

HEIR 2021

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Online Annual Conference

Inclusive Institutional Research

22nd - 24th of September 2021

Join us online at the University of St Andrews



HEIRNETWORK

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL
RESEARCH NETWORK



University of
St Andrews

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WELCOME

We are delighted to warmly welcome you to the 2021 Higher Education Institutional Research (HEIR) conference at a digital University of St Andrews.

Founded in the 15th century, St Andrews is Scotland's first university and the third oldest in the English-speaking world. Teaching began in the community of St Andrews in 1410, and the University was formally constituted by the issue of a Papal Bull in 1413.

Since the University's foundation we have welcomed scholars from across the world to St Andrews to study, teachers to teach, and students to learn, a tradition that continues today, with more than 130 countries represented in the 2020-2021 student population. Our fundamental goal has always been to attract and nurture the best staff and the most promising students from around the world; and to provide an environment in which they can produce their best work to the benefit of society locally and worldwide.

As a truly international world-class university, our ambition is to be a beacon of inclusivity. We are committed to the principles of respect and fair treatment for everyone, eliminating discrimination and actively promoting equality of opportunity and delivering fairness to all. As a University, we aim to act ethically, transparently, sustainably, and for the wider public benefit at all times. This broad commitment to social responsibility and sustainability shapes our policies, practices, and respect for our environment.

Now in our 7th century, we strive to be a World-leading, Entrepreneurial, Diverse and Global institute, living up to the University motto, 'Ever to Excel'. We are therefore delighted to welcome colleagues from the UK, Ireland and beyond to the University of St Andrews for the 2021 Higher Education Institutional Research (HEIR) conference on Inclusive Institutional Research.

The conference will provide a forum for institutional research enthusiasts and practitioners to share the best evidence-based ideas and practices in enhancing inclusive learning and teaching and management decision making within Higher Education.

On behalf of the members of the St Andrews HEIR Conference Organising Committee and the HEIR Network Planning Group we hope that you enjoy the conference and that the experiences you gain will contribute to increased inclusivity across UK and Irish higher education institutions.

ABOUT THE HEIR NETWORK

The UK and Ireland Higher Education Institutional Research (HEIR) network was established in 2008 to bring together institutional research (IR) enthusiasts and practitioners working in the UK and Ireland higher education sectors.

The HEIR network believes that IR is playing an increasingly important role in enhancing learning and teaching practice and providing timely and relevant evidence to aid management decision making at all levels within UK and Irish higher education institutions.

The network is coordinated by a voluntary Planning Group that focuses on supporting the network through providing networking opportunities and facilitating host institutions in organising the annual HEIR conference.

What we do:

The activities of the network are focused on achieving the following four objectives:

1. To build an IR community in the UK and Ireland that can help individuals develop their knowledge and expertise and contribute to the building of capacity for IR across the sector.
2. To be a forum for discussion around contemporary issues and for sharing ideas, experiences, practices and solutions to issues and problems.
3. To inform HE policy and practice through engaging directly with policy-makers.
4. To work with other bodies with the common goal of impacting HE policy and practice.

Please visit the Network's website and join the mailing list www.heirnetwork.org.uk

CONFERENCE SPONSORS



University of St Andrews

Founded in the 15th century, St Andrews is Scotland's first university and the third oldest in the English speaking world. The University stands for research and teaching of the highest quality and the pursuit of knowledge for the common good.



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At Explorance, we believe that each experience matters. From students in higher education to employees at the workplace, feedback is vital to the lifelong learner's journey. That's why Explorance's mission is to help organisations create a personalised journey of impact and fulfillment for their people through innovative Experience Management (XM) solutions. The Blue Student Experience Management platform offers a single source of truth from a centralised process. Blue is purpose-built to fully automate all major student feedback gathering initiatives - institutional surveys, course evaluations, competency assessments, alumni surveys – all on one platform.



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CONFERENCE ADDRESSES



**Professor Sally Mapstone
FRSE,
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
of the University of St
Andrews.**

Sally Mapstone is the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of the University of

St Andrews and its Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Since the mid 1800s it has been customary that one person holds two titles: the post of Principal representing the executive function, and the post of Vice-Chancellor the ceremonial function.



**Anna-Ruth Cockerham,
Director of Wellbeing
(DoWell), University of St
Andrews Students'
Association.**

Anna-Ruth Cockerham is the Director of Wellbeing, representing students on

welfare, equality, diversity, and inclusion. Anna works a lot on the University and Union's approach to dealing with issues like mental health, harassment and discrimination, sexual violence, physical health, and safety. In addition, Anna supports many of the Students' Association's volunteer officers and subcommittees focusing on equality and welfare.



**Dr Leyla Hussein OBE.
Rector of the University of St
Andrews.**

Leyla Hussein is a psychotherapist, campaigner and global leader on gender rights. The Rector presides over meetings of the

University Court and supports the student body at local and national levels. The Rector is supported by the Rector's assessor, a voluntary position, with the main role being to act as the link between the Rector and the student body and to aid and advise the Rector. The assessor meets regularly with the Rector to advise on policy issues, discuss upcoming events and campaigns and ensure the Rector has a coordinated media and web presence in St Andrews.



**Professor Frank Müller.
Assistant Vice-Principal
(AVP) Dean of Learning and
Teaching.**

Frank Müller supports the implementation of the University's Strategy 2018-2023 in areas related to education and leads the management of education. Frank is a Professor in Modern History. He mainly works on the politics and political culture of 19th and 20th-century Europe, with special interests in the history of monarchy, nationalism, liberalism and biography.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Prof Lee Elliot Major OBE

Professor of Social Mobility

University of Exeter

Lee Elliot Major is the country's first Professor of Social Mobility. Appointed by the University of Exeter to be a global leader in the field, his work is dedicated to improving the prospects of disadvantaged young people. As a Professor of Practice, he focuses on research that has direct impact on policy and practice, working closely with schools, universities, employers and policy makers.

Lee was formerly Chief Executive of the Sutton Trust and a founding trustee of the Education Endowment Foundation. In 2021, he was made a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. He is an Associate of LSE's Centre for Economic Performance, an Associate Member of Nuffield College, University of Oxford, a Visiting Fellow at the LSE's International Inequalities Institute, and an Honorary Professor at the UCL Institute of

Education. He is a member of ESRC's Strategic Advisory Network. Lee has published several books, his latest, *The Good Parent Educator*, summarises education research for parents. He was awarded an OBE in 2019.



Dr Gregory M. Walton

Associate Professor

The Michael Forman University Fellow in Undergraduate Education

Stanford University

Greg Walton is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Stanford University. Much of his research investigates psychological processes that contribute to major social problems and how "wise" interventions that target these processes can address such problems and help people flourish, even over long periods of time.

One of the most pressing societal problems is the persistent inequality in academic achievement between different social groups. While many structural factors contribute to this inequality, Greg has long been interested in the role of psychological processes, such as those stemming from negative intellectual stereotypes, and how theory-based interventions that address these can reduce inequality in education. Greg's *social-belonging intervention* aims to prevent corrosive attributions by providing a nonthreatening narrative for feelings of nonbelonging in school.

Greg's research has been covered in major media outlets including the New York Times, Harvard Business Review, The Wall Street Journal, Huffington Post, NPR, The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Washington Post, The San Francisco Chronicle, The Los Angeles Times, and The Onion. He has received awards from numerous organizations including the American Education Research Association, American Psychological Association, Society for Experimental Social Psychology, and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues.



Dr Zainab Khan

Pro Vice Chancellor for teaching and learning at London Metropolitan University and Director of the University's Centre for Equity and Inclusion.

Zainab Khan is the Pro Vice Chancellor for teaching and learning at London Metropolitan University. Alongside staff development, Zainab has institutional responsibility for the teaching and learning strategies, the Access and Participation Plan and driving improvement in key student outcomes as well as development of the academic portfolio. Zainab has held a number of strategic and operational management roles, prior to joining London Metropolitan in September 2019 Zainab was a Faculty Director at the University of the West of England, supporting three large departments to achieve outstanding academic and teaching excellence framework (TEF) results.

Led by Zainab, London Metropolitan's Centre for Equity and Inclusion, is pioneering a new approach to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into institutional practices, specifically institutional approaches to creating an inclusive and equitable

culture for staff and students. Since arriving at London Met she has led the development and introduction of a values-led vision of Teaching & Learning strategy which places inclusion, accessibility and social justice at the heart of teaching practice and the curriculum. Zainab is a multi-award-winning advocate for inclusion and race equity in education. Her work has received national recognition at the prestigious Guardian University Awards in 2019, Inclusive Companies Awards 2018 and she was highly commended at the Asian Women of Achievement Awards 2020. Her particular area of expertise is the design and implementation of transformational change programmes which address the experience of Black and minoritised individuals in Higher Education and the labour market.



Dr Celia Whitchurch

Honorary Associate Professor of higher education. University College London, Institute of Education.

Celia Whitchurch is Honorary Associate Professor of higher education at University College London Institute of Education. Her research interests focus on academic and professional identities in higher education and changing workforce patterns. Completed projects include an international study for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) on Professional Managers in UK Higher Education: Preparing for Complex Futures (2008); an LFHE-funded study on Staffing Models and Institutional

Flexibility (2013); and a study for the UK Higher Education Academy on Shifting Landscapes: Meeting the staff development needs of the changing academic workforce (2016). She has recently been Principal Investigator on a Centre for Global Higher Education (CGHE) project entitled the implications of a diversifying workforce for higher education systems, institutions and individuals and is completing a monograph from that project. She has also published an edited monograph (with George Gordon) on Academic and Professional Identities in Higher Education: The Challenges of a Diversifying Workforce (2010); a single-authored monograph, Reconstructing Identities in Higher Education: The Rise of Third Space Professionals (2013); and a further monograph with George Gordon on Reconstructing Relationships in Higher Education: Challenging Agendas (2017). She edited Higher Education Quarterly between 2007 and 2017.

