

The Impact of Good Practice in Digital Delivery on Student Engagement, Progression and Achievement – Case Studies

COVID-19 Support
and Guidance

For QAA Members

These case studies accompany two earlier papers published by QAA.

In February 2021, QAA published [How Good Practice in Digital Delivery and Assessment has Affected Student Engagement and Success - an Early Exploration](#), which identified some initial qualitative evidence of the positive impact of good practice in digital pedagogy. This was followed in late March 2021 by a further paper - [The Impact of Good Practice in Digital Delivery on Student Engagement, Progression and Achievement](#) - which provided an expanded evidence base including both a sector and provider perspective. This enabled us to present indicators of alignment between good practice in digital or blended pedagogy and improved student engagement, progression and achievement.

These case studies are written in the providers' own words and QAA is very grateful for their contribution to this study.

There will be further consideration of the evidence of alignment between good digital pedagogy and improved student engagement and performance, with a further study expected to be produced in autumn 2021.

Case studies

[University of Edinburgh: A comparison of student performance on the same module with physical and hybrid delivery](#)

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[Teesside University: Institutional support for course redesign by digitally competent academic staff](#)

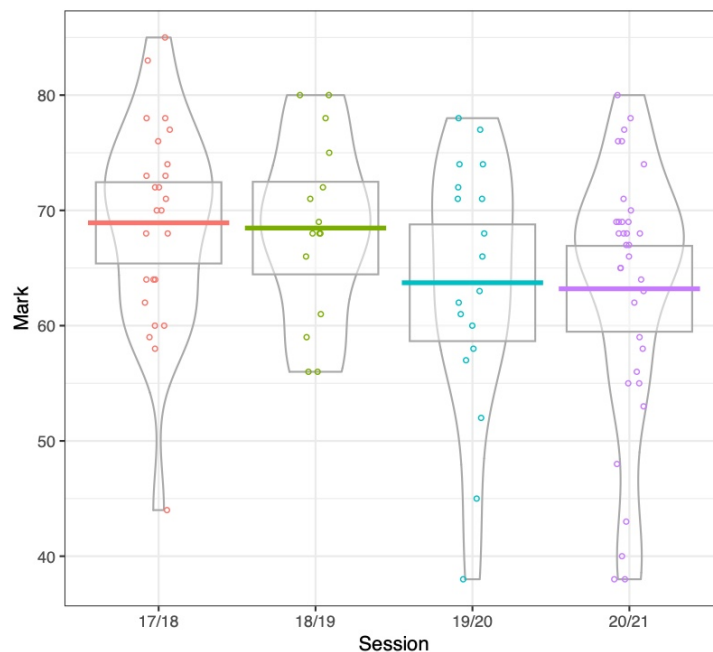
University of Edinburgh: A comparison of student performance on the same module with physical and hybrid delivery

Introduction

This case study from the University of Edinburgh examines the impact of the redesign of a module for hybrid (primarily asynchronous) delivery on student attainment by comparing performance across pre-pandemic and 2020-21 cohorts. There is no evidence of grade inflation or consistent deterioration in achievement, while high-performing students achieved, on average, a higher grade with hybrid delivery, with positive student feedback highlighting the benefits of a structured approach to course design.

Context and impact

The plot diagram shows the summary performance of students on a single piece of assessment for an honours-level (SCQF Level 10) module at the University of Edinburgh. The assessment is focused on technical data analysis skills. For 2020-21, the material was prepared for primarily asynchronous hybrid delivery using an [ABC methodology](#). The content and the assessment are closely comparable. Two hours of lecture and one hour of tutorial/practical work per week were replaced by a series of activities interspersed with short videos, usually three activities and three to four video lectures of about 10 minutes' duration, in addition to exercises and questions for group discussion (supported by discussion boards and weekly synchronous Q&A sessions). The results show neither significant inflation nor consistent deterioration in achievement. The average mark is lower, but in line with some previous years. In fact, the average is somewhat artificially lowered by the unusually large number of very low marks.



Discussion

At least two possible explanations for those present themselves: first, some students would have had a difficult experience in wider aspects of their studies and lives due to the pandemic; second, some students would have had low motivation due to lack of interest (the course curriculum was narrowed compared to previous years to ensure resilience, so in other circumstances these students would not have been taking this module). Among the

higher-achieving students, the level of performance is as good as, or better than, previous years (note, in particular, the prevalence of higher 2:1 marks over lower ones compared to previous years). Qualitative feedback from students indicates that the adaptation of the module with a focus on active learning was successful.

