

Forum

Learning and Teaching Committee



UNIVERSITY
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The York Pedagogy: innovative teaching and learning

Programme-
level learning

Students
as partners

Authentic
assessment



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Editorial

Welcome to issue 42 of *Forum*! This is the 'conference issue' which focusses on workshops and presentations from the 2017 Annual Learning and Teaching Conference which took place at the University of York on 20th June. The conference focussed on the York Pedagogy and especially on how departments around the University have gone about 'making it work'. For me, the conference really highlighted how much the York Pedagogy has stimulated great innovations in teaching and it is that which we focus on in this issue of *Forum*.



The Faculty Plenary sessions which took place at the end of the day at the conference gave us the opportunity to reflect on the challenges and opportunities associated with the York Pedagogy. The conference had already given me the opportunity to have many interesting discussions with colleagues from different departments and faculties throughout the day. Upon reflection during the Plenary session I realised that these discussions were so productive because the Pedagogy has given us a common framework and language that make it easier to share practice across the University. All of our programmes now have Programme Learning Outcomes, a Statement of Purpose, a Programme Map and a Programme Leader, and we all have in mind the programme-level thinking and sense of progression that the Pedagogy has asked us to adopt. It is this idea of a common approach that has stuck with me since the conference, and I hope this continues to help us communicate our approaches to 'making it work' across the University as we settle into this new way of thinking and develop new and existing programmes into the future.

This is my last issue of *Forum* as Editor and I wish Ruth Penfold-Mounce (Sociology) best of luck as she takes on this role. I hope you enjoy reading about the Pedagogy-inspired innovations in teaching from around the University in this current issue!

Claire Hughes
Editor

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New graduate training course in sustainable chemical manufacturing

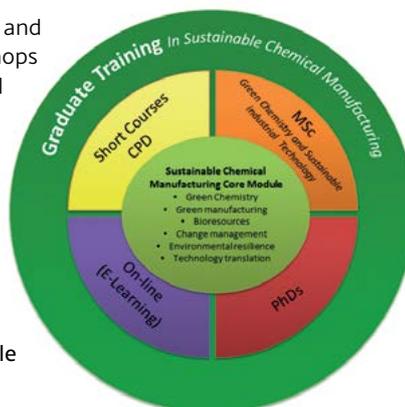
Increasing demand for chemicals worldwide, depleting resources, stricter legislation and the rising cost of waste disposal are placing increasing pressure on the chemical and related industries. For any organisation to survive in the current climate, the issue of sustainability must be fundamental to the way it operates. The RenewChem initiative within the Green Chemistry Centre of Excellence was established to support the chemical industry in the transition to green manufacturing and circular economy. As part of this project the GCCE held a workshop to consult with industry and identify the skills, knowledge and experience they would like their new employees to have in order to meet these demands. Building on this a

series of five interactive and multidisciplinary workshops on Sustainable Chemical Manufacturing was designed comprising:

- What is green chemistry?
- Business case for green
- Biorefining waste
- Running a sustainable chemical company
- Safer chemicals for healthy buildings

These workshops all incorporated industrial case studies, providing access to real business issues, and were delivered by experts both from departments across campus and industry.

Attendance was high with 50 individuals; primarily graduate students and PDRAs, from across campus engaging with



the workshop series. The workshops prompted a considerable amount of open discussion and feedback was very positive with attendees particularly praising the industrial perspective, team work and interactive aspects. The GCCE plans to run the course again next year with a blend of new and existing content.

ViCEPHEC2017: Variety in Chemistry Education and Physics Higher Education 2017

The premier national conference in higher education in chemistry is coming to the University of York from Wednesday 23rd August to Friday 25th August 2017 www.vicphec2017.com. This conference is free for staff and students to attend. Contributions will include presentations, workshops, posters, and a new 'Absolutely Fabulous' practical session. Glenn Hurst is chairing this conference and more detail can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDJ-9mt30sY> Email vicphec17@york.ac.uk to register.

The Writing Centre

Drop-in sessions and appointments available to UG and PGT students

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THE YORK PEDAGOGY

Rolling out and rolling on

John Robinson, *Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching, Learning and Students.*

Following programme improvements in my Department, led by an enthusiastic, York-Pedagogy-savvy team, I need to change my autumn-term module: where previously I taught a class of about twenty students, now there will be 120. This isn't because everyone has suddenly realised how great my teaching is! No, the cohort are funnelled through my module because of how it fits in the learning ladder, how it advances the Programme Learning Outcomes, how the skills developed there give leverage to other learning. Although as PVC Teaching, Learning and Students, this is just the sort of thing I want to happen as the Pedagogy rolls out, as module leader, to be honest, it's a bit of a pain. Where previously the lectures were almost seminar-like, and I could spend a few minutes regularly with each student in the lab, now I'll be more distant. Of course, there are ways to adapt: lectures to larger classes offer many opportunities to vary teaching methods,

and my Department has great laboratory demonstrators so students don't really need much of me there. But the redesign I'll have to do is more driven by the big increase in class size than reflection on how to improve.

The Pedagogy itself brings about programme changes, but so do the planning contexts of student demand and the behaviour of competitors, the preparedness of students, developments in the discipline. Just as with my single module, so whole programmes are subject to landscape slips, and curricula, teaching methods and teachers have to adapt.

This issue of *Forum* contains examples of innovations arising from the York Pedagogy. I have seen these and many other examples as people have engaged with the Pedagogy and its opportunities for collaborative reflection. But I know too that changes have mixed effects. The real strength of the Pedagogy should be, will be, that as change comes from many directions, student-work-centred, coherent programme design will continue to be at the heart of our adapting curricula.

The Programme Learning Outcomes

and Programme Maps we've adopted for our undergraduate programmes, and are now developing for PGT, capture how things fit together, how student work propels learning in a connected, carefully designed way. The Pedagogy emphasises PLOs and maps because together they are compact enough to express and maintain those connections as things change. The PLOs and maps are a framework, not rigid and brittle, but supple and durable. The Pedagogy's continued influence will be through those flexible design tools: as we reflect on teaching year-by-year, the maps will help us see new possibilities for boosting student learning in particular modules, and when the landscape reshapes from an external cause, the framework – PLOs and maps – will stretch and flex to the new shape while ensuring those internal connections of learning are thought about and maintained or redesigned.