PROGRAMME – WEDNESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

09:30 - 10:00	Arrival	
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10:00 - 10:05	Welcome from Hosts Gerald Prescott, Chair HEIR 2021, University of St Andrews Rachel Bowden, Head of Evaluation and Policy Department, University of Brighton	Wardlaw Auditorium
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10:05 - 10:15	Opening Address Prof Sally Mapstone FRSE, Principal and Vice-Chancellor, University of St Andrews <i>Chair: Gerald Prescott</i>	Wardlaw Auditorium
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10:15 - 11:15	Keynote 1 Improving social mobility prospects in the post pandemic era Prof Lee-Elliott-Major, University of Exeter <i>Low and worsening social mobility is one of the biggest societal challenges facing Britain as it recovers from the pandemic, with millions of people unable to fulfil their potential and prosper in life. What can we do to level the playing field and improve prospects for all irrespective of who they happen to be born to or where they live? And what role can the education system, and universities, play in boosting social mobility?</i> <i>Chair: Ian Smith</i>	Wardlaw Auditorium
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11:15 - 11:25	Screen Break	
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11:25 - 12:00	Networking Session 1 N1.1. Learning analytics for an improving student experience N1.2. Data for operational development and decision-making N1.3. Progress (participation, retention and awarding) gaps, the evidence and how we close them N1.4. Career development for professional staff	St Salvador's College St Mary's College Younger Hall Parliament Hall
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12:00 - 12:45	Breakout Session 1 B1.1. Staff-Student Partnership to Decolonise the Curriculum: Case of University of Exeter B1.2. Levelling the playing field; sharing insights into developing an inclusive institutional culture. B1.3. Fostering subject lecturers' commitment and capacity to engage with students' academic literacies development. B1.4. Invisible but Exposed: The Lived Experience of Disabled Academics B1.5. Lightning Talks 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Building an inclusive student experience – lessons from the pandemic</i><i>Engagement and impact for workers studying postgraduate professional development programmes: learning for organisations and their higher education partners</i><i>How can university rankings include social inclusion aspects? – Insights from U-Multirank</i><i>Teaching the West about Eastern Research – an exemplar</i><i>An exploratory study to examine the experiences of working in UNCOVER: a co-creation higher education group</i>	Sir James Black Room <i>Chair: Rachel Bowden</i> Agnes Blackadder Room <i>Chair: Phil Gravestock</i> Hikmat Abu Zayd Room <i>Chair: Matt Hiely-Rayner</i> William Dunbar Room <i>Chair: Jon Issberner</i> Margaret Fairlie Room <i>Chair: Gerald Prescott</i>
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- *The relationships between gender, physics identity, self-efficacy, and the retention of women in physics undergraduate degrees*
- *Breaking Barriers: Personal, Academic and Community; An innovative approach to virtual widening participation summer schools*

12:45 - 13:00 Lunch

13:00 - 13:30 Networking Lunch (optional)

Data for planning and planners
 League tables and their value
 Strategic leadership in changing national landscapes
 Drawing useful conclusions from small cohorts

St Salvator's College
St Mary's College
Younger Hall
Parliament Hall

13:30 - 13:45 Sponsor talks

S1.1. Explorance

Hikmat Abu Zayd Room
Chair: Gerald Prescott

S1.2. PresentPal

William Dunbar Room
Chair: Ken Mavor

S1.3. Caption.Ed

Margaret Fairlie Room
Chair: Daryl Haynes

13:45 - 14:45 Keynote 2

Psychologically "Wise" Interventions to Bolster Belonging and Reduce Inequality in University

Dr Gregory M. Walton, Stanford University

When students come to university, they face basic psychological questions, like whether they will belong and be able to succeed. These questions are most pointed for students from lower social-class backgrounds and those from racial-ethnic minority backgrounds, as these groups have historically been excluded from higher education and continue to face negative stereotypes that allege that they are less able and less deserving of post-secondary opportunities. This talk will review targeted exercises that help students answer questions of belonging adaptively. It will show how even brief (e.g., 1-hour) exercises can cause cascading benefits, raising achievement and reducing socio-economic, racial, and gender inequality even over years. I will focus on (1) "belonging uncertainty," what it is and where it comes from; (2) how interventions can address belonging uncertainty and the effects of doing so on school and life trajectories; (3) how these interventions can be scaled to reach full institutions; (4) the need for contexts to "afford" opportunities for students to belong; and (5) the many opportunities institutions have to address questions of belonging productively.

Chair: Ken Mavor

Wardlaw Auditorium

14:45 - 15:15 Networking Rooms Remain Open

**Younger Hall &
 Parliament Hall**

15:15

Close

PROGRAMME – THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

09:45 - 10:00	Arrival	
10:00 - 10:15	Opening Address Dr Leyla Hussein OBE, Rector, University of St Andrews <i>Chair: Jasmin Hinds</i>	Wardlaw Auditorium
10:15 - 11:00	Breakout Session 2 B2.1. The importance of interpersonal relationships in creating a sense of student belonging and an inclusive student experience. B2.2. Short talks: Widening Participation and Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Building an inclusive student experience through the implementation of Peer Assisted Learning sessions</i><i>Contextual admissions, adjusted offers and university experiences</i><i>NTU's Student 2025</i> B2.3. Inclusive Practice Partnerships at the University of Brighton: improving student experience and attainment through inclusive policy and strategy. B2.4. Short talks: Student Learning and Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Mobilising opportunities for inclusion, engagement and co-creation of an online community</i><i>Using an investigative pragmatic approach to teach about theories</i><i>University Students' Experiences of Access and Inclusion in Teaching and Learning</i> B2.5. Workshop: What is education even for? And if we haven't figured that out, how do we know we're doing it right?	Sir James Black Room <i>Chair: Nigel Page</i> Agnes Blackadder Room <i>Chair: Steve Woodfield</i> Hikmat Abu Zayd Room <i>Chair: Gráinne McDonagh</i> William Dunbar Room <i>Chair: Dharini Balasubramaniam</i> Margaret Fairlie Room <i>Chair: Gerald Prescott</i>
11:00 - 11:10	Screen Break	
11:10 - 11:45	Networking Session 2 N2.1. Third space professionals N2.2. Evidencing inclusive policies and practices N2.3. Developing an inclusive institutional culture N2.4. HEIR Network – future plans	St Salvator's College St Mary's College Younger Hall Parliament Hall
11:45 - 12:30	Breakout Session 3 B3.1. Short talks: Inclusive learning environments <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>The lived experience of disabled academics with chronic fatigue ill-health: An ethnographic of disability intervention in a UK university</i><i>Evaluating strategies to engage peer and inner feedback through exemplar use on a postgraduate distance module</i><i>Supporting Vulnerable Students through Personal Tutoring: Is More Upfront Student Information Helpful?</i> B3.2. Value and power: perceptions of Education Focused academic careers in research intensive universities B3.3. Short talks: Institutional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>International Offices in the European and Indian Universities: Mediators or Drivers of Change?</i>	Sir James Black Room <i>Chair: Jon Issberner</i> Agnes Blackadder Room <i>Chair: Lee O'Farrell</i> Hikmat Abu Zayd Room <i>Chair: Ian Smith</i>

- *A commons for online learning: Supporting students' data protection preferences*
- *"It's reset a lot of relationships": the TEF and the HE workforce*

B3.4. Sharing SoTL Approaches to Address Awarding Gaps

William Dunbar Room
Chair: *Nigel Page*

B3.5. Learning through Doing: An Inclusive Staff-Student Community Responding to COVID-19

Margaret Fairlie Room
Chair *Gosia Mitka*

12:30 - 13:00 Networking Lunch (optional)

Delegate defined networking session
Delegate defined networking session
Delegate defined networking session
Delegate defined networking session

St Salvator's College
St Mary's College
Younger Hall
Parliament Hall

13:00 - 13:40 Panel Discussion 1

Prof Paul Hibbett, University of St Andrews
Matt Hiely-Rayner, Buckinghamshire New University
Dr Zainab Khan, London Metropolitan University
Prof Ruth Woodfield, University of St Andrews

Chair: *Phil Gravestock*

Wardlaw Auditorium

13:40 - 13:45 Screen Break

13:45 - 14:45 Keynote 3

Reflections on driving a whole-institution approach to inclusion.

Dr Zainab Khan, London Metropolitan University

As universities look to improve their performance on inclusion, to match aspirational rhetoric with tangible action, our programmes to tackle disparities in student outcomes are taking place against a challenging backdrop of continual change for the Sector. The pandemic has further tested organisational capacity, staff resilience and invited us to look again at our institutional culture. Reflecting on her experiences of driving education and EDI strategy, Zainab has become increasingly interested in the staff experience of strategic change, and the need for HE leadership to live their values.

Chair: *Jasmin Hinds*

Wardlaw Auditorium

14:45 - 15:15 Networking Rooms Remain Open

Younger Hall & Parliament Hall

15:15 Close

18:30 - 20:30 Evening Reception (Gather.Town)

PROGRAMME – FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER

09:45 - 10:00 Arrival

10:00 - 10:15 Opening Address **Wardlaw Auditorium**
Anna-Ruth Cockerham, Director of Wellbeing, University of St Andrews Students' Association.
Chair: Dhani McDiarmid

10:15 - 11:15 Keynote 4 **Wardlaw Auditorium**
Third Space and Institutional Research in Higher Education
Dr Celia Whitchurch, Institute of Education
The session will introduce the concept of Third Space and discuss its relevance for institutional research and researchers. It will offer Third Space as a way of viewing the Institutional Research community and its activities including, for example, statistical research, data analysis, and scenario planning, in support of institutional management, teaching, and research. Issues are likely to include relationships with the wider academic/research support community, the interface between service and R&D activity, professional identities and careers, and collective recognition as a group of professionals. This will raise questions that can be discussed in relation to individuals' own roles, the teams they belong to, and the disciplinary or project fields with which they feel associated. Finally it will ask whether there is a sense in which a majority of professional and academic staff are moving towards what might be seen as a Third Space, as individuals draw upon a broader hinterland of both disciplinary knowledge and experience arising from practice, resulting in a greater fluidity of roles. Participants will be asked to think about how such a shift might work in practice, whilst maintaining a distinctive profile for Institutional Research
Chair: Dhani McDiarmid

11:15 - 11:25 Screen Break

11:25 - 12:00 Networking Session 3
N3.1. Delegate defined networking session
N3.2. Delegate defined networking session
N3.3. Delegate defined networking session
N3.4. Delegate defined networking session
St Salvator's College
St Mary's College
Younger Hall
Parliament Hall

12:00 - 13:00 Breakout Session 4
B4.1. Short talks: Inclusion and the Pandemic **Sir James Black Room**
Chair: Ken Mavor

- Investigating student wellbeing across an academic year to improve the experience of taught postgraduate students
- Evaluating medical student perception of virtual versus face-to-face communication skills teaching
- Disseminating Best Practice for a Global Audience: A Case Study.
- What lessons can be learnt from COVID-19 that will help enhance future teaching scheduling for our students?

B4.2. Short talks: Wellbeing and the student experience **Agnes Blackadder Room**
Chair: Aisling McKenna

- Raising the awareness of inclusive education in a community college
- Group vs Individual Exercise on Academic Stress and Academic Performance
- Promoting a sense of belonging in under-represented students across an institution.

B4.3. Short talks: Supporting Student Performance

- Understanding the data to close the awarding gap in the biosciences
- Examining the interconnectedness of medical students and its impact on achievement and wellbeing
- Lightening talks 2
 - The impact and ecological validity of vocational-practice-based assessment modes in STEM curriculum degrees on widening access and improving attainment
 - Enhancing transferable skills through active learning – a VIP case study
 - Co-Designing Graduates - Empowering Students Through Co-Design of the Curriculum
 - The Effectiveness of Virtual Reality Simulation in Robotic Surgical Training
 - Defining Resilience

Hikmat Abu Zayd Room

Chair: Steve Woodfield

B4.4. Lightening talks 3

- Navigating Transitions to the Blended Environment: Exploring lecturers' experiences of policy and practice
- Placements in a Pandemic: design, delivery and dissection of Virtual Placement Days in a School of Medicine
- We Are Human Too: An Innovative, Virtual Wellbeing Programme for Medical Students and Staff
- Virtual Life Drawing – an inclusive student drawing experience with alternative deliveries.
- Online learning community in the COVID-19 era: A survey study with a large first year psychology cohort
- T&L Patterns for Inclusive Virtual Classrooms
- Course design for digital environments: temporal flexibility and inclusion
- Money over meaning? Investigating the cost of neoliberalism at universities
- Unlocking potential: Supporting oral communication challenges in Higher Education and amplifying the voices of students with disabilities and SpLDs.