'I like the shorter lectures accompanied by activities! I feel like it helps me engage with what we're learning.'

'I really enjoy the format - short, concise lectures followed by materials to exemplify phenomena/practice relevant data sets. It's really helpful!'

Future directions

Two material challenges can be identified. First, although the overall approach was successful, the workload for students was often excessive, especially given the weekly rhythm of a traditional term. This is difficult to gauge in advance or adjust in the course of the semester, given the necessity of forward planning. Much more experience and/or guidance in this area is necessary to achieve good outcomes. Second, support for weaker students remains a concern - identifying disengaged or struggling students and offering them support is necessary, but difficult without regular interactions. More generally, what is needed is determining which elements of on-campus, face-to-face interactions truly offer significant added value and which ones can be replaced or improved based on lessons learned from the move to online.

Falmouth University: A cross-institutional case study

Introduction

This case study from Falmouth University uses student retention data over a two-year period covering the pandemic, as evidence for the impact of a range of changes to practice, pedagogy and infrastructure. It points to a strategic approach to online learning and highlights examples of innovative practice which the University feels has significantly contributed to an overall improvement in student retention.

Strategic context

At a strategic level, the University had already devoted institutional effort to considering online learning and teaching within the context of its Digital Learning and Teaching Plan. When circumstances dictated a move to online learning, there was already an understanding of the importance of well-structured learning and diverse means of supporting digital learning and teaching. However, at that point, the University identified a cross-institutional approach which was framed by post-Covid strategic objectives within a 2030 Strategy. One aim emerging from what the University describes as 2020 Challenges, is the idea of the Falmouth 'Pracademic' - the Falmouth academic exemplified by professional, practice-based, flexible application of evidence-informed educational methods.

The key institutional initiative was to adopt a [Five-Stage Model](#) for online and blended learning, based on the work of Professor Gilly Salmon. Across the University, course teams were asked to provide a week-by-week structure to help students navigate online elements and achieve weekly activities in support of their learning in what the University labelled 'a whole curricula scaffolded learning approach' to the application of blended learning.

At the same time, with a view to ensuring that the pivot to blended learning was as successful as possible, the University invested in a two-year pilot (currently within its first year) developing a dedicated, broad-reaching and professional 'Student Advice' role for all students. The approach was already in use in Falmouth's existing online provision. The Student Advisers work alongside departmental academic teams employing both qualitative and quantitative data to identify students at risk, initiate contact and provide proactive interventions and support as necessary. The Student Advice team has become the focal point for student support in an online context, acting as a bridge between academic teams and wider student support services.

Programme level

The University believes that the institutional implementation of the Five Stage Model for the move to blended delivery and digital assessment has had a positive impact on the student experience and promoted retention at programme and subject level. It has allowed for greater self-management within student cohorts and some elements of the curriculum which could overwhelm learners have been easier to dissect and understand using the model. The University offers the following examples of improvement.

- **Fashion Design Level 4 - FDE110 Cut and Construct:** Online, asynchronous delivery using, for example, pre-recorded videos and instructional documents, has allowed a staggered and repetitive approach on what has previously been seen as a demanding and technically-complex module. Feedback from students has been positive, with appreciation of flexibility and variety.
- **MA Film and Television; BA Film:** These courses use unfocused 'campfire' sessions, scheduled for key times when students know tutors will be available for a

protected period and they can drop in (digitally) to discuss anything. This has helped develop a community of practice which promotes pastoral, academic and curricular discussion. Again, student feedback has been positive.

- **Interdisciplinarity as a driver of quality content creation:** The University, through collaboration between the Digital Learning team, the Employability team (RealWORKS) and the School of Entrepreneurship has created reusable digital learning resources, such as more engaging video content. The initiative highlights the potential for valuable cross-collaboration between academics and professional services to utilise interdisciplinary skills to successfully convey complex ideas for students.
- **Architecture:** The course has set up an 'Online Work in Progress' exhibition to celebrate and share student work across all year groups, including postgraduate. This asynchronous activity and online space allows students to access the exhibition whenever they want to, as well as sharing their work across the four levels of study. This digital exhibition space has been highly beneficial in providing a way for students to understand their peer group and find students with similar interests and skills.
- **Interior Design:** This area has developed several collaborative projects designed to enable sharing of experience and learning space for students across levels and disciplines. In one example, the course team has set up a showcase 'Journal' site on the virtual learning environment, allowing students across all years to view work produced and meet students from other levels of study.