Success depends on creativity and collaboration. Sitting in on away-days and other activities, I've been impressed at how programme teams and in some cases whole departments have used discussion over programme maps to rethink how students experience their learning. But I've also seen how the realisation of the programme maps as dynamic documents has to be improved. To that end, we are prioritising development of the programme catalogue. The front end of this online system will support programme teams in using maps straightforwardly and efficiently. We will also continue to rely on programme leaders to keep thinking through and challenging colleagues about the richest possible student experience on the way up the learning ladder.

Our programmes will go on changing, and module leaders like me will have to keep updating our materials and delivery methods. Sustaining the Pedagogy means ensuring that what graduates will be able to do remains clear, concrete and well-justified (the PLOs – what and why), and their route there – the learning ladder – uses the best learning methods, carefully deployed (the Programme Map – how and why). The examples in this issue of *Forum* are inspirational and show how we can continue building the quality of our students' learning experience.



THE YORK PEDAGOGY

Enhancement, innovation and reflection

Katy Mann Benn, a Project Manager in the Learning Enhancement team, reflects on the learning process of the York Pedagogy.

I joined the York Pedagogy project 17 months ago as the project manager and as a ProPEL (Programmes to Propel Effective Learning) contact for several departments. Striking features were the scale of the project and the amount of people actively involved, both centrally from various teams and across the full breadth of academic departments. The timeframe in which the project aims were to be achieved also seemed very challenging, and the sheer volume of programmes at times felt overwhelming, a feeling which will no doubt have been shared by others. However, despite the ascent being steep, with collective energy and determination the undergraduate Pedagogy process has been successful in the first phase of implementation. That success is due to programme leaders and programme teams working together to produce stretching programme learning outcomes, reflecting on how existing modules map to new PLOs, capturing this in a map and then developing ambitious enhancement plans. The York Pedagogy emphasises strong programme leadership as one of its core concepts, supported by central staff and engaging whole programme teams more effectively in curriculum design. The institution-wide scale of the Pedagogy has also required

a fresh approach to central support, building educational development capacity and embedding rich connections across different teams.

That institution-wide scale is sometimes difficult to appreciate – but it is worth taking a moment to do so. The undergraduate ‘roll-out’ applied the process of the York Pedagogy to 247 programmes. Over 200 staff have been directly involved in the implementation of the Pedagogy, leading and working in programme teams, supporting departments, reviewing documents and co-designing and facilitating new ideas. Throughout this astonishing amount of work, what has really impressed me has been the collaboration, camaraderie, hard work and the willingness of colleagues to share their expertise generously. Whether this is in terms of programme leaders or central staff donating their time and wisdom, experienced academics coming forward to help with the work of reviewing and approving programme documentation, or the continuing efforts of our colleagues on



Thinking about employability

University Teaching Committee, the work of the York Pedagogy has provided example after example of generous, principled collegiality. Indeed, six academics and a number of support staff have received ‘making a difference’ awards for their contributions and generation of excellent collaboration from their departments and departments have been successful in buying out time to work on the Pedagogy and to run pilots and enhance programmes further.

I have been privileged to attend a number of departmental away days, where such collaboration is a pleasure to see. The image featured shows one among many: Computer Science hard at work mapping out their curricula, with over 40 departmental colleagues present along with their ProPEL contact. It was inspirational to see how the department worked as a team to consider the many facets of their programmes, and to locate particular areas to enhance further. Such collegiality produces strong, vibrant and coherent programmes of study. Equally, in a productive cycle, the structure of team working is also enhanced by the process of consideration. This is something reflected in the literature, where it has been frequently argued that increased collaboration and collegiality operates both as a by-product of, and a condition for, effective curriculum mapping and design (Uchiyama and Radin, 2008; Wang, 2015; Lam and Tsui, 2016).

Enhancement and innovation

Another aspect of the Pedagogy which has been inspiring is the depth and breadth of innovation prompted by the

viewpoint

process of reflecting on programmes, of mapping modules and identifying possible enhancements.

Several key enhancement themes have emerged during the undergraduate roll-out. Various departments are working to enhance progression and student work with written assignments; to introduce assessment and practice opportunities for group work; to embed employability skills throughout the degree; piloting peer assisted learning schemes; working on improving feedback mechanisms; and aligning assessment to the programme learning outcomes. Again, the scale of the work being pursued has been impressive; so, too, has the passion for student learning among our staff which is clearly driving these enhancements. In the following sections of this article, I want to draw attention to the work being achieved in three of these streams of enhancement.

TESTA

Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment (TESTA) is an approach to curriculum review which aims to improve the quality of student learning through addressing programme-level assessment. The TESTA approach has been used with more than 100 programmes in over 40 UK universities, and in Australia, India and the USA. TESTA works with academics, students and managers – and for students, academics and managers – to identify study behaviour, generate assessment patterns to foster deeper learning across whole programmes, and debunk regulatory myths which prevent assessment for learning. Co-ordinated programme-wide assessment policy and practice is required to address both these issues (Gibbs, 2016).

Twelve departments at the University of

York have undertaken TESTA and used the results to inform improvements in feedback and assessment. Two departments are currently undertaking the TESTA process, while two further departments have expressed an interest in using the tool to review their approach to assessment.

The main themes arising from TESTA reports undertaken to date include:

- the timeliness of feedback (particularly in relation to its usefulness as a tool for feedforward),
- ensuring progression is demonstrated through assessments throughout the programme,
- the appropriateness of assessment formats (including high volumes of exams in some programmes and high volumes of coursework in others, with assessment through group work also noted as an area for review),
- the high number of assessment formats (in terms of range),
- the clarity of assessment criteria,
- the quality of feedback.

TESTA outcomes for a number of programmes also noted the following as discussion points:

- streamlining programme aims and PLOs,
- developing a shared understanding of programme aims for staff and students,
- improving programme coherence and structure,
- engaging students more effectively,
- reducing the volume of assessment,
- balancing formative and summative assessment,
- providing opportunities for formative feedback,



- reducing the possibility of students taking a strategic approach to assessment choices.

There are some differences by Faculty in the themes emerging from TESTA reports. Broadly speaking, the main themes from programmes in the Faculty of Arts are: developing a shared understanding of programme aims for staff and students; ensuring the appropriateness of assessment formats and clarity of assessment criteria and reviewing both the timeliness of feedback and opportunities to provide formative feedback. For the Faculty of Social Sciences, the main themes arising from programmes are: improving consistency, quality and timeliness of feedback; reviewing the high number of assessment formats, and enhancing student engagement. For the Faculty of Sciences, the two emerging themes are ensuring progression is demonstrated through assessments throughout the programme and reducing the volume of assessment.