William Dunbar Room

Chair: Gráinne McDonagh

B4.5. Workshop:

Hauntings in Higher Education: working with ghosts to support inclusive student experiences

Margaret Fairlie Room

Chair:

Dharini Balasubramaniam

13:00- 13:30 Networking Lunch (optional)

Delegate defined networking session
Delegate defined networking session
Delegate defined networking session
Delegate defined networking session

**St Salvator's College
St Mary's College
Younger Hall
Parliament Hall**

13:30 - 14:15 Panel Discussion 2 – Conference reflections

Chair: Gerald Prescott

Wardlaw Auditorium

14:15- 14:25 Closing Address

Prof Frank Muller, AVP Learning and Teaching, University of St Andrews

Wardlaw Auditorium

14:25 - 14:30 Goodbye and Thanks from Hosts

Dharini Balasubramaniam, University of St Andrews
Rachel Bowden, University of Brighton

Wardlaw Auditorium

Gerald Prescott, University of St Andrews
Matt Hiely-Rayner, Buckinghamshire New University

14:30

Conference Close

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Staff-Student Partnership to Decolonise the Curriculum: Case of University of Exeter

Riadh Ghemmour, Fatuma Mohamud, Tina Verhaeghe, Caitlin Kight
University of Exeter

In the past few years, especially with the rise of BLM movement, there has been an increase of funding opportunities, events and academic scholarship to decolonise curricula, pedagogies, classrooms and develop an antiracist approach to create inclusive spaces within and beyond Higher Education. In this current presentation, we would like to present our interdisciplinary and collaborative project which aims to create a resource for all University of Exeter educators who are working to decolonise their curricula and teaching practice.

It will respond to the frequent call for accessible, practical support that explains decolonisation and walks educators through the process of decolonising themselves, their content, and their methods of teaching and supporting learning. Each local has its own needs and signature pedagogy- i.e., the University of Exeter's particular blend of students, staff, learning environments, disciplines, and institutional cultural history. To achieve this, we embrace a relational approach to knowledge production through undertaking cross campus staff and student surveys to collect information about their lived experiences, concerns and attitudes towards decolonisation and decolonising the curriculum. In addition, we are in the phase of conducting some follow-up discussions with staff and students using focus groups and informal spaces to cultivate and draw a critical nuanced understanding of what decolonisation and decolonising the curriculum may look at the University of Exeter. The results of both quantitative and qualitative data will eventually shape the development of the toolkit and will be presented in the session. Practical recommendations will also be provided to sustain similar work.

Levelling the playing field; sharing insights into developing an inclusive institutional culture.

Jenni Jones, Ada Adeghe, Debra Cureton, Julie Hughes
University of Wolverhampton

The University of Wolverhampton has been working on enhancing its inclusivity profile and developing an inclusive institutional culture for some time through internally and externally funded research projects and through innovative practical initiatives that have improved student retention, attainment and progression across all levels and years. The case for inclusivity recognises, embraces and involves the full diversity of the student population which is constituted from under-represented groups whose intersectional characteristics reflect the richness of the Black Country region from where we draw 80% of our students.

The aim of our group presentation session will be to share insights from our institutional research in order to highlight the differences in continuation, attainment and progression for our students within our University, and to share a sample of our activities and lessons learnt towards closing the gap. We will include examples of our inclusive framework in action, our curriculum review and redesign to the creation of transition roles to address historical disadvantages and degree awarding gaps. We will also share examples of how we have encouraged our student voices and their co-creation towards a more sustainable way forward.

As part of our 'long talk session', we plan to facilitate a discussion with the audience about their practice and ideas about how they intend to measure the impact of their inclusive actions, as this is a primary focus for us at our University too and it would be good to share insights and best practice.

Fostering subject lecturers' commitment and capacity to engage with students' academic literacies development.

*Lisa McGrath, Helen Donaghue
Sheffield Institute of Education*

The academic literacies students require for success are specific to their disciplinary contexts. This means that subject specialists are best placed to induct students into the specific genres and discourses of their communities. Yet students' literacy development is often 'outsourced' to generic skills centre or English for Academic Purposes (EAP) provision, with subject lecturers remaining chiefly preoccupied with content knowledge development. Academic literacies specialists have long argued for a collaborative approach, yet university structures impede such collaboration; some subject lecturers are unaware of their value in this process; for some, academic literacies knowledge is tacit, meaning they struggle to articulate their expectations; and others lack the pedagogical tools. To address these issues, we draw on an adaptive process advocated by Benzie et al. (2017), instigating a collaboration between an EAP specialist, an academic developer and subject lecturers with the aim of supporting the subject lecturers to reach an understanding of the academic literacies required by their discipline and to plan how these can be taught and developed in a contextualised way that suits them and their students. Through analysis of interviews and planning meetings with the subject lecturers, teaching materials they developed, and their reflections on the process, we provide insights into subject lecturers' conceptualisations of academic literacies, their teaching practices in relation to academic literacies and their experiences of the collaboration. The project thereby illuminates subject lecturers' relationship to students' academic literacies development and makes recommendations for future collaborations.

Invisible but Exposed: The Lived Experience of Disabled Academics

*Gayle Brewer
University of Liverpool*

Objectives: Neoliberal Higher Education privileges productivity and performance. Academics are expected to work long hours and the 'ideal academic' is framed as being able to dedicate themselves to their career, free from caring responsibilities or other issues. In this environment, disabled academics may be marginalized and often experience discrimination. Few studies have, however, addressed the experience of academics with disabilities or long-term health conditions. The present study addresses this gap in our knowledge.

Design and Methods: Individual online interviews were conducted with ten female academics, all with long-term energy limiting conditions or those that impact on cognitive function. These conditions are particularly inconsistent with the neoliberal ideology that privileges long working hours and performativity, are not easily addressed by institutional policy or accommodations, and (as these conditions are typically 'invisible') the academic must often decide whether to disclose or conceal their condition.

Results: Academics discussed the impact of their condition, disclosure experience, coping strategies, and the consequences of COVID-19. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis identified six themes: Identity and the Concept of Disability; Dependence and Vulnerability; Legitimacy, Convention, and Conformity; Workload, Intensification, and Marketisation; Insecurity, Competition, and Comparison; and Perceptions, Othering, and Isolation.

Conclusions: Academics with conditions that are energy limiting or that impact on cognitive function are often poorly accommodated and supported. A number of recommendations are made directed at individuals, institutions, and policy makers in order to reduce stigma and address academic ableism.

Building an inclusive student experience – lessons from the pandemic

Gosia Mitka

University of St Andrews

Due to transition into online delivery and blended teaching I have revised the way I teach and assess my students. In my presentation I would like to discuss how I adjusted my teaching materials and approach as well as introduced new forms of assessment to facilitate learning and provide students studying locally and remotely with inclusive learning experience. Among the adjustments that I have made were: providing pre-recorded videos accompanied with handouts for self-reflection, focused note taking and revision, Moodle activities for active learning from own and other students' contributions, individual briefing to enhance transferable skills, a blog post in place of an exam, group work and discussions in breakout rooms during tutorials, using Teams Whiteboard during in person and online tutorials to facilitate students' engagement. One of the assignments that was designed particularly to provide students with a support network and connect them with each other despite studying in different locations was a group video assignment. Students were connected using a virtual platform to facilitate communication, exchange ideas, learn and work on the project. Designing a video allowed to demonstrate active learning and apply the material acquired in the course. As part of the video challenge students organized a watch party in their group, provided each other with feedback and voted for the best video. I would like to share this experience, reflect on the challenges for the students and myself, discuss what went well and what can be improved in the following years going ahead.

Engagement and impact for workers studying postgraduate professional development programmes: learning for organisations and their higher education partners

Deborah Scott¹, Ian Grime², Rachel Emms²

¹University of Chester, ²in>pd

This presentation outlines research into the experiences of students taking part time distance learning postgraduate professional development programmes delivered by a private professional development company in collaboration with a university. We investigated students' engagement in, and the nature and degree of impact their studies had, to identify areas for development.

The professional development company's vision is to "To challenge traditional learning by enabling professionals to access inclusive, transformational and real-world training" with emphasis placed on inclusivity and accessibility. The company collaborated with the university to develop three PG Certificates, speaking directly to these values, and providing opportunity for experienced professionals to learn and adapt their business practice, irrespective of their academic background.

The university's work-related studies centre enables professionals to study flexibly, fusing professional development with a distinctive university qualification to deliver workplace impact. It values highly its partner's ability to recruit considerable numbers of students to programmes, diverse in their education and their employment.

We collaborate continually to ensure the programmes offered are relevant and accessible. We wished to find out how we could further facilitate both engagement and achievement, and to explore the impact (be it personal, professional or societal) of these programmes for students.

We'd like to share our data analysis and findings to date and to hear of your perspectives, experiences and suggestions, helping us strengthen our collaborative practice further.

How can university rankings include social inclusion aspects? – Insights from U-Multirank

Kathrin Müller

CHE - Centre for Higher Education

As student bodies in higher education institutions are steadily becoming more diverse, while the underrepresentation of certain student groups simultaneously continues, social inclusion has become a prominent topic on the higher education policy agenda.

This short talk will show how university rankings can evidence social inclusion aspects. Specifically, the existing and envisaged new social inclusion indicators – both on the institutional as well as the subject level – for the global and multidimensional university ranking U-Multirank will be presented.

U-Multirank had already included information on part-time students and programmes, a gender balance indicator and several students' sociodemographic aspects. Based on consultations and surveys with different stakeholder groups – university coordinators, students and experts from the field – on the validity, relevance and feasibility of potential new indicators, access to higher education by underrepresented groups has been identified as the main area for new indicators.

This talk summarises the indicator development process and presents two potentially new indicators and their operationalisation. While one qualitative indicator will focus on outreach programmes and support strategies for underrepresented student groups, a second quantitative indicator will measure the diversity of first-year students (considering mature students, students with disabilities and students' gender composition).

Taken together, those indicators will enable higher education institutions and policymakers alike to determine the status quo of social inclusion policies and practices in higher education institutions – the basis for adequately addressing and supporting underrepresented student groups in their access, progress and successful completion of higher education.

Finally, extension prospects of student diversity characteristics will be discussed.

Teaching the West about Eastern Research – an exemplar

Alexandra Negoita, Caroline Wilson

Coventry University

Decolonising the curriculum is seen as a way to widen the curriculum and among its many benefits, deliver a more inclusive learning experience for ethnically diverse students. One way to extend the reach of this work is to focus on the teaching of research methods, a common feature of many UK degrees. At Coventry University, a reusable learning object (RLO) introducing the Story Circle technique as an Indigenous research method has been made available to academics to embed the method in their teaching as a curriculum enhancement. A Story Circle is a traditional Indigenous method to share perspectives and pass on new knowledge and personal information from generation to generation. In research context, Story Circle is a narrative-based approach and refers to a group of participants sharing experiences through stories and reflecting on the stories in groups. The Story Circle can be used in answering exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research questions. The technique can be adapted based on context and group and is a rich alternative to using focus groups for data gathering. Indigenous methods have the potential to provide meaningful insights into experiences of participants and also the research process due to its reflexive underpinning. This paper argues the benefits of inclusion of such methods within the UK Higher Education teaching. Finding ways to respectfully address Eastern frameworks in Western research might contribute toward building more partnerships with communities whose voices are silent and also broaden the curriculum.

An exploratory study to examine the experiences of working in UNCOVER: a co-creation higher education group

Jasmin Rostron¹, Kayla Oshtrishko¹, Thulani Ashcroft¹, Neneh Rowa-Dewar², Emilie McSwiggan²

¹University of Edinburgh, ²USHER - University of Edinburgh

This presentation will share the process and results of conducting qualitative research within a multi-disciplinary co-production team in a higher education setting, with the aim of contributing to continuous improvement and enhancing student and staff experience.