Retention

The University's institutional data, as of March 2021, reveals that retention has improved over the last two years, obviously covering the period of the pandemic, with all but two of nine academic departments demonstrating better retention. In particular, there has been a 46% improvement in withdrawal figures across all levels between 2019 and 2021 (to date).

Table 1: Student retention for all levels - 2019-20 and 2020-21



	2020-21	2019-20	Difference	% Change
Withdrawn in 2 weeks	49	31	18	58%
Intermitting	64	65	-1	-2%
Withdrawn	53	98	-45	-46%
Total	166	194	-28	-14%

At the same time, the University has examined student attendance pre and post-Covid and observed that there has been a 6% increase with the move online and the advent of an institutional digital attendance monitoring project.

Conclusion

The University is confident that its improved student retention across the two academic years covering the period of the pandemic, can be explained in terms of sustained strategic investment and pedagogic innovation. This has enabled it to swiftly adapt to wholly online delivery and also use its developing strength in blended delivery to improve the overall learning and teaching experience for many of its students.

Appendix: Falmouth University Retention Institutional Data Set

		All Students - Academic Department							Data as at: 03/03/2021		
Student Retention for Academic Year 2020/21											
Level	Enrolled at Start	Current Enrolled	Intermitting	Withdrawn	Withdrawn within Two Weeks	In Year Progression	Completed	Percent Lost	Previous Year Equivalent	Previous 2 Year Equivalent	
Undergraduate	4,608	4345	58	49	47	38	71	3.34 %	3.80 %	3.93 %	
The Fashion & Textiles Institute	393	376	5	4	6		2	3.82 %	4.33 % ✓	5.50 % ✓	
The Falmouth School of Art	667	633	15	3	9		7	4.05 %	2.98 % ✗	3.70 % ✗	
The Games Academy	562	540	6	8	5		3	3.38 %	4.52 % ✓	3.10 % ✗	
The School of Architecture Design and Interiors	248	244	2		2			1.61 %	3.21 % ✓	3.37 % ✓	
The School of Entrepreneurship	243	165	3	6	3	34	32	4.94 %	5.50 % ✓	1.67 % ✗	
The School of Film & Television	692	670	7	8			7	2.17 %	2.66 % ✓	3.86 % ✓	
The School of Entrepreneurship	243	165	3	6	3	34	32	4.94 %	5.50 % ✓	1.67 % ✗	
The School of Film & Television	692	670	7	8			7	2.17 %	2.66 % ✓	3.86 % ✓	
Total	5,053	4589	66	54	49	69	226	3.34 %	3.74 %	3.88 %	

University of Northampton: The impact of an institutional approach to digital learning experience design

Introduction

This case study from the University of Northampton uses student feedback and assessment data from an undergraduate module to demonstrate the positive impact of online delivery guided by the institution's Active Distance Learning pedagogical framework. The structured course design encouraged student reflection and resulted in highly-positive feedback, while digital assessments led to improved student performance compared to the previous year and were used by students to enhance their employability prospects.

Context

SPO3026 Critical Issues in Physical Education was delivered entirely online between the dates of October 2020 and January 2021. This was in response to the government advice for teaching and learning practices relating to COVID-19. This module explores the social, historical and philosophical issues relating to physical education and sport. It is a Level 6, 20-credit module that is compulsory on the BA Sports Development and Physical Education programme. The module has two assessed pieces - an individual essay and a group presentation.

Underpinning theoretical concepts

The module delivery aligned to Active Blended Learning (ABL) and Active Distanced Learning (ADL) pedagogical approaches. ABL environments, both on and off campus, are digitally rich and afford students the opportunity to learn collaboratively in 'live' real-time sessions as well as in their own time through tutor-mediated digital methods. ADL is the University of Northampton's approach to off-campus students' learning experiences. ADL pedagogical approaches combine sense-making activities with focused and engaging interactions in small groups, in synchronous and asynchronous digital learning settings. ADL focuses on engaging students in knowledge construction, reflection and critique, the development of learner autonomy and the achievement of learning outcomes.