TESTA is led by Dr Lucy Hodgetts, who is also a Faculty Co-ordinator within the Pedagogy team. Please contact her if you would like to run TESTA or find out more.

Peer assisted learning

During the pedagogy process a number of departments have identified the potential of introducing peer-assisted learning schemes. The School of Social and Political Sciences (SPS) ran a small Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) pilot scheme this year, having identified a need to support students in navigating the differences between individual academic departments and cultures and to develop great confidence in their written, analytical and presentation skills.

SPS found students raised similar issues flagged in the Freshers' survey data 2016/17 (see figure 1):

PAL provides an opportunity for cross-year support whereby higher-year students are fully trained to facilitate small collaborative study groups of lower-year peers. Based on learning through exploratory discussion, sessions



Figure 1: Freshers' survey data: what matters to students



For more information on PAL please contact Tamlyn Ryan on ext 1134 or via email: pal-enquiries@york.ac.uk

PLOs on show at the Learning and Teaching Conference

also provide opportunity for session leaders to share their own experiences of studying at the University of York. Discussion is based on information students have already been introduced to, either through lectures or through recommended reading. As a result, PAL session leaders are engaged in encouraging discussion and critical thinking rather than delivering any new material. Student participants are encouraged to compare notes, clarify what they read and hear, analyse, critique, question and seek verification of their understanding. Participants and leaders benefit from consolidating their knowledge and gaining deeper conceptual understanding. Sessions also include study skills and learning strategies which are integrated into the activities leaders use in the sessions. A systematic review of evaluative studies on PAL concluded that PAL is an effective pedagogical intervention that raises the achievement of students and increases student retention (Dawson *et al* 2014).

Five departments (Philosophy, History, Electronics, Maths and Sociology) have opted in to a UTC pilot for 2017-18, led and coordinated by Tamlyn Ryan and Francis Duah.

Employability skills

Several departments have reflected on employability skills, considering the extent to which these skills are explicitly developed within their programmes. Innovative ideas were showcased as part of the recent Learning and Teaching conference here at York from Sociology and Environment.

Publicising the Pedagogy

It is exciting to see the outputs of the Pedagogy starting to emerge in publicity materials for the undergraduate programmes. The UG prospectus and webpages emphasise how carefully the programmes of study have been designed. Webpages will include the Programme Learning Outcomes and student ambassadors will be using their PLOs at open days. Departments have been innovative with ideas on how to utilise the PLOs and SoP for marketing purposes, producing banners, leaflets and videos depicting how the programmes have been expertly designed. Meanwhile, attractive posters have been produced showing the programme learning outcomes, which will be used at open days.

The conference this year provided an opportunity to showcase some of these emerging outputs as well as sharing the challenges we have all faced along the way. Looking back feels like we have all been on a mountain hike, relying on collegial support, struggling at times, learning a common language and developing processes which will enable future developments



Publicising the Pedagogy

and programme level discussions. This journey is, in a sense, also just starting: the Pedagogy is not a process that comes to an end, but a shared vision for our programmes that continues into the future. Equally, postgraduate programmes are still in the process of being reimagined through the Pedagogy. Here, too, there are challenges but impressive successes, with 287 sets of Programme Learning Outcomes completed, a shared language being built, and, certainly not least, intensive thought being given to postgraduate programmes. The Pedagogy has been difficult at times (some would argue that genuine, engaged programme development nearly always is), but it has also been immensely rich, rewarding – and the seeds planted are already beginning to bear fruit in the learning experience of our students. And at the end of the day, that experience is worth climbing a mountain for.

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Overview Course content Fees and funding Teaching and assessment Careers Entry requirements

The York approach

Every course at York is built on a distinctive set of learning outcomes. These will give you a clear understanding of what you will be able to accomplish at the end of the course and help you explain what you can offer employers. Our academics identify the knowledge, skills, and experiences you'll need upon graduation and then design the course to get you there. Find out more about our approach to [teaching and learning](#).

Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Communicate knowledge of the art and literature of a wide range of periods, and engage creatively and critically with a range of conceptual, theoretical and methodological approaches.
- Take a critical and questioning approach to the ways in which literary and visual culture has been interpreted, and narrated, with reference to the period and tradition in which those interpretations were produced.
- Analyse the affective power of language and visual culture, and their cultural and political impact, and use this awareness to better understand the world and influence others.
- Make connections and comparisons between the ideas, cultures and societies of different time periods and places around the world.
- Exercise independent thought and judgment, construct meaningful research questions and develop well structured evidenced-based arguments in response to them through self-reflection, peer review, and feedback.
- Convey complex ideas with clarity and precision and make sophisticated and persuasive arguments based on both visual and textual materials from a range of sources, primary and secondary, archival and digital.
- Have the initiative to work well both independently and in collaboration with others, managing time effectively, meeting deadlines and taking an analytical approach to extending their own knowledge and skills.

Show less

Publicising the Pedagogy



Katy Mann Benn has worked in higher education for the past 20 years, predominantly in the UK but also in Trinidad, New Zealand and Italy. Katy is a Project Manager in the Learning Enhancement Team at York.

Programme-level models of skills development

Claire Hughes and Abigail Parrish discuss models of learning and how they can be used to define effective pathways of programme-level skills development.

Promoting progressive development towards the programme learning outcomes (PLOs) defined under the York Pedagogy requires us to define clear programme-level strategies for key skills development. In the Enhancement Plan we put together in the Environment Department under the Pedagogy we proposed to introduce key skills training pathways, involving face-to-face learning activities complemented by an online skills hub, across the core modules that sit within our degree programmes. Jessop *et al.* (2013: p74) state that this sort of programme-level approach 'clarifies the interconnectedness of units of study (modules), emphasising that an undergraduate degree is subject to a curriculum design process where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'. It is clear that the design of skills training pathways for a degree programme has a major impact on the student experience and ultimately learning (Walsh and Nixon, 2016).