The subject of study is the Usher Network for COVID-19 Evidence Reviews, which was created by staff and student volunteers at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the course of the last year, UNCOVER's scope has evolved, with an emphasis on enhancing student experience and allowing students to develop competencies in conducting reviews across various sectors. This uniquely structured academic program gives students the opportunity to expand their skill set into teaching, public speaking, and furthering their research experience.

Our work involves an internal qualitative study of the experience of approximately 15-20 UNCOVER members in various roles. We will collect information through semi-structured interviews, on topics such as personal experiences and expectations of joining UNCOVER; perceived advantages/disadvantages of working collaboratively; and time management. We will explore how individuals identify their role and contributions to UNCOVER; skills gained or pursued; their reflections on working with UNCOVER during the COVID-19; and suggestions for future changes. This is a discrete, grant-funded, student-led research project within UNCOVER.

The main purpose is to contribute to continuous improvement of the UNCOVER model. It is perhaps unique as a real-time, student-led evaluation of an innovative staff-student collaboration, which will help shape the future of the UNCOVER program and support best-practice in other multi-disciplinary academic research initiatives.

The relationships between gender, physics identity, self-efficacy, and the retention of women in physics undergraduate degrees.

Ewan Bottomley, Antje Kohnle, Kenneth Mavor, Paula Miles, Vivienne Wild

University of St. Andrews

The retention of women in physics higher education is a national problem in the UK, with the female/male ratio on enhanced first degrees (MPhys) being significantly lower than the female/male ratio on BSc degrees. A large-scale US study has shown that the intention to continue with physics is positively associated with physics identity (Hazari 2010). Thus, investigating physics identity may be an important aspect of enhancing retention in physics. We report here on quantitative and qualitative work investigating undergraduate physics students' physics identity, self-efficacy and other related constructs. The results from 717 surveys (236 women, 481 men) showed that gender was indirectly related to physics identity via students' self-efficacy (their confidence in their ability to complete physics-based tasks). Moreover, women reported significantly less self-efficacy than men. These results were corroborated by semi-structure interviews with a small number of physics students, where some female students reported feelings of imposter syndrome. Some women reported that they often doubted their abilities in physics, and that this impacted on their experiences in the classroom and their desire to continue with physics. Based on outcomes of this work, we are currently developing an intervention focusing on imposter syndrome based on Walton and Cohen's (2011) belonging intervention, which may be relevant for wider institutional adoption.

Breaking Barriers: Personal, Academic and Community; An innovative approach to virtual widening participation summer schools.

Alex Martin-Carey, Gemma Hunt, Betsy Porritt, Paige Policelli
University of Kent

The Breaking Barriers Summer Schools reimagine the place-based summer school for the virtual environment. The model developed out of the four elements identified by Bandura as key to developing self-efficacy[1], and the recognition that for students to succeed at school and progress confidently into HE they not only need information and understanding of HE, but genuine confidence in their own abilities and the skills to take care of their wellbeing. The pandemic experience has only heightened the challenges students face in acquiring these key skills and experiences, compounding the learning loss experienced by disadvantaged and underrepresented students. The Breaking Barriers summer schools will help to redress this loss, by taking students on a journey of discovery, starting with personal barriers to their own wellbeing, moving through academic barriers to discover university learning and research, and finishing with a community barriers project in which students put these skills and ideas into practice, alongside concrete academic skills developed during the programme.

This presentation will share details of the concept and structure of the Breaking Barriers Summer Schools for Year 12 and Year 10 students, as well as outcomes from both events, including data from the Year 10 event which will form part of the TASO Summer Schools evaluation project. We will also share examples of student work and ambassador reflections, to propose a new pedagogical model for pre-entry summer school activity in the post-pandemic world.

[1] Bandura, A. 1977. "Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioural change." *Psychological Review* 84 (2): 191-215.

The importance of interpersonal relationships in creating a sense of student belonging and an inclusive student experience.

Neil Currant
University of the Arts, London

Student engagement (e.g. Kuh et al. 2005) and more recently belonging (e.g. Thomas et al. 2017) are recognised as important concepts in building an inclusive student experience. Based on institutional research into the experiences of British Asian and Black students at a predominately white institution (PWI), this talk discusses the importance of staff - student relationships and student – student academic relationships (i.e. through group work) in creating a sense of student belonging to build an inclusive student experience.

The talk will firstly discuss different conceptualisations of belonging in higher education. Drawing on this research and from literature on student engagement and belonging, I will present a practical model of belonging using sense of fit and interpersonal relationships. This model is designed to help university colleagues to think about how they can support students' sense of belonging to create inclusive learning environments.

Often in higher education, creating a sense of belonging is associated with student – student social relationships and extra- and co-curricular activity. However, this research identified that staff - student relationships and group work were the crucial ingredients for creating a sense of belonging. For many British Asian and Black students, what happens in the classroom and with academic staff is key. I will discuss this finding and in the facilitated discussion participants can explore the model and practical actions that can be taken to create a sense of belonging and build an inclusive student experience.

Building an inclusive student experience through the implementation of Peer Assisted Learning sessions

*Linnea Wallen, Karl Johnson, Lisa Vettese Cruden
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh*

The Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) model is globally well-established as a key provision in building an inclusive student experience and the body of research evidencing its efficacy is constantly expanding. Queen Margaret University (QMU) has a diverse student population, with a high percentage coming from Widening Participation backgrounds and many matriculating into second or third year on completion of a relevant college qualification. Initially set-up in 2017 to support WP students to find their place in the university community, the scheme has now expanded into multiple divisions across QMU's two Schools and has become an integral part of student support for all students at the university. PAL offers a student-led and supportive space for students across programmes and years to explore and develop their learning together, in both a face-to-face and online environment. The recent move to the online environment has allowed for significant flexibility in delivery, which has been beneficial for all students and students with additional support needs in particular. Presenting qualitative and quantitative data gathered through surveys, focus groups, exam boards and reflective leader statements, we will demonstrate the impact of PALS on attainment, retention and progression for QMU students into and throughout their university journey. We will reflect on the impact of the scheme on participants, as well as the trained leaders, and how PAL as supported them in the development of transferable and employability skills. In all, we will argue for the valuable role that PAL can play in building an inclusive student experience.

Contextual admissions, adjusted offers and university experiences

Yvonne Skipper¹, Charlotte Bagnall²

¹University of Glasgow, ²University of Exeter

Contextual admissions, or adjusted offers, consider the context of an applicant's attainment; meaning that Universities may offer a student who has experienced difficult circumstances a lower threshold for entry to a course than a student from a more stable or affluent background. While all institutions are committed to 'fair' admissions, there are significant differences between Higher Education institutions in how contextual data is applied at different points in the admissions process. To date, there has been some research exploring how stakeholders such as university admissions teams and schoolteachers view the contextual admissions process, but there is limited research exploring student voice and their lived experiences. This lack of insight is concerning as it may be that those receiving an adjusted offer may enter university feeling less confident in their abilities to do well. Students with adjusted offers may also experience psychological challenges such as lower self-efficacy and higher feelings of imposter syndrome.

In this talk we will be presenting preliminary findings from our interview study which explored the first-hand experiences of university students with adjusted offers from various universities. We seek to unravel whether university students with adjusted offers believe their adjusted offer impacted their university experience. The interviews are currently being conducted and will be analysed using Thematic Analysis in time for the conference to maximise discussion.

This valuable first-hand insight could inform support provisions for students with adjusted offers as they enter university and throughout their time at university, and inform University policies.

NTU's Student 2025

Francoise McKay¹, Jenny Hambling², Francoise McKay¹

¹Nottingham Trent University, ²

We are proposing to lead a 10-minute presentation introducing Student 2025; a longitudinal study, seeking to explore the academic and social experiences of a sample of 100 students beginning September 2021. Students will be recruited from Nottingham Trent University's Access and Participation Plan (APP) target groups and 'counterfactual' comparison students. Running from 2021/22 to 2024/25, these Level 4 students will be tracked as they progress throughout their academic journey. A team of 4 institutional researchers will monitor their experience through a combination of questionnaires, interviews, and institutionally generated outcome data.

Student 2025 is rare in its longitudinal design, the breadth of its scope and the richness of the proposed data generation methods. Over the past few decades, only a few projects have sought to explore the student experience through a longitudinal lens that prioritises the voice and perspective of the student. The presentation will both introduce the concept of and justification for Student 2025 to sector colleagues in addition to raising some important questions around ethical and academically 'robust' student recruitment and the use and appropriateness of language when discussing student ethnicity and background (beyond Office for Student metrics).

We believe that the work underpinning this project relates to all four conference 'tracks' but we will make explicit the links between Student 2025 and how we plan to produce insights to further evidence NTU's inclusive policies and practices with the aim of building an inclusive student experience (conference 'tracks' 1+ 2).

Inclusive Practice Partnerships at the University of Brighton: improving student experience and attainment through inclusive policy and strategy

Jennifer Jones, Jo Hall, Joanna Macdonnell

University of Brighton

This presentation examines the implementation and initial evaluations of the Inclusive Practice Partnerships (IPP) Scheme at the University of Brighton. This project is a large-scale, partnership working initiative to co-create an inclusive curriculum. The IPP Scheme contributes to the achievement of institutional targets to reduce differential outcomes, specifically the awarding gap, within our Race Equality Charter Action Plan (UoB, 2020) and Access and Participation Plan (UoB, 2020). It is also a key part of the University's Learning and Teaching Inclusive Practice and Accessibility Policy (UoB, 2020). In the first year of the Scheme, partnership work has focused on diversifying and decolonising the curriculum, as requested by students at our Anti-Racist Student Forum events.

In the first part of this presentation, we discuss partnership working as a methodology for decolonising and diversifying the curriculum and highlight the challenges and successes of implementing policy through a University-wide curriculum-based project. In the second part, we examine the evaluation of the Scheme, which assesses impact on student experience and attainment across university modules. The evaluation comprises a longitudinal mixed methods study over 2 years including: a survey, analysis of module attainment data and qualitative interviews, which seek to identify ways in which decolonising and diversifying the curriculum practices across University modules influence undergraduate student belonging, inclusion, and achievement; and what changes are taking place over time. We will present key findings from the evaluation so far that include: survey results and module attainment data analysis.

Mobilising opportunities for inclusion, engagement and co-creation of an online community

Sharon Turner

Queen Mary University of London

This talk explores the online migration of the 5-week Project Based Learning 'Project M2' simulation designed specifically with inclusion, engagement, community co-creation online in SEF030: Communication for Science and Engineering. The course consists of 20 groups, each with 20 students who were split into project groups and received both input and project work time in synchronous online sessions each week. Asynchronous tasks were built in to support team collaboration and to produce a joint project of a recorded poster presentation based on a material or method in science and an individual reflection. The course also needed to engage a diverse student population as well as cater for mixed disciplines, learning differences and socioeconomic status. Our online course not only had to work globally but also allow students to engage equally on a mobile phone.

The talk will begin with the theories from the relevant literature and practical considerations that were needed to increase inclusion, engagement and a sense of community for a course which is outside students' comfort zone. It will then look at practical examples of how inclusion, engagement and community building online were integrated and scaffolded. It will reflect on what worked and what lessons we learnt along the way. Further development will be explored through the lens of qualitative participant feedback and quantitative analytics. A 20 minute interactive discussion will ensue after the talk covering the main themes of inclusion, engagement and community building as well as accessibility and social justice.

