. While the question of whether blended learning is well-understood or well-defined remains unanswered, it can nonetheless be described as the 'new normal'.

This session considers transformation in educational delivery mode in the context of the results of an institutional review of technology-enhanced learning, undertaken at Birkbeck, University of London in 2018. An overview of the method and results of the review will be discussed, alongside consideration of the extent to which these findings are more widely applicable. Birkbeck's mission has been to create opportunities to study for groups who are usually excluded by conventional modes of provision. However, where 'distance' mode teaching acts to take location out of the equation, Birkbeck has historically opened access through its timetable. Birkbeck students give up the semblance of a normal life to dedicate many of their evenings to the classroom. But perhaps this has obscured the extent to which student life is increasingly the life of the computer, as well as of the mind. Evening, face-to-face mode teaching, while seen to a great extent as the college's 'USP', is only one element of the 'student experience' and digital practices have quietly gone mainstream.

These results have thrown into question whether 'face-to-face' mode truly exists at Birkbeck any more. Furthermore, if blended learning has become an umbrella term that covers a multitude of modes, it seems that much closer attention is now due to the nature and diversity of 'blends'.

Leo is a Digital Education Advisor at University College London and was previously a learning technologist at Birkbeck. He is also a part time postgraduate researcher at the Open University, a co-ordinator of the M25 Learning Technology Group (an ALT SIG) and a member of the Advisory Board of the Open Education Working Group (Open Knowledge International). His interests include digital and open educational practices, institutional strategy and policymaking, and literacies and capabilities.

Session Chair: Matt Philpott

Enhancing student engagement through an alumni-peer mentorship scheme for Public Health MSc students undertaking a research project via distance learning

Anna M. Foss¹, Grace Mambula², Sophia Kohler³, Rebecca French⁴, Samuel van Steirteghem², Olivia Perrotta Hare², Sumedh², Mary-Ann Schreiner², Vasha Bachan², Natalina Sutton³, Tolu Osigbesan³, Nadia Tekkal³, Nicolò Saverio Centemero³, Jenny Fogarty⁵, Mike Hill⁵, Ros Plowman⁶ and Alan Tait⁷.

1: London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM); 2: Student partner mentors (alumni), LSHTM; 3: Student partner mentees (current students), LSHTM; 4: Associate Professor and former PMO, LSHTM; 5: Assistant Professors in Learning & Teaching, LSHTM; 6: Associate Professor, LSHTM; 7: Centre for Distance Education (CDE)

Some project module students undertaking the Public Health MSc by distance learning at LSHTM have asked to engage with alumni. In response, PMOs launched an alumni-peer mentorship scheme in 2018, aiming to enhance students' learning experience, with funding from CDE.

This project uses an action research approach that is participatory in nature. We developed a series of videos and written contributions from mentors, and supported engagement via Moodle discussion forums and Collaborate web conferencing. To evaluate the scheme, we are analysing views/experiences, alongside learning analytics, throughout the 20-month cycle.

Mentees value the diversity of the group mentoring approach, finding the feedback very "helpful" and "reassuring", and it "encouraged me to think more". Alumni are keen to share their experiences to support students, describing their mentor role as "enriching", "rewarding" and "exciting", remaining "connected to the academic world". Participation and engagement in Moodle and Collaborate has increased, and students seem better prepared.

Mentors add value by sharing their authentic first-hand experiences and provide details beyond PMOs' input. There are other students/alumni interested in becoming mentors for new cohorts of students to sustain this innovation. The training materials and lessons learnt are transferable for use/adaptation elsewhere in the University of London Worldwide.

Anna is an Associate Professor in Public Health Education and Mathematical Epidemiology at LSHTM. She has 18 years of experience in research and education across four Higher/Further Education institutions. Currently, Anna is a Project Module Organiser (PMO) for Public Health MSc students by distance learning (PHDL), managing/coordinating support to students and supervisors. PMOs received a LSHTM Director's Award 2018 for Excellence and Innovation in Developing Students as Researchers. Anna is also a Director of LEARN – the Learning and Educational Advances Research Network. Anna's educational research interests include enhancing student engagement through the involvement of alumni and increasing awareness and understanding of the concepts of creativity and innovation). Alongside this, she has recently undertaken public engagement activities in primary and secondary schools. Previously, she has held roles as an educational supervisor for the Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching (PGCILT) and conducted summative teaching observations, as well as being a former Programme Director on face-to-face MSc programmes.

Alan is Emeritus Professor of Distance Education and Development at the Open University UK and a

visiting fellow of the CDE. From 2013-2015 Alan was Director of International Development and Teacher Education; before that he was Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) there from 2007-2012, and from 2004-2007 Dean of the Faculty of Education and Language Studies from 2004-2007. He has been editor of several journals devoted to open learning. He was president of the European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN) from 2007-2010, and co-director of the Cambridge International Conference on Open and Distance Learning 1988-2013.

In 2012 Alan was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Moscow State University for Economics, Statistics and Informatics, and appointed Visiting Senior Online Consultant at the Open University of China in 2013. Alan is founding Emeritus Editor of the Journal of Learning for Development, produced from the Commonwealth of Learning; Visiting Professor, Amity University, India; Distinguished Visiting Professor Open University of Hong Kong; Visiting Professor at Aalborg University, Denmark 2012-2016; and transformation advisor for the Commonwealth of Learning at Botswana Open University 2011-2016.

Doing what works – designing for effective distance learning experiences for students around the world.

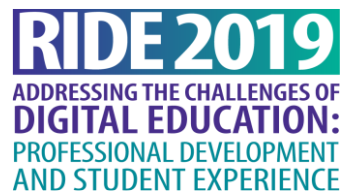
Sam Brenton (University of London Worldwide)

As the technology used for distance education has matured and coalesced around a suite of more or less standard web-enabled tools, attention has turned once again to the art/science of learning design. There seems to be an emerging consensus of kinds around what makes for effective learning design, and this is seen in the similar approaches you see in today's online learning courses and programmes, from MOOCs to short courses to degrees. But there are, of course, a number of models available for distance learning design, and some of these pre-date the Internet by many decades. Is it time to revisit some of these models to see what we can learn from them? Are we in danger of homogeneity in today's online offerings? Ought we to question some of the fundamentals of today's approaches? This session will examine several models side by side and stress-test them to try and draw out responses to these and similar questions so that we might be more confident when we are designing online courses for mass consumption around the world that we are truly doing what works for our students.

Sam is Director of Education, Innovation and Development at the University of London, which has been delivering distance learning since 1858 and has over 50,000 students in more than 180 countries. As such, he is responsible for identifying and developing new programmes.

Prior to joining the University of London, he was Director, Digital Learning at Cass Business School, which is among Europe's leading business schools. He has also worked in the private sector in the online learning partnership business, was Head of E-Learning and then Director of the Learning Institute at Queen Mary, University of London.

He has consulted, written and presented on a wide variety of topics including the globalisation and disaggregation of higher education, the impact on formal education of today's social web and the ways in which higher education practice and business models need to adapt and change to thrive in the digital economy.



Session Chair: Simon Rofe