Gibbs (2012: p27) suggests that there is 'currently a rapid retreat from modularity' towards more programme-level planning'. The benefits of this approach are numerous and include improvements in the student experience through greater sense of coherence and progression, easier interpretation and action-planning in light of NSS results, greater communication within programme-teams and fewer teaching 'silos' (from Gibbs, 2012). Whilst the benefits are clear there are numerous challenges involved in 'retrofitting' a programme-level approach into an existing modular programme, not

least ensuring consistency in approaches towards teaching and assessing specific skills across modules. As part of a University Strategic Learning and Teaching Fund project we have been exploring optimal programme-level models of face-to-face and online skills development to propel learning towards our PLOs in the degree programmes run in the Environment Department.

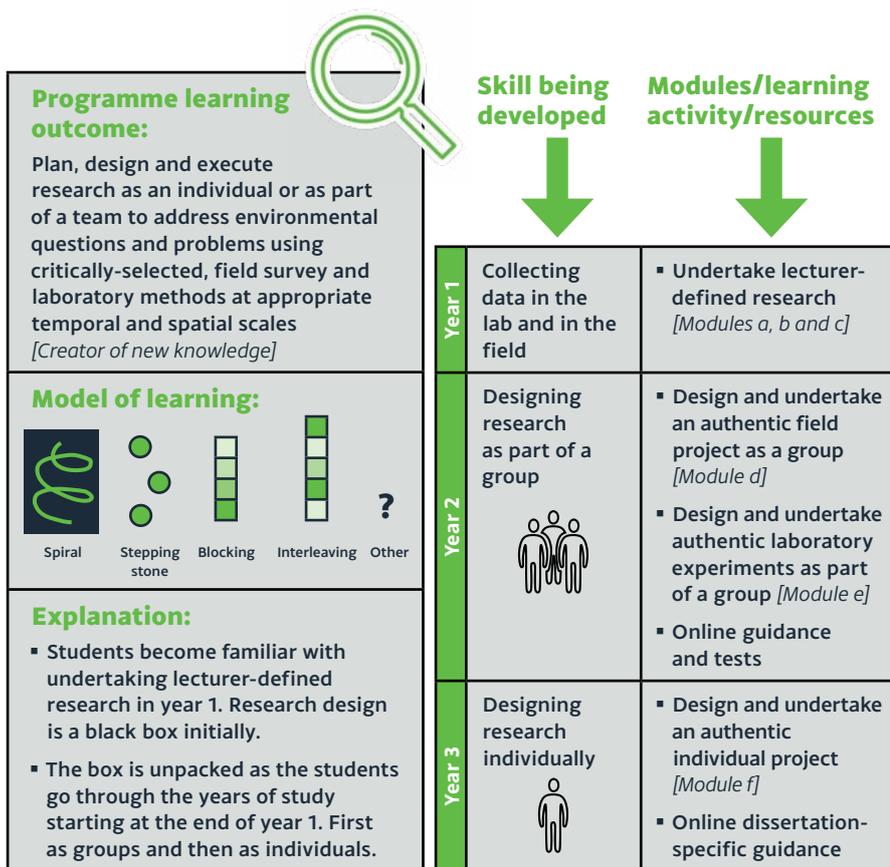
Models of learning

There are a range of proposed models of learning/curricula design including *spiral* (Grove *et al.*, 2006; Coelho and Moles, 2016), *blocking* and *interleaving* (Taylor and Rohrer, 2010), *stepping stone* (Yeagley *et al.*, 2016) and combinations thereof. In a *spiral curriculum* skills are introduced and then revisited at a later stage but at an increasingly higher level and degree of connectivity to the wider subject area (Bruner, 1960). Coelho and Moles (2016) found that a spiral curriculum has its challenges but it benefits student learning by providing opportunities to revisit and consolidate learning. *Blocking* involves concentrating on one specific skill until it is mastered and then moving on to the next skill. Repetition is a key feature of blocked learning. In contrast, *interleaved practice* involves learning new skills while at the same time practicing those previously taught. Studies (eg Taylor and Rohrer, 2010) have shown that *interleaving* leads to higher test scores than *blocked learning* but impairs practice session performance. A *stepping stone* curriculum assumes that students need to develop certain skills before they can move on

to others, and Yeagley *et al.* (2016) found this to be an effective model of learning for chemical information skills. For us, these models have provided a starting point for establishing optimal approaches towards the development of key skills at a programme-level.

Proposed approaches

The design of the skills training pathways that we are planning to embed into our core modules requires us to first define the sub-skills that make up each of our PLOs, define the expected progression across the years of study (ie the model of learning) and then establish the nature of the learning activities and identify the modules in which they will sit. For example, we are planning to teach research skills by first giving our students opportunities to undertake lecturer-defined experiments or field sampling in year 1 (modules a, b and c), and then engage them in research design first as groups (modules d and e, year 2) and then as individuals in the dissertation (module f, year 3). This gradual unpacking of the 'research design box' and increasingly student-led approach is similar to a spiral model of learning. In contrast, we believe that skills such as the use of sources should follow more of a stepping stone approach whereby students are first equipped with the toolkit needed to find and incorporate relevant sources in their work (induction activities, year 1), before they can go on to the critical analysis of source content (module g, year 2) and then identify knowledge gaps (module h, year 3). This sort of core skills training can



then be complimented by opportunities for practice in other core and optional modules and via online activities, providing our students with a strong learning experience.

Establishing the optimal models of individual skills development in this way provides us with a means by which we can easily communicate the journey towards PLO development to our students. It also gives those involved in curriculum design a guide on how to achieve programme-level skills development within our modular programmes. Overall this approach brings greater clarity in terms of exactly how 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'.