Using an investigative pragmatic approach to teach about theories

Bruno Travassos-Britto¹, Paulo Prado¹, Charbel El-Hani², Renata Pardini³, Daniela Scarpa¹

¹University of São Paulo, ²Federal University of Bahia, ³University of São paulo

Investigative teaching is a fairly known approach in school teaching. However, because such approaches are usually based on methods for investigating well-known phenomena, they are not as used to teach about topics that are on the frontier of knowledge generation, which is often the case for topics learned at the higher education level. Recently, I have developed a pragmatic approach to investigate theories that are currently under development; the Pragmatic Approach to Theories (PATH). The approach aims at identifying the most relevant concepts being used as conceptual bases to learn about the phenomenon (its pragmatic theory). In this study, I created a course for graduate students in ecology based on the PATH, in which students apply the approach to learn about a specific theoretical domain (i.e. the theory of species coexistence). Students were required to define the phenomenon of species coexistence, decide how the approach would be carried out, discussing the consequences of making these decisions, and discussing the final output of the approach. At the moment, I am analysing data from the student's learning experience through the course. Preliminary data show that students are using more complex cognitive skills than they would use in more traditional courses aimed at teaching theories. Another finding is that through the course the students experience different epistemic practices related to inquiry science, engineering, and socioscientific systems.

University Students' Experiences of Access and Inclusion in Teaching and Learning

Ameera Ali

York University

This presentation will provide a brief overview of preliminary findings of a current study wherein [undergraduate and graduate] students from a University in Toronto (Canada) were interviewed regarding their experiences of and perspectives on accessibility within their classrooms. This presentation will begin by defining, conceptualizing, and operationalizing accessibility and accessible learning (and teaching). A brief summary of the current study will then be provided, which will then be followed by an overview of preliminary findings of the study. The presentation will conclude by adopting a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) lens to offer strategies through which accessible learning can be fostered based upon student contributions from the study. This session will underscore the salience of putting student perspectives first when considering how to foster and support accessible learning. The session is primarily targeted at university and college faculty as well as educational developers working in educational institutions. University students may also find this presentation useful as it emphasizes and privileges the perspectives of learners in discussing the promotion of accessible learning.

What is education even for? And if we haven't figured that out, how do we know we're doing it right?

Karen Porter

University of St Andrews

What is education for? If we can answer that, in the most basic of terms, educators (individuals and institutions) can be more confident about the value of education that we provide. Being confident in knowing the answer to what education is for impacts *how* we deliver learning, *what* we deliver and how we *evaluate* what students have gained from what we have offered them.

How will we explore the question? Universal emotions of CARING, CURIOSITY, COOPERATION and COPING WITH LOSS fuel motivated effort to change ourselves by acquiring new experiences, skills and knowledge. While the emotions are ubiquitous, their expressions are unique. We will reflect on the ways that we experience each emotion: how we recognise CARE, what we are CURIOUS about, when we are moved to COOPERATE, and how we deal with feelings of threat or challenge. Considering our own emotion drivers, and sharing experiences with others, will inform us about the variety of human motivation both to learn and to support others' learning.

What might we gain? Explicit understanding of our unique motivations for learning and teaching will help us to educate in meaningful and valued ways, and to select appropriate curriculum content likely to fuel students' enthusiastic engagement. Understanding potential responses to aversive situations and acknowledging the discomfort they cause will inform us about how we might frame difficulties as challenges, threats or opportunities. Understanding the purpose of learning will help us select appropriate ways of measuring progress of value to learner and educator alike.

The lived experience of disabled academics with chronic fatigue ill-health: An ethnographic of disability intervention in a UK university

Olugbenga [Abraham] Babajide

Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh.

Disabled academics experience ableism and disablism in higher education institutions [HEIs], and their lived experience of hidden disabilities such as chronic fatigue ill-health is hardly visible. The disclosure rate of hidden disabilities in HEIs is low and disabled academics are underrepresented and under-researched while the institutional structure avoids catering for their needs - particularly those living with chronic fatigue ill-health. The increase of chronic impairments coupled with the impact of Covid-19 is pivotal to this research. This doctoral research as part of the Disability Inclusive Science Careers [DISC] project aims to make UK universities more inclusive/accessible for disabled academic living with chronic fatigue ill-health. To come across as an 'ideal academic', disabled academics must work twice as hard and self-navigate their working lives with limited institutional support (unlike customer students) in neoliberal institutions where the illusory expectation of perfection (ableism) is embedded into the organisational culture. To achieve meaningful disability inclusion and accessibility, this research has considered exploring organisation culture through Ethnography/Netnography and understanding the lived experience of disabled academics living chronic fatigue ill-health in line with how disabled academics are managed. This provides an opportunity for triangulation of qualitative data to uncover holistic insight/findings that would foster inclusivity and accessibility in policies for disabled academics in HEIs in the UK. The talks for this event will be accompanied by presentation slides that will involve discussion about disabled academics, chronic fatigue ill-health, disability disclosure among disabled academics, methodological approach, and potential findings to develop/improve an inclusive institutional culture.

Evaluating strategies to engage peer and inner feedback through exemplar use on a postgraduate distance module

Matthew Tolley, Mark Carver

University of St Andrews

Exemplars are recommended as good practice in encouraging student partnership in feedback, encouraging a type of reflection that has been described as 'inner feedback' (To & Carless, 2016). Benefits from exemplars include reducing power imbalances between lecturers and students by negotiating tacit assessment judgements, encouraging students to develop their own understanding of what counts as quality, and making comparisons between their own works-in-progress and examples of other students' work (Scoles et al., 2013). In distance learning, discussion around exemplars can also help to develop shared understandings of quality, clarify assessment expectations, and facilitate a sense of community. Exemplars also allow for much earlier feedback, particularly important on short modules, meaning that they can help students to prepare for their own assessments early in their module. However, exemplars can also be seen to lack relevance to students' own intentions, struggle to find a balance between revealing enough tacit knowledge to be useful without restricting students' understanding of valid approaches to tasks, and – despite the intention for inclusive dialogue – may give disproportionate advantages to the highest-attaining students.

In this session, Matt will explain the results of his MSc TESOL dissertation interviews asking postgraduate students about their exemplar use, suggesting which theoretical frameworks from his literature review are most helpful in considering the extent to which exemplars support an inclusive student experience. Mark, as the lecturer who designed the module under study, will then invite discussion around reflections on exemplar use from a staff perspective and 'lessons learnt' when revising the module.

Supporting Vulnerable Students through Personal Tutoring: Is More Upfront Student Information Helpful?

*Sara Hannam, Roger Dalrymple
Oxford Brookes University*

This presentation will address a noticeable trend towards increased use of data analytics for the purposes of enhancing support to HE students, and, in particular, disclosure and collection of undergraduate demographic and personal characteristics data at the point of enrolment. We ask how far such information, apart from its use in statistical reporting and monitoring of student outcomes, might be of pedagogic value in inclusive personal tutoring.

With reference to such recent developments as the Office for Students' revision of the categories of 'vulnerable' students, especially following the onset of the global health pandemic, our research asks might a differentiated form of personal tutoring, which takes cognisance of the support arrangements recommended for different categories of student vulnerability, contribute to inclusive practice development by supporting transition and progression.

Based on a professional development session the authors ran at a post-92 university and the data deriving from four focus groups convened with experienced personal tutors from a range of disciplines, the paper explores attitudes and perceptions to the question of how far an increasingly differentiated model of personal tutoring would represent a positive step in inclusive practice development.

Findings include pronounced variation in staff views of the kinds of learning analytics and demographic data they would find helpful - and would feel comfortable having access to. We conclude by theorising these findings in the light of research from adjacent educational sectors and propose some next steps in mobilising personal tutoring as a dimension of inclusive practice development.

Value and power: perceptions of Education Focused academic careers in research intensive universities

Anita Laidlaw¹, Stephanie Bull², Alison Cooper³, Louise Milne⁴, India Pinker¹, Shelly Parr⁵

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The landscape of Higher Education in the UK is constantly changing and the proportion of academic staff on education focused (EF) contracts has increased from 10% of the workforce in 2002, 26% in 2014/15 to 32% in 2019/20. An EF academic may experience difficulties in career progression and identity, particularly in a research intensive environment and across the sector there is also a rising level of poor mental health amongst academics. However, we do not have a clear and current understanding of what factors facilitate or are barriers to career progression for EF academics in research intensive universities.

Our study aimed to address gaps in the literature relating to our understanding of career progression for EF academics within research intensive universities.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 45 EF academics at differing stages of their career from 11 research intensive universities across three UK nations. Framework analysis utilised two appropriate organizational theories; Kanter's structural theory of power within organisations and Feldman and Ng's Career Mobility, Embeddedness and Success, as lenses through which to explore this topic.

Our preliminary findings suggest that; 1) there is significant variability in the value placed on education and EF academics at both organisational and school level, 2) critical mass of EF academics is helpful at either school or organisational level, 3) there is limited agreement as to what an EF pathway is, and therefore appropriate promotion criteria, and 4) the senior school management culture is a significant influence on the experience of EF academics.

International Offices in the European and Indian Universities: Mediators or Drivers of Change?

Pranjali Kirloskar¹, Neeta Inamdar²

¹Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India, ²Professor

Internationalization of higher education has been a prominent response to the growing global academic competition. Universities across the world are characterized by strategic decision-making and optimum planning of resources and personnel. Against this need of developing distinct organizational strategies for attaining global visibility, the role of international offices becomes prominent in the pursuit of internationalization.

The responsibilities shared by the international office staff largely may focus on incoming mobilities, outgoing exchanges, international projects, and partnerships; whose activities are overseen by the individuals in the management. However, what is interesting to explore is the extent to which international office staff has a role to play in taking decisions on internationalization. Do we need a central international office in a higher education institution? Are international offices only mediators between two institutions? Or the international office staff practically designs and drives the internationalization strategy?

This research focuses on some of the key observations at the international offices in higher education institutions in India and Europe. The overt and covert role of hierarchy in different workspaces, the implicit perceptions of internationalization, the day-to-day responsibilities which the international office staff is in charge of are some of the themes addressed in this presentation.

A commons for online learning : Supporting students' data protection preferences

Janis Wong, Lea Racine, Tristan Henderson, Kirstie Ball

University of St Andrews

COVID-19 meant that UK higher education institutions had to implement online teaching models overnight, without time for due consideration of appropriate data protection practices or impact assessments. This not only affects students' and staff's university experience, but also how their institution processes their personal data under the General Data Protection Regulation. As lecture capture, tutorial recording, and educational surveillance become implemented and, in many cases, mandatory, students and staff may less willingly participate in classes, creating a chilling effect on education. The GDPR offers solutions such as applying fairness and transparency principles and exercising data subject rights. However, this is insufficient where data subjects have no choice but to accept their institutions' terms or be locked out of academia and the power imbalances between students and their institutions.

In this presentation, we introduce a data protection-focused data commons, a collaborative space for resource sharing and contribution to support and give data subjects autonomy over their own personal data preferences. We develop and test an application for existing educational platforms that accounts for best practices for tutorial recording, learning analytics, and educational technology. We will discuss our preliminary results for this study by measuring the data protection-focused data commons' effectiveness for encouraging the co-creation of better data protection solutions in relation to their privacy awareness and attitudes towards online learning technologies. Finally, we demonstrate how a commons can balance the implementation of educational technologies with the need to deliver online learning to benefit student's and staff's academic experience.