The pedagogical premise for the module was grounded in contemporary social constructivist, constructionist and connectivist learning theories that emphasise the social situatedness of learning in communities of practice (Papert, 1980; Siemens, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978 and Wenger et al, 2009). It aimed not only to allow the students to meet the learning requirements of the module but to create a sense of community, to increase accessibility and inclusivity in line with the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2021). The live sessions had digital activities blended into them to capture and share online collaborations. This also allowed the students autonomy in their knowledge, co-creation and how they demonstrate their learning (Caldwell et al, 2020).

Digital pedagogies employed

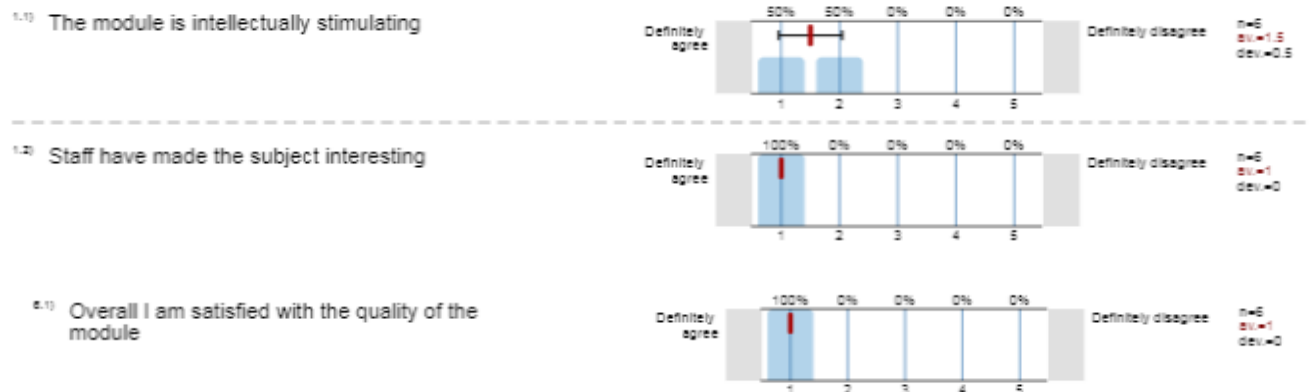
This module made effective use of technologies to establish ways of collaborating synchronously and asynchronously, such as through the combined use of collaborative tools, online communities, live and recorded webinars and interactive digital tools. The weekly sessions took a structured connectivist approach that allowed for pedagogic flexibility and engaged the students and staff in talking, reflecting and doing. This draws from Wenger's (2009) ideas about participation and reification.

Digital tools: Book Creator, Jamboard, Padlet, Bitmoji classrooms, Google slides, AnswerGarden, and Canva (Caldwell, 2021)

Impact

Measures of success of the module included evidence of change of practice or beliefs, or intention to transfer to practice, and the quality of the community relationships and sustained debate. The student module evaluations reflect the impact of the digital pedagogies used.

Figure 1: Extracts from SPO3026 student module evaluations 2020-21



Students' module evaluations (Figure 1) demonstrate that the quality of experience had improved from previous years' data. The above module data appears to indicate that the module was effective in challenging students' dogmatic beliefs, knowledge and practices associated with various contemporary issues in Physical Education, developing critical thinking, and stimulating engagement and interest.

Student qualitative comments:

'The module was overall great!'

'The module was delivered in an excellent way considering the current climate.'

'The lecturer made use of the discussion rooms and I enjoyed the assignments for this module. I believe the content was delivered in a clear and concise way and each assignment had clear guidance.'

'The online lectures were well adapted and taught to keep us engaged and any questions we had were answered the best way possible.'

The qualitative feedback represents excellent overall satisfaction and engagement in the module and the group assessment. It demonstrates a feeling of being included and supported, a use of a variety of pedagogical approaches and effective features of ADL.