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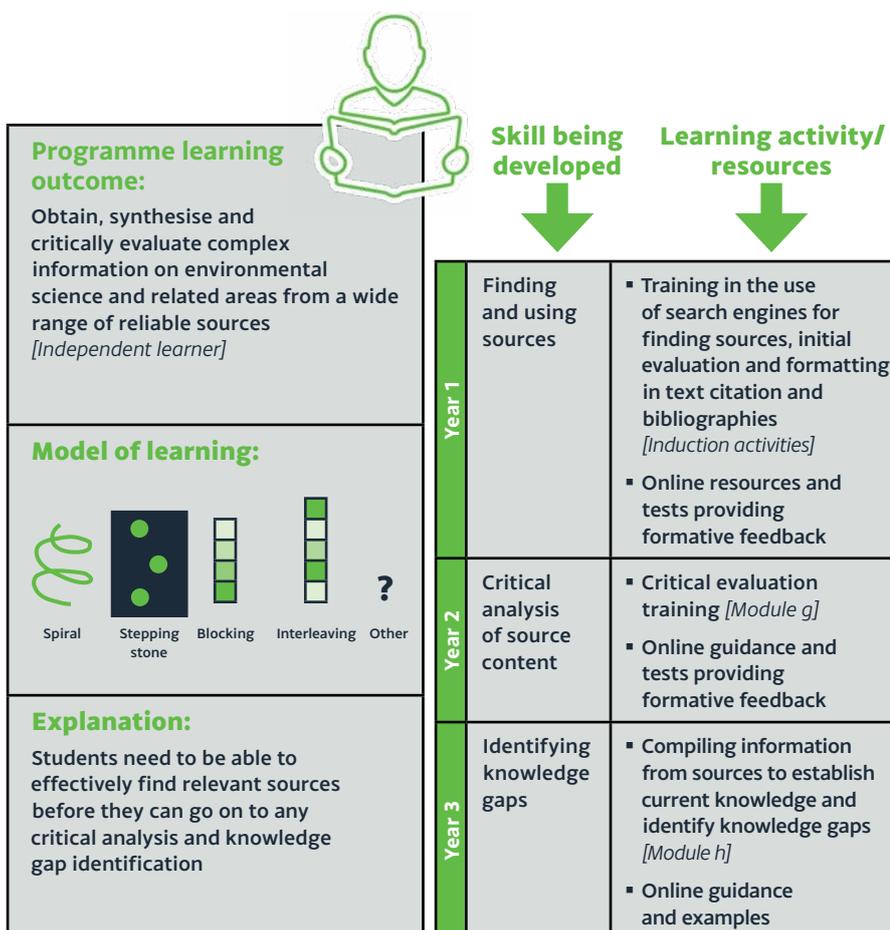
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 **Claire Hughes** is a Lecturer in Environmental Chemistry and marine scientist in the Environment Department at the University of York. In terms of teaching she is particularly interested in developing ways to ensure and communicate programme level coherence and the promotion of student-centred active learning in science education. c.hughes@york.ac.uk

 **Abigail Parrish** is an Associate Lecturer in Environment working on the York Pedagogy project and has a background in Education. A former secondary teacher, her education research focuses on student choice and motivation.

Improving engagement through student partnerships



The York Pedagogy emphasises active student engagement supported by focused, quality staff contact time. The pedagogy gives us the opportunity to re-visit student learning on our modules and to make changes which enhance engagement.

Caroline Chaffer and Jill Webb consider how student partnerships can be used as an approach to addressing issues of student engagement on a core module in the Management School.

What is student partnership?

Student partnership can be defined as a “collaborative, reciprocal process through which all participants have the opportunity to contribute equally, although not necessarily in the same ways, to curricular or pedagogical conceptualization, decision making, implementation, investigation, or analysis” (Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten, 2014, 6).

Partnerships have been conceptualised in a variety of ways; Healy *et al.* (2014) have developed a model for partnerships which distinguishes four areas for potential partnerships: Learning, teaching and assessment; Subject-based research and inquiry; Curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy and Scholarship of teaching and learning (Figure 1). Whilst the four areas identified in the model are not mutually exclusive they can provide a useful way of focusing on a particular area where partnership activity can enhance engagement. We have considered two elements of the model: partnerships for

learning, teaching and assessment, which focuses on ways in which partnerships can develop active learning; and partnerships for curriculum design and pedagogic consultancy, where students go beyond giving survey-based feedback on course design and are actively engaged and consulted in the design process.

Why student partnerships?

Healy *et al.* (2014) argue that using student partnerships as a way of thinking about the process of student engagement has two primary benefits: firstly, partnerships encapsulate the reciprocity of learning where students and faculty enter into dialogue which goes beyond positioning students as passive consumers of higher education; and secondly partnerships recognise the power relations between learner, academic and faculty and the implicit assumptions and preconceived ideas these bring. Student partnerships provide an opportunity to understand and challenge these preconceived ideas.

However, it can be difficult to measure the success of partnership in a particular module, as the focus tends to be on the learning activities and curriculum rather than on the ways in which students engage with faculty (Healy *et al.*, 2014). We wanted to think carefully about how we are using student partnerships within our module and identify the extent to which we could work in partnership with students more extensively across the module with a view to enhancing student engagement.

A case study

Feedback suggests that students value our module and like the way in which it is run. However, student engagement with respect to attendance and preparation for seminars is at the level where student attainment is detrimentally impacted for a large minority of the cohort.

We used focus groups to explore with students the extent to which traditional and existing partnership informed pedagogy was working well on the module and to examine the opportunities to embed a partnership approach more extensively. The discussion focused on two areas: the delivery pattern and its relationship to curriculum and the design of formative assessment feedback. The focus groups engaged students as consultants in the re-design of pedagogy; this consultative approach can be a first step to partnership.



Writing your own question is a good idea but I'd give myself too much scope! You could ruin an essay with a bad question."

Student's response to writing their own assignment

Current practice

Students are given a choice of two essays at the start of the module which cover different areas of the syllabus. Teaching on the module consists of weekly lectures and seminars; lectures focus on relevant subject based materials and seminars are both subject and skills based. Each seminar covers a unique clearly-signposted reading or writing skill which is relevant to both essay titles.

Students work as partners in the provision of formative feedback and engage with the assessment criteria in providing peer feedback on a short written piece in a seminar. This formative written work is then handed in for tutor marking. Students are also invited to attend a twenty minute one to one session with a tutor where they justify their planned approach to the assessment and work with the tutor to refine and develop their plan.

**What to keep and what to change
DELIVERY PATTERN AND CURRICULUM**

Focus group feedback suggested that students value the dialogue with staff in seminars and recognise the importance of focusing on a specific reading or writing skill. However, students questioned the value of reading challenging material in preparation for seminars which was of less relevance to their chosen assessment title and felt that this was a barrier to their active engagement. Students felt that lectures provided sufficient understanding of a topic such that they were in a position to select for themselves areas to explore in more depth.

FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT

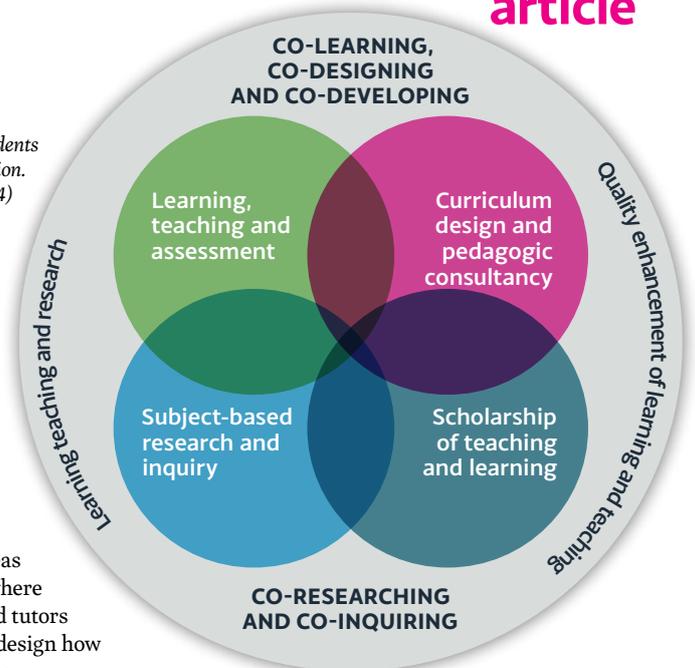
The focus group feedback suggested that students most value formative feedback that is directly linked to the summative assessment task; whilst the plan review is linked in this way the formative writing task is not. The plan review was therefore seen as particularly valuable and the formative task less so.

The focus groups also indicated that the students value the opportunity to see a variety of examples of written work in the peer feedback seminar. However, they also felt limited in their ability to provide valuable feedback to other students.

CHANGES MADE TO THE MODULE

The skills based approach to seminars has been retained but the delivery pattern of the lectures has been changed to enable students to select seminars which will focus on their area of interest. All lectures will be delivered in the first four weeks of term, and, after completion of the lectures, seminars will be scheduled so that students can select which they attend depending

Figure 1. Ways of engaging students as partners in higher education. Healey, Flint and Harrington (2014)



on the area of syllabus that interests them. Students can therefore tailor the sessions they engage with based on the curriculum area chosen for their final assessment. Group consultations will be held at the start of the module and also at a midpoint to identify particular skill areas or aspects of the syllabus where extra support is needed and tutors will work with students to design how this support should be given.

Formative assessment has been linked to the final assessment; students will produce an extract from their summative assignment which focuses on the development of a line of argument. The peer assessment session will be preceded by a live interactive on-line writing simulation where students and tutors will provide feedback to support the development of a short tutor-produced piece of writing; evidence suggests that student learning is maximised when students see the process of writing rather than the end product (Sambell and Graham, 2010).

A STEP TOO FAR?

The focus groups explored the possibility of allowing students to write their own assessment question for the module with support from tutors. The partnership literature suggests that this active approach enhances student motivation and engagement (Healey et al., 2014) by enabling students to explore their own interests. We found that a majority of students felt that this would add an unacceptable element of uncertainty and risk to the assessment process. They didn't appear to be ready to trust both themselves and us to take this step.

Reflections

One of the benefits cited in the literature with respect to student partnerships is that preconceived ideas are challenged and the result is stepped change rather than small incremental improvements (Cook-Sather, Bovill and Felten, 2014). We feel that the focus group sessions and the small successes we have already had with student partnerships have given us the confidence to make a step change in the way our teaching sessions are organised. The focus groups have also helped us recognise the value of compromise in adapting to the way in which our students learn rather

than putting the responsibility on students to adapt to our ways of working. Finally, we have learned that it is important to think carefully about module changes and consider how we manage student anxieties as we ask them to engage in new ways which they may find challenging as well as exciting. We may need to explore ways in which we prepare students more broadly across the programme if we want to empower students to develop and follow their own interests in a supported environment.

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DESIGNING AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT TOOLS FOR

Experiential learning

Andrew Kerrigan of the Centre for Global Programmes shares best practice in engaging learners and propelling learning towards programme outcomes while teaching twenty-first century skills.

Introduction

In March 2017, the Centre for Global Programmes (CGP) ran a creative problem-solving module on a short-course for undergraduate students of Tohoku University, Japan, who were studying at the University of York. In response to a request from Tohoku for increased integration with York students, equal numbers of York students from all over the University were recruited to learn alongside the Tohoku students. Over six sessions, the students were introduced to a framework for creative problem-solving – from framing the problem, to pitching the solution to potentially resistant adherents of the status quo. Classroom sessions interspersed tutor presentations with small group work, thought experiments, reflective questionnaires, research, and discussion. As an outcome, the module required each mixed-student group to come up with an original strategy to solve a relevant real-life problem in which they all had expertise, namely how to encourage more York students to go on mobility projects in Japan. The module came to a close after three weeks with a poster presentation to York students and Study Abroad professionals, who understandably had a vested interest in engaging with the students' strategies and rationales.

This innovative programme is typical of the courses now being developed at CGP. While the Centre's core business remains English language, culture and academic taster programmes, over recent



years, the Centre has branched out into designing and delivering programmes on so-called twenty-first century skills such as creativity, intercultural competence and employability. Despite this diversification, our programme designers and tutors bring to the teaching of content the same methodologies which underlie best practice in ELT, that is student-centredness, a pronounced preference for content with a high surrender value, the closest possible fit between assessment, learning outcomes and programme content (a core principle of the York Pedagogy), and a sensitivity to pace and interaction patterns sufficient to maintain high

levels of student engagement. Finally, as a support department, our programmes are non-credit bearing, and the majority of our students come to York during their vacation period. In addition to enhancing students' language or creative competence, there is often an explicit objective that the York programme should broaden 'students' horizons', and encourage them to experiment and reflect. Despite this, our programmes *are* assessed, with students' grades and reports sent back to the partner university at course end. In addition, partners can award credit so there is always the need to ensure valid and reliable measures of student learning.

It will be clear from my description of

the activities and ethos of CGP that our staff are professional teachers and syllabus designers operating within an environment which gives them considerable freedom to innovate, particularly when it comes to pushing the limits of experiential learning and authentic assessment. Central to the York Pedagogy is the notion of learning by doing, of learning activities which promote active student engagement and of strategies to propel learning toward programme outcomes. Recent policy developments in HE have made the pursuit of excellence in teaching vital to the success of universities. There are, however, very few genuinely new ideas in education and, at a time when best practice in pedagogy is up for debate, it is precisely in forums such as these that ideas tried and evaluated within one teaching and learning context might find application in another.