"It's reset a lot of relationships": the TEF and the HE workforce

Francoise McKay

University of Oxford (2018-19)

This short session will present the findings of a 2019 case study on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to explore academic schools as spaces of 'policy enactment', and professional services staff, with their nuanced and complex identities and experiences, as policy actors.

Each slide will briefly explore a different dimension of this issue, including: a brief overview of why the micro and meso experiences of professional services staff (and their 'academic manager' colleagues) are worth exploring; what these staff are doing in academic units when regulatory policies such as the TEF are introduced; and what should therefore be considered by institutions when embedding external policies and regulation. The session would be particularly relevant to research and development practitioners within institutions, senior colleagues involved in workforce and strategic planning and to government departments looking to learn how policy is translated and implemented by the oft-forgotten HE workforce. In providing insights into the reality of local activity it aims to reposition central Higher Education (HE) policy within institutional discourse as opportunities rather than threats. The research underpinning this session has been written up as a chapter in an upcoming book on Higher Education Leadership and Governance (Emerald Publishing, December 2021).

Sharing SoTL Approaches to Address Awarding Gaps

Diane Butler¹, Trevor Collins²

¹Faculty of STEM, The Open University, ²KMi, The Open University

This talk will explore how higher education practitioners can be empowered to address institutional problems. Specifically in the context of the Access and Participation Plans, we argue that the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) can be a valuable mechanism to raise awareness, develop ownership and engage distributed expertise to develop institutional solutions. Although the Open University is an open entry institution, like many HE providers, we have significant differences in the outcomes for specific student groups. Indeed, we have ambitious institutional targets to reduce awarding gaps and improve access and progression of students from BAME backgrounds, students from low-socioeconomic areas, and students with physical disabilities, mental health issues, or low prior qualifications.

The Open University's STEM faculty has a well-established SoTL centre (eSTEEeM). In 2020, in conjunction with the University's Access Participation and Success team, eSTEEeM initiated a faculty-wide discussion of our student awarding gaps encouraging practitioners to formulate a scholarly approach to addressing the issues. Through a variety of activities, eSTEEeM sought to empower colleagues to deepen their understanding and take ownership of our APP targets. This has resulted in a significant body of SoTL projects, led by STEM practitioners, which will deepen our knowledge of the awarding gaps and inform the development and evaluation of interventions to reduce them. We will present the mechanisms introduced to initiate these conversations and the support they offered practitioners to question and develop their teaching practices, and invite delegates to discuss these alongside their strategies for building an inclusive student experience.

Learning through Doing: An Inclusive Staff-Student Community Responding to COVID-19

*Emilie McSwiggan, Durga Kulkarni, Prerna Krishan, Bohee Lee, Madhurima Nundy, Neneh Rowa-Dewar
University of Edinburgh*

This student-led presentation draws on the experience of creating a collaborative, inter-disciplinary academic community (UNCOVER: the Usher Network for COVID-19 Evidence Reviews) to address complex, real-world questions about COVID-19 and its consequences.

We explore the benefits of an inclusive approach in terms of problem-solving, quality of work, and opportunities for student and staff development.

We discuss the context in which UNCOVER was created: to provide rapid, reliable evidence reviews for policy-makers and decision-makers responding to the pandemic. We explore how this has provided an opportunity to bridge the gap between academia and practice, and offered greater scope for student leadership and growth. We have achieved this through peer-mentorship, internships and project opportunities, and students rapidly stepping into roles with increasing responsibility.

We also explore the 'growing pains' or challenges arising from this innovative new way of working: the instability and rapid change; the challenges of flattening the hierarchy; and the need to manage boundaries as people stepped up into new roles and we felt our way towards productive and sustainable ways of working.

UNCOVER student/graduate volunteers will share our experiences of participating in UNCOVER, and ways in which we have co-produced its working model. We will discuss the role of the Student Forum and other channels for free exchange of opinions; how student involvement led to the creation of an UNCOVER conference and an inclusive model for publications; and the growing emphasis on transferable skills - using workshops and practical opportunities to support student experience, academic development and employability.

Investigating student wellbeing across an academic year to improve the experience of taught postgraduate students

*Francesca Fotheringham, Paula Miles, Veronica O'Carroll
University of St Andrews*

Students with greater wellbeing typically have higher academic achievement and a better student experience (Humphrey & McCarthy, 1998; Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2011). Unfortunately, student wellbeing has been reported to be significantly poorer than the general adult population (Stallman, 2010). This disparity is particularly stark for postgraduate (PGT) students who have been named the 'forgotten cohort' (Coneyworth, Jessop, Maden & White, 2019). This is attributed to many challenges unique to PGT students: transitioning to a new environment, change in social support, having higher academic expectations, unstable living environment, financial stress, and juggling responsibilities and expectations (Coneyworth et al., 2019). PGT students have also faced additional challenges this academic year due to the pandemic where loneliness, uncertainty and online learning/social interactions have become a source of difficulty.

The current study uses a longitudinal mixed method design undertaking both questionnaire (including the CORE-GP wellbeing scale; Evans et al., 2005) and focus group methodologies to understand: 1) PGT wellbeing across the academic year; 2) how PGT wellbeing from a pre-COVID cohort (2018-2019) compares to the current, COVID-impacted cohort; 3) how University policy can support PGT students and what tools can be developed in practice to support their wellbeing. Preliminary results have demonstrated that PGT wellbeing is poorer than undergraduate wellbeing and gets significantly worse throughout the academic year. Students reported that the following factors can negatively impact wellbeing: social support/infrastructure, juggling responsibilities, COVID-19 and health issues. Encouragingly, students equated good wellbeing to University resources and staff, their social support network, and personal experiences.

Evaluating medical student perception of virtual versus face-to-face communication skills teaching

*Eva Peck, Mari Roberts, Jill Keohane
University of St Andrews*

Introduction

Undergraduate medical education adapted in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, with the University of St Andrews adopting exclusively virtual history-taking sessions. Virtual communication skills sessions are as effective as in-person learning, however student opinion has not been evaluated. This project aimed to compare perceptions of virtual versus face-to-face communication skills sessions and identify areas for development.

Methods

After ethics committee approval, an anonymous online survey was distributed to medical students. Survey questions included Likert scales assessing attitudes towards teaching, with free text boxes to expand on opinions. Comments were qualitatively analysed.

Results

There were 81 responses. Perception of patient encounters as 'realistic' was lower for online sessions (27% vs 78%), however confidence in taking a history was higher (77% vs 64%). Students felt in-person sessions were better at meeting their learning needs (88% vs 47%) and preparing them for clinical practice (91% vs 64%). Most (75%) did not prefer online sessions, due to themes of non-verbal communication and technological issues. However, 53% would like them to continue, highlighting a relaxed atmosphere and increased support.

Discussion

Analysis indicated confidence was increased by a less pressured environment in online sessions, resulting in lower stress levels. Some had poorer experiences due to technological problems - a common issue in telemedicine. Virtual sessions were considered unrealistic, however tele-consultations became common during the pandemic. Virtual sessions therefore reflect clinical practice, but did not meet student expectations. In conclusion, students support a blended approach of virtual and face-to-face sessions, providing high quality teaching.

Disseminating Best Practice for a Global Audience: A Case Study.

*David Wooff¹, Sue Beckingham², Claire Stocks¹, Dawne Irving-Bell³
¹BPP University, ²Sheffield Hallam University, ³Edge Hill University*

The work presented here brings together leading initiatives developed to debate, collaborate and disseminate the very best of learning and teaching practice in Higher Education (HE). It draws on the experience of leading practitioners who have developed avenues to facilitate and encourage those working across all areas of HE to support each other openly and freely. Operating in a digital space, it will be shown how such initiatives transcend the traditional confines of institutional boundaries to reach a global audience. In some cases, these initiatives have seen an accelerated evolution due to the impact of the pandemic, conversely others have been formed, developed, and delivered during this time. Analytical trend data will be presented to demonstrate the impact these initiatives and spaces have had during the pandemic which indicates they are likely to continue beyond the pandemic. This work draws on the experiences of a founder of the Twitter #LTHEChat discussion group, the #SOCMedHE conference community and the founder of the "National Teaching Repository" with additional representation from other key stakeholders in the HE learning and teaching community. Framed in an autoethnographic narrative, we then go on to explore how the wider HE community accesses, and embraces, the effective sharing of best practice with the ultimate aim of positively impacting practice to enhance the student experience.

What lessons can be learnt from COVID-19 that will help enhance future teaching scheduling for our students?

*Nigel Page, Gary Forster-Wilkins, Mark Bonetzky
Kingston University London*

On-campus scheduling has been the major way students identify and interact with their learning environment, both in time and space, which can be reflected in the student experience and levels of engagement. This is often purported by the traditional view that the UK university experience is characterised by young people moving a long way from home for the first time and becoming a direct part of university life. Nonetheless, this perceived notion is less true particularly set against widening participation where over the past few years students from a diverse range of backgrounds have been encouraged into university with many of these now living at home and commuting (most being BME). Therefore, changes preceding COVID-19 were already placing significant challenges in developing inclusive strategies; especially, in countering a student population that was becoming increasingly more strategic in judging their own learning needs and perceived value in making the journey to campus. This presentation will explore our journey at Kingston University from pre-COVID-19 scheduling, the twists and turns through social distancing and intermittent lockdowns and what lessons can be taken forward post-COVID-19. We will review the outcomes of data obtained locally within one school and the wider university and nationally especially considering NSS Q16 ('the timetable works efficiently for me') and what impact this has had this year. We will be joined for narratives from academic staff and our Head of Timetabling in discussing timetabling realities post-COVID-19 and what the new drivers are to better reflect our current student needs.

Raising the awareness of inclusive education in a community college

Chi-Ho Joseph So¹, Yuk-Wang Bernardo Wong²

¹College of Professional and Continuing Education, ²Hong Kong Community College

Studies have shown that the proportion of students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the world is increasing over the past few decades (Cline & Frederickson, 2009; Folin et al, 2013; Gulliford & Upton, 2002; McCauley, 2009; Westwood, 2007). In Hong Kong, an increasing number of students with SEN was found in public schools (Audit Commission of Hong Kong, 2018). It is expected that more students with SEN will enter tertiary education including community colleges in the coming years. To cater for the increasing number of students, funded by the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme, PolyU Hong Kong Community College launched a two-year project in 2019. One of the project objectives is to raise awareness of inclusive education on campus. To achieve so, a series of activities were held for staff and students during the project period. First, a set of lecturer guidelines for supporting students with SEN was created. Lecturers can follow the guidelines to understand different types of SEN and offer appropriate accommodation such as special exam arrangements. Second, multiple campaigns were launched to promote an inclusive campus experience, including a Caring Leadership training programme and a whole-school online SEN promotion. Participants of these campaigns learnt different ways to cater for SEN and they were submerged in an inclusive environment. Up to May 2021, a total of 63 activities was held and more than 1000 participants, including students, staff, and students with SEN, participated in the activities. Positive views of the relevancy and appropriateness of the activities were also received.

Group vs Individual Exercise on Academic Stress and Academic Performance

*Ian Boyle, Anita Laidlaw, Gozde Ozakinci
University of St Andrews*

Introduction: Academic stress affects not only the mental and physical health of students but also their academic performance. Physical activity and social support have shown to buffer the effects of stress. We do not understand whether social support mediates the relationship between physical activity, academic stress and academic performance amongst university students. It is hypothesised that there will be a difference in academic stress and performance between different forms of exercise. It is further hypothesised that group exercise will provide further stress mediation through higher perceived social support.