One of the assessments of this module was a group presentation. Students were required to collaborate digitally, plan remotely and present as a team remotely. The assignment involved the students presenting their needs analysis of physical education in a school setting and planning the subsequent two years of funding allocation based upon the Association for Physical Education's five key indicators of effective physical education and school sports premium spending. This challenged both their digital making skills, their application of real-world learning and their building of a community of learners. Figures 2 and 3 represent the assessment statistics for 2020-21 and 2019-20 (note that there were three separate submission points in 2019-20 as part of the Emergency Regulations). The average grade in

2021 (B) is higher than in 2019-20 (C) and the median grade in both 2020-21 and 2019-20 is a B. The assessment has helped support employability and graduate outcomes with one final-year student securing a role as a primary physical education manager based on their use of their assignment data and findings in their job interview. Two further students have secured places on initial teacher training programmes in a primary setting having referenced their assignment work in their interviews.

Figure 2: Assessment statistics 2020-21

Count	28
Minimum Value	0.00
Maximum Value	78.00
Range	78.00
Average	63.17857
Median	70.50
Standard Deviation	19.78103
Variance	391.28954

Figure 3: Assessment statistics 2019-20, assessment points 1, 2 and 3

Count	4	Count	6	Count	4
Minimum Value	0.00	Minimum Value	0.00	Minimum Value	0.00
Maximum Value	78.00	Maximum Value	78.00	Maximum Value	78.00
Range	78.00	Range	78.00	Range	78.00
Average	55.25	Average	53.00	Average	55.25
Median	71.50	Median	58.00	Median	71.50
Standard Deviation	32.33709	Standard Deviation	25.5147	Standard Deviation	32.33709
Variance	1045.6875	Variance	651.00	Variance	1045.6875

Conclusion

This case study presents the impact upon the students in terms of their engagement, digital making skills, real-world application of learning, and overall satisfaction. The evidence presented suggests the digital delivery strategies were helpful to students' interaction and engagement, feelings of being supported by inclusive teaching practices and attainment. Digital delivery effectiveness is underpinned by a supportive pedagogical framework (ABL/ADL). This, in combination with tutor knowledge, skills and confidence in the use of innovative digital learning pedagogies has demonstrated the potential for exploring and integrating new and novel ways of teaching.

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Open University: Remote practical learning with OpenSTEM Labs

Introduction

This case study from the Open University (OU) demonstrates the use of dedicated digital learning environments in practical lab-based courses. It highlights the potential of shared digital resources to support learning across different providers, with significant demand for OU's virtual lab services, and highlights the benefits of providing hands-on science learning within the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Context and impact

The Open University's [OpenSTEM Labs](#) enable students to remotely engage in authentic experimental and practical learning. The OpenSTEM Labs provide an authentic learning environment, connecting students to instrumentation, data and real equipment for practical experiments and analysis over the internet, accessible from anywhere and at any time. For remote-controlled activities, users access real equipment through a web browser. The OpenSTEM Labs continued to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and we gained more than 10,000 additional users of the Labs during the COVID period.

OpenSTEM Labs resources have helped other universities around the world to move to online practical learning during the pandemic period. For example, the Open University's [virtual microscope](#) with its collections of open-access, interactive images of geological samples, has allowed other universities to deliver petrological microscopy lab sessions virtually. In March and April, users of the virtual microscope peaked at over 1,000 users per day and on average 2020 user numbers were up by almost 300% on 2019.