Twenty-first century skills

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) defines twenty-first century skills as a set of “literacies, competencies and character qualities that are believed to be critically important to success in the modern world” (HEA, 2017).



literacies (literacy, numeracy, citizenship, digital, and media); competencies (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration); and character qualities (curiosity, initiative, persistence, resilience, adaptability, leadership).”

(HEA, 2017)

These skills are of course nothing new. What is new is the consensus that in an age of increasing automation and fake news, success defined in individual terms, as well as that of developed and democratic nations, is heavily dependent on cultivating these skills. As a body of non-specialist skills and knowledge, twenty-first century skills have wide appeal, and can be taught to students regardless of the language or course of study. In this sense, they lend themselves to our Centre’s need to develop a programme for a varied cohort for students who wish to learn alongside York students. Opinions differ about how these

skills are learned, and how explicitly they should be taught. However, our experience delivering these skills in mixed groups is that today’s students, regardless of origin, are looking for their university education to equip them with skills and knowledge that will allow them to gain a competitive advantage in their professional lives. Lastly, as a body of predominantly procedural rather than declarative knowledge, twenty-first century skills also lend themselves to development through experiential learning. In this sense, they complement well the existing practices of the CGP teaching team.

Experiential learning and authentic assessment

In 2014 CGP designed its first short-course for undergraduates of Tohoku University Japan. The main driver of this programme was recent legislation from the Japanese government making funding available for graduate mobility programmes with a specific emphasis on employability. The syllabus therefore contained an employability Skills component including a focus on leadership, team-work, motivation and avoiding group-think.

As practitioners with a background in ELT, CGP designers approached syllabus design from the perspective of a variant on task-based learning. Taking team-work as an example, within this paradigm, a standard small-group task requiring complex coordination was introduced, which students then worked to complete. At task end, a stage of feedback and reflection followed. If the tutor felt it necessary, key sub-skills flowing from the task were isolated and subject to analysis and micro-practice before goal setting and a subsequent round of practice.

While individual sessions on the employability skills took this form, a learning journal based around the STAR framework (Situation, Task, Action, Result) was completed by the student each week in order to consolidate learning and encourage transferability. This framework was chosen precisely to prepare students for the final assessment, which took the form of a job interview for the role of student intern. One of the issues in developing authentic experiential assessment tools is finding a context that encourages the student to display learning for tutor evaluation, while maintaining the students’ involvement in and ownership of that experience. The intern interview task was widely perceived by the students as a task that not only synthesised learning on their programme, but also allowed them to practice packaging this learning for

future professional gain. Finally, as with all of our programmes, the assessment criteria were written to be understood by the students, free from meta-concepts and ‘teacher-ese’. During a preparation phase, time was taken to explain these criteria to the students using concrete examples. The same criteria were also used after the assessment as a means of generous, specific and timely formative feedback, as well as onward goal-setting.

Concluding comments

Following the two programmes here described, the participants completed an in-depth evaluation form. The feedback from Tohoku and York students alike indicated that they found the programmes engaging, useful, challenging and, in a few instances, transformative. Well versed in experiential learning, CGP staff have also learned over the years, and these lessons may be of use to colleagues searching for ideas to enhance teaching and learning in their contexts: (A) authentic assessment tools, whether these be interviews or developing strategies to influence policy within the university, are one of the most effective means of propelling experiential learning toward programme outcomes; (B) teaching skills through repeating task cycles interspersed with reflection, and bringing students together in multicultural, interdisciplinary groups to work on open-ended problems are excellent means of promoting student engagement, not to mention incidental learning; and (C), taking the time to explain the assessment criteria the assessment criteria in ways the students can understand, and thereafter, and thereafter using it for generous, specific and timely formative feedback, is not only a means of giving students ownership over the assessment process, but is also a highly-rated use of student-tutor contact time.

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Enabling active learning

TRANSFORMING THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Current generations of students are now arriving on campus with the expectation that their technologies will seamlessly interconnect with university services and support a flexible and personalised learning experience (Jisc NUS, 2016). This short article discusses the impact of these technological developments on the delivery of campus-based courses – specifically, the scope that learning technologies present for innovation in the delivery of the taught curriculum through the adoption of student-led teaching and discovery strategies, incorporating user-led design principles to support active student learning.

Students' expectations towards the use of learning technologies

The Jisc Digital Student project (Jisc, 2013 –) has highlighted the transactional and transformational expectations that students now share towards technology adoption, with the former addressed by universities through enhancements to learning infrastructure: eg improved access to wifi for student-owned devices and by the optimisation of online learning and teaching services for mobile access. On a pedagogic level, transformational (educational) expectations have been associated more with the ways in which digital technologies – both personal and centrally provided tools – can be employed to support learning activities. The University of Greenwich's implementation plan for the embedding of mobile technologies in curriculum design across the institution (Kerrigan et al., 2014) represents a recent example of transformational change in this respect, empowering students to make use of their own tablet devices in formal learning contexts such as lab work, supporting data collection/data entry for experiments, as well as through the use of apps in a range of practical and informal study activities across the curriculum.

Supporting pedagogic innovation through technology

At the heart of these developments lies the opportunity for pedagogic change and innovation, enabled through creative uses of technology which support student-controlled online learning activities, engaging learners and offering challenge to their personal study. Through personalised online learning activities we may also support students in the development of their skills in planning, organising, self-teaching and self-evaluating their own learning (Arenas, 2008).

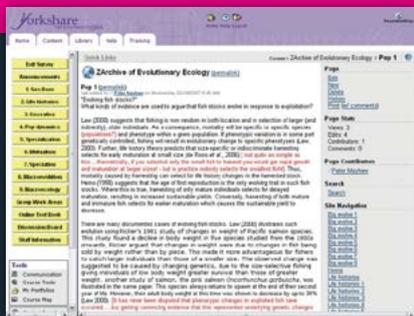
One way of visualising the role of technology in supporting online learning is to plot study tasks on a spectrum of active learner engagement and autonomy, as illustrated in Figure 1 opposite. Learning technologies may be utilised to enable learning outside of contact hours through independent practice (eg by the completion of formative self-study quizzes and automated feedback with links to further study resources), but can also support enhancing and transformative learning modes, such as student-led teaching and the creation of course artefacts, which require a greater level of autonomy and ownership by learners in their performance.