Methods: Students from the University of St Andrews were invited to take part in an online survey. This comprised of the PAS (academic stress), the MSPSS (perceived social support) and the recreational physical activity portion of the GPAQ. Participants were also asked to provide their average grade from the previous semester and if they exercise predominantly as a group, individually or not at all.

Results: The results showed a significant difference in perceived social support between exercise types ($p = 0.012$) with group exercise participants reporting significantly higher perceived social support than individual exercise participants ($p = 0.009$). No other significant results were found.

Conclusions: The results indicate that students who exercise as part of a group report significantly higher perceived social support than those who exercise as an individual. While non-significant, a number of the results followed the pattern expected by the hypotheses. There remains a need for universities to reduce academic stress in students to improve mental and physical health.

Promoting a sense of belonging in under-represented students across an institution.

*Ewan Bottomley, Kenneth Mavor, Theodora Sabadeanu, Tahira Chopra, Brenda Marin
University of St. Andrews*

Fostering students' sense of belonging as part of a university can have numerous benefits with regards to their academic outcomes. For example, the feeling of belonging as part of the university has been associated with greater academic performance and sense of subjective happiness. Consequentially, belonging interventions have been used in educational psychology to promote a sense of belonging in students. Most notably, Walton and Cohen's 2011 belonging intervention found that when first-year students read about the challenging experiences of older students, and how they had been successful in spite of these challenges, the first-year students reported significantly less belonging uncertainty. These effects seem to particularly benefit under-represented students. Currently, we are creating a manual for the University of St. Andrews to help educators across the institution to implement some of the lessons from Walton and Cohen's studies. We have asked our students to reflect on their introduction to the University of St. Andrews to examine what groups report a difficult transition to the University and do not feel like they belong as part of the institution. The results of this will inform our manual to help educators across the University. We are collaborating with members of the Centre of Higher Education Research and supported by the Centre for Educational Enhancement Development at St. Andrews University to create and distribute our manual across the institution. Our aim is to incorporate the belonging intervention into specific schools' induction programmes, to foster a sense of belonging at the initial transition to the University.

Understanding the data to close the awarding gap in the biosciences

Nigel Page

Kingston University London

Closing the awarding gap is not only about implementation to deliver equitable outcomes but requires institutional understanding of the data. It is particularly important to institutions such as Kingston University given the high proportion of home students who come from BME backgrounds. Differing attainment not only affects retention and success, but progression into further study/employment. Our data demonstrates a host of potential factors that may contribute to the awarding gap including from the impact of commuting, differential motivators for studying at university, sense of belonging, the effect of peer support, wider networking opportunities to the design and delivery of assessments. These features all present distinctive challenges in securing equitable outcomes, where it can be difficult to single out the impact of any individual factor or the interplay between them. In this context, this presentation will review some of the inclusive interventions and initiatives that we have made in our practice using examples from the biosciences at Kingston University from designing our curriculum to impact of the timetable in curriculum delivery; content availability and the virtual learning environment; the exploration of differential attainment by assessment type; and how data obtained locally and through the use of university wide module/course dashboards can be used to highlight and act on areas of inequality. Ultimately, these approaches need to be consolidated and reflected in greater staff awareness of the relevant issues along with appropriate guidance/policies to provide holistic solutions beyond just the data.

Examining the interconnectedness of medical students and its impact on achievement and wellbeing

Gerens Curnow¹, Rohini Terry², Sohag Saleh³, Neil Rice², Vrinda Nayak², Daniele Carrieri², Mark Tarrant², Stephanie Bull²

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There is an awarding gap between White and BAME medical students in the UK, with no clear cause identified. One hypothesis suggests the way students form socio-academic groups negatively impacts BAME students. Micro-aggressions from faculty and other students, and culturally limited practices within academic societies, may limit inclusion in networks that could support students' academia and wellbeing.

This two-site, mixed-methods study, explores socio-academic group formation by early-years medical students, and how these groups relate to ethnicity, academic performance, and wellbeing.

Ethnicity, socio-academic connections, social identification, and wellbeing, are being explored using a questionnaire, which will be analysed alongside academic performance records. Semi-structured interviews contextualising these findings and exploring the experience of forming and belonging to socio-academic groups are underway.

Early quantitative data indicates that most students have formed a number of connections that support their academic success. Of concern, is that others state that they have not formed any connections and do not socially identify with their cohort. There are also indications that BAME students may interact less with faculty and may be at higher risk of suffering significant wellbeing concerns than White students.

Early qualitative analysis reveal that students seek socio-academic support from others with complementary characteristics, and value the opportunity to find this support from a diverse student population. There is recognition that BAME students may experience additional challenges with a unanimous wish for change.

Data collection concludes in July. This study hopes to provide insight into the awarding gap, and contribute to building inclusive student communities.

The impact and ecological validity of vocational-practice-based assessment modes in STEM curriculum degrees on widening access and improving attainment

*Jo Turbitt, Jo Turbitt
Edinburgh College*

In a recent MEd study (2019) data indicated that if an alternative assessment mode to a written essay were available to students on vocational arts degrees (specifically SCQF Level 10 Dance), candidates would be more engaged with and confident in assessment tasks. Participants in the study were asked to generate practical evidence for an assessment instrument that they had previously produced written evidence for in order to ascertain whether or not if an alternative had been available to them a) would their self-efficacy with the assessment mode be different, b) were they more or less confident in the alternative assessment task and c) did they consider it more or less valuable to their learning. A further focus group of dance education specialist were recruited; data gathered here indicated that while an alternative assessment mode would need to be robust enough for students to be able to generate sufficient measurable evidence against set criterion, it is possible that it would be an alternative mode could be considered to support students confidences and self-efficacies. This has led to the current line of enquiry and research proposal around the ecological validity of practice-based assessment modes across a spectrum of STEM HE curriculum, the impact this could have on widening access to HE for those in the main SIMDs, the low efficacy that students from SIMDs may associate to STEM/ HE and address the gaps in lecturers efficacy to creating responsive alternative assessment modes and what could be implemented to improve their creative-confidences.

Enhancing transferable skills though active learning – a VIP case study

*Gosia Mitka, Luc Bridet
University of St Andrews*

In the academic year 2020/21 the University of St Andrews launched its pilot Vertically Integrated Projects. The HMO Caps in St Andrews, evaluating the impact of the HMO licenses freeze on the St Andrews housing market has been one of them. Based on students' feedback, it proved to deliver a valuable and rewarding experience. In my presentation, I would like to discuss the special form of delivery and assessment for this module. Students are challenged by tackling a variety of tasks like scheduling and running meetings, planning, executing, documenting a research project, collecting data, designing a survey and interviews, obtaining an ethics approval, building an economic model, reflecting on their experience in a weekly reflective report, working in project teams and sub-teams, mentoring new team members, developing leadership and organisational skills, dividing tasks according to the year of study and credits, providing peer feedback, communicating to general audience using a video and a poster and to subject specific audience using a project progress report, etc. Although new and challenging, this unique experience provides students with an opportunity to apply and develop skills and knowledge that are directly transferable to a workplace and can give them more confidence and competitive advantage on the job market. These skills can be logged using our graduate attributes portal. I would like to share this experience, reflect on the challenges for the students and the supervisors, discuss what went well and what can be improved in the following years going ahead.

Co-Designing Graduates - Empowering Students Through Co-Design of the Curriculum

Lauren Moriarty

Leeds Beckett University

My study, *Co-Designing Graduates*, investigates the transition of product design graduates from higher education to industry. This is a timely reassessment of teaching and learning resources to support students to define careers in the workplace or to go on to postgraduate study. My research explores how the higher education curriculum needs to adapt in order to optimise employability of product design graduates and how these recommendations could be incorporated into an employability resource for design course teams, students and industrial partners to use. An important aspect is the development of my co-design methodology, working with stakeholders, including design students, to optimise graduate employability.

The co-design approach focuses on designing with students, not for them, therefore breaking down hierarchies in a process of empowerment. Establishing and developing a co-design methodology has led to the iteration of a number of solutions for embedding employability into our curriculum, bringing product design students and graduates together with relevant industrial partners and academic staff. The aims of the work are to enhance the student experience and to boost students' inclusion, employability, ongoing personal and professional development, relevance in industry and creative contribution to society, as well as informing and iterating undergraduate course curricula in the UK and internationally.

My findings focus on the outcomes of my ongoing co-design work with product design students, careers advisors, industry and academic teams, to explore the territory of graduate employability in order to design our co-created solutions for how we might embed employability into our course curriculum.

The Effectiveness of Virtual Reality Simulation in Robotic Surgical Training

Adam Burns

University of St Andrews

The technological innovation of robotic surgery has enhanced the potential of patient outcomes by augmenting the advancements of laparoscopic minimally invasive surgery. However, the variable standards of training due to the lack of a standardised curriculum, required to implement this new technology, has highlighted concerns over patient safety. Therefore, applying simulation as the principal teaching method eliminates the risk to patients during surgical training. Adopting this method of training facilitates the safe and effective incorporation of new innovations and technologies into healthcare. However, surgical robots remain scarce and are widely unavailable for educational purposes, and additional ethical considerations must be met with wet lab simulations. A potential solution to this issue has been introduced by the progression of computerised technology leading to an influx of VR, which neither requires a surgical robot or ethical considerations. The question remains whether VR is more effective at improving the surgical performance of trainees in robotics, compared to alternative simulation methods. Therefore, a critical review on the relevant literature was performed and as a result, it is believed that VR simulation training has the potential to be effective at improving the surgical performance of trainees in robotics. This review has highlighted the key areas that require additional input by researchers and should be applied as a guide to the next steps in future research. Therefore, this could play a role in the implementation of VR simulation into a robotic training curriculum and possibly other medical education programmes in the future.

Defining Resilience

*Anna Brown, Neha Gopinath, Samantha Ross, Shruti Narayanswamy
University of St Andrews*

This paper discusses a collaborative, student-led project ('Defining Resilience'), which developed a student-centred definition of resilience. The project responds to calls to generate shared definitions of resilience in HE and extends research into understanding resilience in different student cohorts and contexts (Brewer et al 2019). Understanding resilience is important because it encourages us to explore mental health and wellbeing, and support student learning. This understanding has the potential to apprise student-centred strategy on learning, teaching and assessment, pedagogical innovation, and student engagement (McIntosh and Shaw, 2017). Although there is agreement that resilience reflects the ability to adapt positively when faced with adversity (e.g. Prince-Embury and Saklofske, 2013) after fifty years of research there remains no universal definition (Etherton et al, 2020; Sanderson and Brewer 2017). Indeed, the definition of resilience is said to be context specific, meaning that how resilience is understood depends on how students perceive adversity, and how they respond to challenging situations to form positive outcomes. By defining resilience in the context of the University of St Andrews, our project gives voice to the 'hidden' aspects of the curriculum and aims to remove some of the structural inequalities experienced by students as they navigate University life (Haggis, 2006). It further contributes to the development of an inclusive student experience by positively supporting mental health, wellbeing, and a sense of belonging for students. Through this paper we share insights on definitions of resilience, as well as the process of how we are embedding this understanding in the curriculum.