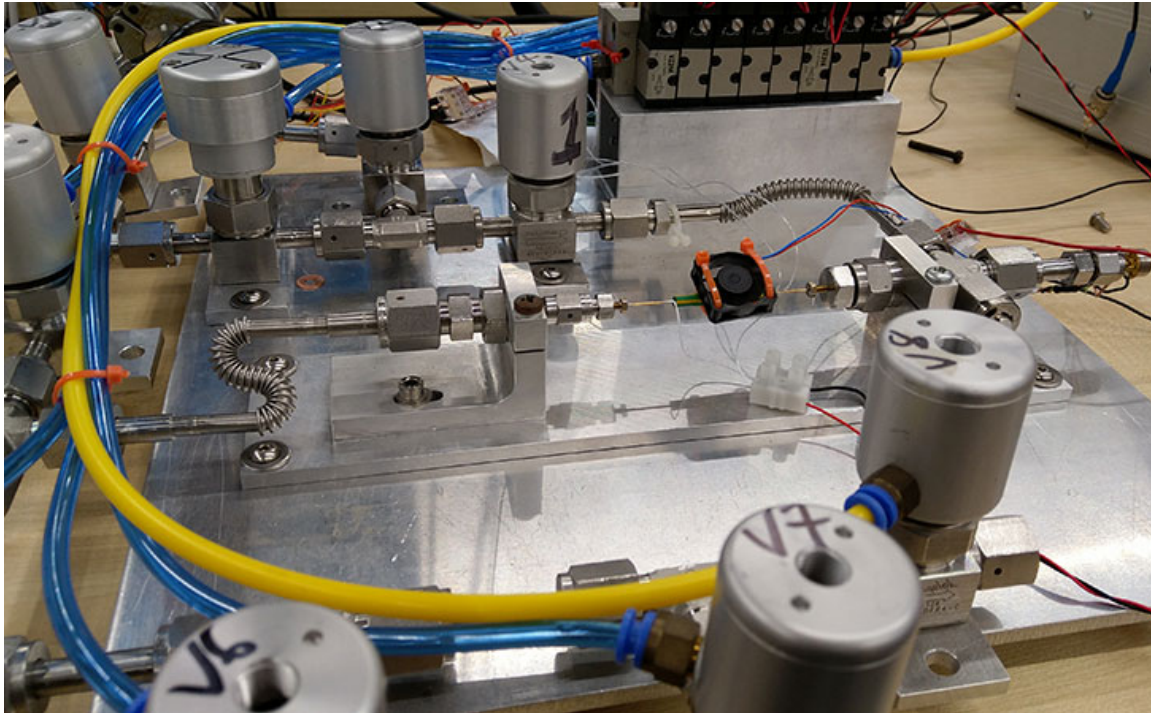


Several new experiments have also been introduced during the last year including a remote experiment that allows students to explore planetary atmospheres in our solar system. Using new and bespoke equipment set up in the Open University's laboratories, students investigate two unknown, bottled gas mixtures to find out which planet or moon the module team 'put into the bottle'. Students access the equipment remotely from wherever they are in the world with an internet connection via an OpenSTEM Labs interface. They control the gas

flow in the system, set the pressure, and initiate measurements - and, importantly, the system watched over the proceedings to warn the users of any potential problems, just as any laboratory system would do. Adding to the experience was a webcam view of the set up. This physics experiment also provided hands-on practical learning for chemistry students who were unable to attend face-to-face residential schools during the pandemic period.

Quote from module team chair:

'This experiment gave our students a real laboratory experience, allowing them to use the skills they had learned earlier in the module - from planning an experiment to analysing the data with Python.'



Robert Gordon University: How the digital transition has enhanced student performance

Introduction

This case study considers the impact of the student partnership approach to the digital transition at Robert Gordon University (RGU), which informed innovations across both course delivery and assessment, and student support initiatives. Institutional data reflects the successful transition to digital assessment, with extremely high pass rates for students, while digital support services saw significant increases in uptake and student feedback showed high levels of student satisfaction and engagement with digital delivery.

Institutional context and student partnership focus

Named 'Scottish University of the Year' in *The Times* and *Sunday Times Good University Guide 2021*, Robert Gordon University (RGU) is a professionally-focused university which aims to transform people and communities.

In response to the global pandemic, since March 2020, RGU has transitioned learning, teaching and assessment arrangements to support online and blended delivery. In doing so, the University has sought to protect the wellbeing of staff and students; ensure continued excellence of learning, teaching and assessment; and enable positive student attainment.

The transition process has been characterised by RGU's enduring commitment to enriching the student learning experience through student partnership and use of evidence-based enhancement. The process included:

- an April 2020 pulse survey to demonstrate RGU's continued commitment to listen and learn from students; with feedback enabling university staff to continue to protect, assure and enhance the student experience
- dialogue with student representatives to inform actions at course, subject and institutional levels, including student representation on key decision-making committees as well as the University's Covid response group
- frequent check-ins with students to understand how they are coping with increased digital learning provision and offer advice to help manage their online engagements with staff and fellow learners.

This approach has delivered a range of student-centred and inclusive innovations such as those set out below.

Course delivery and assessment

- Rapid innovation in teaching and learning allowing students to remain engaged with their studies including opportunities to participate in hands-on practical activities in new ways, such as a Virtual Degree Show for art students, virtual placements for physiotherapy students, virtual student exchanges, and Covid-safe equipment lending support to practical activities in remote environments.
- Support measures enabling continued academic progression designed to assist students at all stages to undertake scheduled assessments effectively and confidently, including new student guidance for remote assessment and remote IT support for students throughout live online exams.

Evidence of engagement and impact: in May 2020 the University held 117 fully online exams, providing 7,157 students with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning. 6,719 students attended, with 6,709 submissions made.

After any resit opportunity, the overall module pass rate for those students that undertook the assessments for semester 2 modules for academic year 2019-20 was 99.3% (females) and 98.6% (males).

Student support

- 'Staying Well While Staying at Home': a one-stop shop designed to support students' intellectual, personal and mental wellbeing following the initial move to online learning in March 2020.
- Online delivery of student-facing services including increased counselling provision to support wellbeing, and online personal tutoring to ensure a balance of academic and pastoral support.
- Online self-development provision, including an innovative Success Programme designed to equip students with academic and transferable skills to help them thrive on-campus, online and in the world of work, with enhanced support for groups with historically lower retention and attainment.
- A new online 'Welcome' for students to support student orientation, integration and wellbeing at this key moment of transition. The online Welcome demonstrates RGU's 'whole person' approach to education and includes optional courses on consent, bystander intervention and good citizenship.

Evidence of engagement and impact: Since the introduction of the University's online employability support platform (eHub) in September 2018, over 7,000 students, staff and alumni have registered. In June 2019, there were 258 users engaging in 2,944 activities. In the height of lockdown due to Covid, in June 2020 there were 914 users engaging in 17,142 activities. A similar increase was seen between July 2019 and July 2020 with an increase of over 200%.

Similarly, from June 2020 to March 2021, 1,978 students completed one or more of the tasks within the Employability Enhancement Award. This is an eight-topic online learning programme which has a comprehensive set of tools to prepare for the workplace of the future.

Impact and conclusions

In evaluating the impact of RGU's transition approach, Semester 1 2020-21 institutional feedback mechanisms have shown:

- 81% respondent '*satisfaction*', endorsing the coordinated approach adopted to delivery of key aspects of provision
- 82% of respondents indicated they knew '*what to expect in terms of engagement in my course*', with 89% indicating that they knew who to contact for advice and support in relation to their course
- 81% of respondents recognised '*opportunities to provide feedback*' and acknowledged that staff '*value*' this
- tracking of student engagement with online assessment indicates an assessment engagement rate of 96%.

Taken together, this illustrates the positive impact of RGU's transition approach and the value of student partnership within this. While the pandemic necessitated a rapid transition to online and blended learning at scale, RGU is committed to going beyond transition to bring about lasting transformation. This ambition is encapsulated in a range of institutional work strands designed to enable the University to emerge stronger from the pandemic, ensuring it remains impeccably placed to meet the current and future needs of staff, students, employers and communities.

Teesside University: Institutional support for course redesign by digitally competent academic staff

Introduction

This case study describes the strategic approach taken by Teesside University, which builds on existing strengths in staff digital competence. The University's Resilience Review process was supported by proactive coaching for staff and frequent publication of resources. To enable staff to apply their digital skills in the design of a hybrid model, the University also developed a seven-step toolkit that helped identify the right pedagogic approaches to learning activities and choose appropriate digital tools to deliver those.

Context

Drawing on the Learning and Teaching Recovery Strategy, the focus at the University of Teesside was on embedding enhancements, nurturing excellence in delivery and strengthening resilience in the event of future disruption. Together with the guidance, support and high impact staff development from the Digital and Online Learning teams, schools and course teams were supported to sustain the delivery of the curriculum ensuring that all students maintained their potential to succeed.

Staff support and coaching

A substantial amount of resource has been allocated to supporting our staff to conclude the previous academic year and plan for Hybrid Learning in 2020-21. Since March 2020, the combined Digital Learning and Online Learning Team has provided a responsive support service, as well as offering coaching through drop-in sessions (initially facilitated in-person before quickly switching to online as a result of remote working) for individuals or small groups who wished to discuss/explore issues in more depth.

Teesside did not prescribe a specific approach to moving to online delivery, allowing teaching staff considerable flexibility in how they deployed the existing technology suite, building on the University's Future Facing Learning work which saw staff become digitally confident prior to the pandemic. Guidance encouraged staff to focus on inclusion and approaches that promote engagement with learning.