Navigating Transitions to the Blended Environment: Exploring lecturers' experiences of policy and practice

*Jill Dickinson, Teri-Lisa Griffiths
Sheffield Hallam University*

Against the backdrop of an increasingly challenging Higher Education environment that has been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic, this paper reports on findings from a qualitative research project that explored lecturers' transitions to the blended learning and teaching environment. Adopting a case study approach the researchers recruited participants from across different subject groups at a post-1992 institution. The participants had varying previous experiences of teaching, supervising students' research, and providing personal tutor support at either undergraduate and/or postgraduate levels within the online environment. This longitudinal research study captured data towards the start of each of semesters 1 and 2 to examine any changes in lecturers' perceptions over time.

Adopting creative photovoice methods, the researchers invited each participant to share a photograph of their home working space to facilitate either focus group and/or interview discussions around both the benefits and challenges presented by this environment. As part of this interactive conference session, the presenters will invite delegates to participate in the same methods to encourage reflection on both their own experiences of navigating the transitions to the blended learning and teaching environment and also the creative techniques employed.

Placements in a Pandemic: design, delivery and dissection of Virtual Placement Days in a School of Medicine

Kathryn Steven, Rebecca Walmsley, Robert Humphreys

University of St Andrews

Introduction

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, clinical placements for second year medical students in 2021/ 2022 were not possible. A new approach was required to enable the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes normally gained through clinical exposure. The result was development of the 'Virtual Placement Day', delivered throughout semesters 1 and 2.

Methods

The virtual placement day consisted of 1) an interactive clinical case delivered using Nearpod and 2) a virtual history taking session with a patient partner via Microsoft Teams. Groups of 3-6 students participated in a virtual placement every fortnight. External and internal tutors facilitated the session via Microsoft Teams. Student feedback was sought through a bespoke evaluation form. Staff feedback was obtained informally through an online meeting at the end of the semester.

Results

There were 14 responses in semester 1 and 23 in Semester 2 (year group of 156 students). Student feedback was generally positive regarding the Nearpod case and the patient partner session, though some students expressed that virtual placements cannot replicate real clinical experience. Suggestions for improvement of Nearpod case were mostly around session length and time management. Regarding the patient partner session, students felt patients with histories linked to their in-house teaching would be beneficial. Responses also highlight the challenge of speaking to patients in groups.

Conclusion

It is likely that some form of virtual, clinically orientated learning will continue to be incorporated into the curriculum. Experiences of the Virtual Placement Day will enable us to further improve these opportunities for students.

We Are Human Too: An Innovative, Virtual Wellbeing Programme for Medical Students and Staff

Eva Peck, Zoe Arnott, Rowan Ah-See

University of St Andrews

Intro

The wellbeing of healthcare professionals has far-reaching consequences, including emotional distress; patient safety concerns; and extensive financial costs. Alongside physicians, medical students face unique challenges compared to their non-medical peers. Rates of mental health problems and poor wellbeing are high, with generic university support services often not addressing their specific concerns. Guidelines state that medical schools should proactively provide wellbeing support, which has been more challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Aim

To provide effective wellbeing interventions virtually to medical students and staff.

Methods

A range of wellbeing topics were presented across seven virtual events to students and staff at a UK medical school. Six events consisted of a talk followed by a Question-and-Answer section, with feedback collected via anonymous questionnaires including Likert scales and free text boxes. The final event was an informal, drop-in Question-and-Answer session; thus, no feedback was collected. Ethical approval was granted for secondary data use.

Results and Discussion

A total of 253 feedback questionnaires were completed. At each event, over 94% of respondents rated the content as highly relevant or relevant and a majority reported their practice would 'definitely' or 'potentially' change following each event (range: 91.2-100%). Qualitative analysis showed respondents particularly valued the "openness" and "honesty" of discussing mental health topics, as well as practical tools to enhance wellbeing. The virtual setting provided anonymity, accessibility and a "safe space".

Conclusion

These virtual events provide effective and cost-efficient wellbeing interventions, which addresses a vital need highlighted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Virtual Life Drawing – an inclusive student drawing experience with alternative deliveries.

Alex Roberts

Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, University of Dundee

How to solve the challenge of keeping life drawing active, engaged and inspired for art and design students during what became our, 'lockdown'?

Creating the virtual life room, a digital experience to relate as close to the real as possible. Inclusive of the social presence of propagating a drawing community.

Methods: updating theoretical course design and piloted online critique groups, workshops, and teaching deliveries (MA Education Module, *e-learning Pedagogy and Application*), applying to a full academic year of online life drawing. Adjusting F2F life drawing to be interactive, socially constructive, closely aligned to the experience of F2F delivery with effective technology formats. Devised by a mixture of tutor guided and student-led initiatives. Referencing comprehensive subject disciplines, all degree levels and from national and international perspectives. Examples platforms: *To Draw* (De Montfort University and DPUK); *Freies Zeichnen* (MdH Berlin); *The Virtual Life Drawing Room* (DJCAD, University of Dundee).

Conclusions: students and staff sensibilities rising to the challenge lent to a community of practice (localised, national and international) that thrived. Interdisciplinary connections have forged, collaborations and work displays resulting, isolation and wider inclusion agendas being embraced. Pedagogical shifts with how we approach, deliver and share drawing practices are expanding. Integrating virtual life drawing with F2F teaching in the long term. Widening life drawing delivery to greater numbers, locations with blended means to learn and engage, sparking further inquisitive forms of social exchange. Developing to an inclusive, institutional culture that observes and learns, offering a drawing research network with scope for international partnerships.

Online learning community in the COVID-19 era: A survey study with a large first year psychology cohort

*Eoin O'Sullivan, Eoin O'Sullivan, Paula Miles
The University of St. Andrews*

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the rapid adoption of new methods of teaching online and in person. Developing learning communities is difficult under normal circumstances, but barriers are starker in online learning environments. This is problematic given evidence that a low sense of student community is associated with poor attainment. Therefore, knowing that many universities will not be returning to fully in-person teaching until 2022 or later, it is important to learn about how we can best develop our students' sense of community online. With our latest cohort of first year psychology students, we are in the position to learn about which aspects of our teaching encouraged a sense of community. Throughout the 2020/21 academic year we used a number of techniques to teach and interact with students, including online drop-in sessions, online research groups, interactive workshops, and synchronous lectures. In this paper we will discuss findings from a survey of our first-year students, enquiring into their engagement with, and experience of, these various learning formats. In particular, we will examine which of these components might best nurture a sense of community. The results of this study will inform our own practice as we transition into another year of hybrid teaching, and here, we will discuss our plans and wider implications.

T&L Patterns for Inclusive Virtual Classrooms

*Joanna Olszewska
UWS*

Online, distance, and/or hybrid teaching and learning (T&L) requires the development of inclusive T&L patterns to build students' confidence in using technology and learning in the digital space. Hence, this work proposes interactive multimedia technological patterns (iMMT) to guide T&L delivery and assessment within the Virtual Classroom, while supporting an inclusive students' experience. The proposed iMMT model encompasses the Student-Centered Perspective and meets the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) criteria, while it goes beyond the Technology, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge (TPACK) model and the Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, Redefinition (SAMR) model. Furthermore, the developed iMMT patterns cover a variety of synchronous and asynchronous T&L activities, offering an inclusive digital learning environment, addressing diverse student learning needs. The talk will present the iMMT patterns as well as discuss examples and results of the application of the iMMT model in context of inclusive virtual classrooms.

Course design for digital environments: temporal flexibility and inclusion

*Dr Aisling Crean
University of St Andrews*

What role does time have in your course design and how does its temporal order include (or exclude) various groups? This short paper examines the concept of temporal flexibility in the context of designing courses for digital environments and how it can work to both include and exclude a range of different groups. We'll see that while temporal flexibility is, in some ways, inclusive, it is not all that it is sometimes cracked up to be. There are disadvantages to temporal flexibility too; it can work to exclude as well as to include. I finish by also considering whether temporal flexibility in the context of designing courses for digital environments might have implications for the meaning of a teacher's work and for teamwork among students studying online.

Money over meaning? Investigating the cost of neoliberalism at universities

*Elena Strobl, Kenneth Mavor
University of St Andrews*

Neoliberalist policies, such as tuition fees, are being increasingly implemented at higher education institutions, shifting the university-student relationship to a service-customer one. Previous work suggests that this change affects learning approach and satisfaction. Our research builds on these links and examines the effect of neoliberal policies at universities on student expectations, identification, learning approach and satisfaction. The relationship of these variables was explored using survey responses from a UK student sample (N=317). The final model of relationships was created through multiple regression and mediation analysis. Results indicate that social mobility beliefs, through utilitarian expectations, positively predict surface learning and negatively predict satisfaction with the university. Contrastingly, social mobility beliefs, through self-expression expectations, discipline identification and deep learning, predict satisfaction with the degree and university. This implies that social mobility must be reconceptualised to not only concern utilitarian motivations but also self-expression in terms of social identity. Our findings provide first indications that while universities aim to broaden participation and close the attainment gap, neoliberalist policies, by encouraging a utilitarian social mobility, ultimately reduce student satisfaction and could even contribute to the attainment gap.

Unlocking potential: Supporting oral communication challenges in Higher Education and amplifying the voices of students with disabilities and SplDs.

Ben Scott¹, Courtney Aitken²

¹Present Pal, ²Present Pal / University of St Andrews

Oral communication tasks such as presentations or group tutorials are common active learning activities used in higher and further education to increase student engagement, independence, and develop transferable skills. However, because of the complex psychological processes involved in these tasks, they can create barriers for students with disabilities, neurodiversities, and specific learning differences. Despite this, very few students receive support for their oral communication as the oral communication task is not a core or graded component of their course.

In this presentation, Ben Scott (Present Pal and University of St Andrews Alumnus), and Courtney Aitken (University of St Andrews PhD Student) are joining forces to share the research findings of the Present Pal Amplifying Voices 2021 study. The study aimed to explore the experiences of students with communication challenges and their experience with oral communication tasks in higher education. Of the 176 disabled students recruited for the study, it was found that not only were students who self-reported a disability more likely to experience public speaking anxiety than a typical research sample but that this anxiety was also more severe. Ben and Courtney will open up the floor to discuss the implications of these findings, and how they can be used to build an inclusive student experience through the use of technology and strategies - supporting all students with oral communication challenges, regardless of whether the activity is core or graded.

Hauntings in Higher Education: working with ghosts to support inclusive student experiences

Julie Brooks¹, Shona Russell², Lucy Wishart², Kevin Orr²

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Ghostly spectres permeate education. Online learning, decolonising the curriculum and widening participation are contemporary efforts to build inclusive institutions casting off traditions. Despite resourcing, capacity and commitment, unfolding initiatives may be affected by spectres of past times, decisions, and people. Peculiar ghosts may also haunt individual learners and teachers. For students, motivation to study may be sparked by a wish to prove past sceptics wrong or frenzied job applications presenting a response to the fears of monstrous debt or to meet expectations, often unrealistic, that obtaining a degree will instantly lead to multiple job offers. In cases of teaching, the presence of staff long gone lingers through module designs and learning materials. Past pedagogical intentions are shadowy presences which potentially limit the creativity of new staff, particularly in the adoption of more diverse texts or activities.

The preceding examples illustrate ways in which hauntings may shape a sense of what is possible and what has changed in higher education. Whilst unsettling, moving towards the shadows and engaging with the uncanny can support learning, identification of role models and influences on organisational culture. This workshop invites participants to share ghost stories informed by the spectral turn in organisation studies. Emerging from collective tales, participants will develop an understanding of how spectres shape relations, narratives and ethics and consider how working with ghosts might inform and enhance inclusive institutional cultures and student experience.

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