Course teams and module leaders were advised to interpret intended learning outcomes so as to enable academics to select appropriate content, activities and student-facing approaches, without entirely replicating the face-to-face offer. The key idea here was to make sure that students meet programme and level learning outcomes in challenging and interesting ways through a series of rigorous staff support and development programmes and daily lunchtime blog posts, facilitating the creative and effective use of digital solutions to support high-quality learning for our students. The Digital and Online Learning team offered bespoke and one-to-one guidance, and coaching and support to transition teaching into an engaging online experience for students. This featured a wide range of support on digital solutions for alternative assessments, course design, design and delivery of learning activities and on the use of technology in designing deep and active learning through collaboration and construction of knowledge.

To support the immediate transition, the University quickly produced the [Digital Delivery: Learning and Support](#) section of LTE Online, communicated this to all colleagues through existing appropriate channels and ensured this was at the forefront of the University homepage. This section provided clearly labelled guidance across all LTE portfolio areas impacted by the pandemic; guidance which has been regularly supplemented over the

duration of the remote working period as the University has moved from business continuity, to business recovery and beyond.

In addition to the guidance available on LTE Online, proactive support for colleagues was provided through the publication of [frequent blog posts](#), timed specifically to coincide with key points during the academic calendar and/or key pieces of activity, most recently evidenced by posts dedicated specifically to setting up Blackboard modules for the new academic year. Furthermore, the topics discussed in blog posts were also informed by any recurring themes identified through staff support and coaching.

Finally, an intentionally concise [L&T FAQ section](#) was developed to help colleagues quickly find key pieces of information or documentation.

Timeline	Learning and Teaching Recovery Strategy
March and April 2020	Phase 1 saw around 1,300 modules have successfully pivoted from face-to-face to online delivery. Student and staff support mechanisms were migrated online and business continuity of learning and teaching was sustained through supporting schools with the transition from campus delivery to online delivery of learning and teaching.
April, May and June 2020	A Resilience Review Tool was launched to provide support for course teams to understand the extent to which their course could pivot between delivery online and on campus without the student experience being unduly impacted. Following from this, all assessments were reviewed and converted to alternative approaches, where required. Extraordinary regulations were introduced to underpin changes in practice.
May to September 2020	Drawing on the Learning and Teaching Recovery Strategy, a bespoke programme of activities for staff development supported building academic resilience at course and module levels. The focus of the staff development was on embedding enhancements, nurturing excellence in delivery and strengthening resilience in the event of future disruptions.
September 2020 and beyond	Reviews and planning for semester 2 modules, including resilience reviews and embedding a hybrid approach to course design.

Driving culture change in hybrid and online learning

Within Teesside University there is a strong advocacy and leadership recognising the extensive investment and success in existing online learning courses, which builds upon the University's reputation as a sector leader in digital competence. A mandatory Digital Development Programme for all teaching staff was already in place, with a reported 96% satisfaction rating from participants, enabling the University to accrue the largest concentration of Microsoft Innovative Educator Experts (MIEEs) in the UK.

Principles of Course Design for Hybrid Learning Toolkit

To support the transition, the University developed a 'Principles of Course Design for Hybrid Learning' toolkit which sets out a systematic approach to learning design for the creation of Hybrid Learning courses and modules.

The toolkit is a resource to support the Resilience Review process for schools, to adapt the Hybrid Learning model to the nature of the subject discipline and assist in determining the extent to which courses could be delivered within the Hybrid Model without undue negative impact on the student experience. The seven-stage model, with a particular focus on the online component of hybrid learning, includes:

- a methodology for seamless and coherent integration of digital solutions as part of a campus-delivered course design, identifying things to consider when making decisions about which activities are best served online and which are best on campus
- suggestions and key questions within each section of the seven-part journey that can be used as a resource in the course design process, structured around the principle of student centredness. This takes into account academic staff's own individual developmental needs and those of the wider course team in order to develop an academic offer that is rigorous and high quality.

Working through this resource helps identify additional staff development needs to design, and subsequently deliver, a meaningful and innovative curriculum to students. Staff are encouraged to take time to familiarise themselves with available digital tools and solutions for their learning design, understanding how the tools operate, how they can support the course design journey, what their pedagogical strengths and limitations are, and how they can best be leveraged within the particular subject context to teach and support their learners.

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- Veronica Strachan, Robert Gordon University
- Dr Ann Thanaraj, Teesside University
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