Transforming learning through student-led teaching and discovery

Approaches in transformative course design focus on students taking direct control over their learning through independent and peer-led teaching and discovery based learning approaches. Examples of transformative design approaches at York which have been supported through the use of technology include the use of shared blog and wiki spaces by postgraduate law students to perform unguided group research tasks, as part of a blended problem-based learning (PBL) design (Case study 1, online). In this context technology has underpinned the PBL cycle, enabling groups of students who are geographically dispersed to collaborate online in self-directed learning tasks, researching solutions to the targeted learning outcomes which have been agreed with their PBL tutor. The choice of task and technology is entirely aligned with

CASE STUDY 2: Transforming learning through student-led teaching and discovery (Evolutionary Ecology)

In this 3rd-year Biology module a VLE site was used to host course materials including lecture notes and animations to explain key concepts. Students were allocated to small groups (4-5 students) and each group was provided with a blog and a wiki, with viewing and participation rights restricted to that group. Students were required to produce collaboratively a short summary of the research literature on each week's topic. The blog was used to coordinate activities – allocate work, discuss ways of working, arrange to meet – and the collaborative writing was done in the wiki. Groups were required to present orally their findings in face-to-face sessions. The lecturer provided feedback on the online work. At the end of the course, the best reports were collated by the lecturer in a course level wiki, presented as an 'online textbook'. This provided students with a valuable revision resource.



Learning through technology: Experience through user-led design

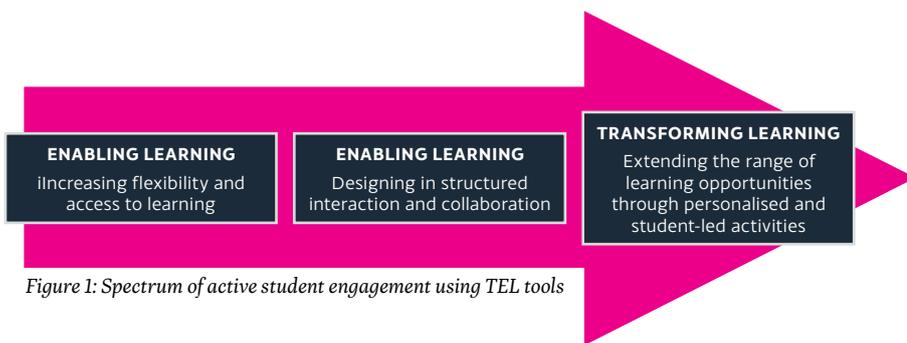


Figure 1: Spectrum of active student engagement using TEL tools

the aims of the teaching programme in this respect, in fostering self- and group-management skills expected of students at this level.

Transformative learning designs can also offer the potential for students to engage in 'user-led education', collaborating with peers and communities within and beyond the classroom to create their own learning resources. Experimentation with user-led knowledge creation tasks has been a feature of blended course design at the University of York, as a way of engaging students in the mastery of key concepts and the evidence base underpinning it, as illustrated in the Evolutionary Ecology case example below.

Towards user-led design

User-led design re-envisioned the role of students as producers as well as consumers of learning (Bruns, 2006). Implicit in this design approach is an acknowledgement that students have the skills and capability to engage in collaborative knowledge creation activities and to develop their learning as producers of 'content'. Bruns, *et al.*, (2007) observe that this approach is entirely

appropriate for Generation 'C' learners – the generation responsible for open source software development, music file-sharing, YouTube, Flickr, and Wikipedia – who they claim are now arriving on campus seeking to engage in knowledge-sharing and networking activities through the creative use of technologies.

Whether we agree with this characterisation of today's learners or not, there seems to be a changing context of higher education, which now appears to be more open to the use of technology in learning and teaching activities, and is receptive also to student-centred pedagogies and the engagement of students as partners in educational design and delivery. This latter theme has been strongly supported by Jisc in its current collaboration with the National Union of Students and The Student Engagement Partnership in promoting good practice in the use of digital tools across courses, academic departments and institutional service areas (Jisc NUS, 2016). This new student-centred outlook is also starting to surface in institutional visions for learning and teaching, and is entirely consistent with the principles of the York Pedagogy (Robinson, 2015) in providing opportunities for students to rehearse and articulate their knowledge as part of their independent study.

To find out more about these design approaches, take a look at the case studies and get in touch to discuss your ideas. Please note that the E-Learning Development Team and the Teaching and Learning Team (Library and IT Services) can advise on curriculum design and provide training and support in the use of learning technologies. Working from a pedagogy-first approach, drawing upon our

own research and evidence from the sector, we will help you to find the right tool and approach to meet your learning objectives.

Case studies

1. Blended problem based learning: <https://elearningyork.wordpress.com/learning-design-and-development/case-studies/blended-problem-based-learning/>
2. Transforming learning through student-led teaching and discovery (Evolutionary Ecology): <http://tinyurl.com/student-led-teaching>

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User-led design re-envisioned the role of students as producers as well as consumers of learning."

Bruns, 2006



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An app for applicants



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Mobile apps are widely used by a number of institutions in the United Kingdom, such as Lancaster, Liverpool, Manchester and Warwick, to aid recruitment and support the transition from school to university. To this end, an interdisciplinary team of staff and students from the Departments of Chemistry and Theatre, Film and Television combined their expertise to design and produce the first mobile app to support admissions at the University of York.

The work was completed as part of a 10-week summer project in 2016 with the aid of a grant from the Summer Internship Bureau. The internship was awarded to Chris Fulford, an undergraduate studying on Theatre, Film and Television's Interactive Media BSc. Chris designed the app for prospective applicants and visitors to the Department of

Chemistry, with features including a campus map, promotional videos, news feed, links to resources to aid the school-university transition, employability information, life as a student and details about admission days. The internship offered Chris invaluable experience of applying the user-experience design and software development skills he is learning on his course, in response to an authentic design brief and the needs of real users. Chris gained a great deal from the internship, as he comments:

'Working alongside the Department of Chemistry proved to be a rewarding experience for myself as I was able to successfully design and tailor a product to



Some of the design team

their specifications. This taught me how to manage my time efficiently, alongside allowing me the opportunity to create my very first Android mobile application.'

Approximately 250 applicants downloaded the app ahead of their interview, with the total number of downloads exceeding 500. Feedback from applicants has been very positive. For example:

'Also, I must thank you for introducing me to the Chemistry@York app, which is a service I haven't seen any other university employ. It has given me insightful information about York as a university, the students that study with you and the chemistry department.'

To facilitate inclusivity, the app is available free to download from both Google Play and Apple Store platforms. This project aligns with the institutional

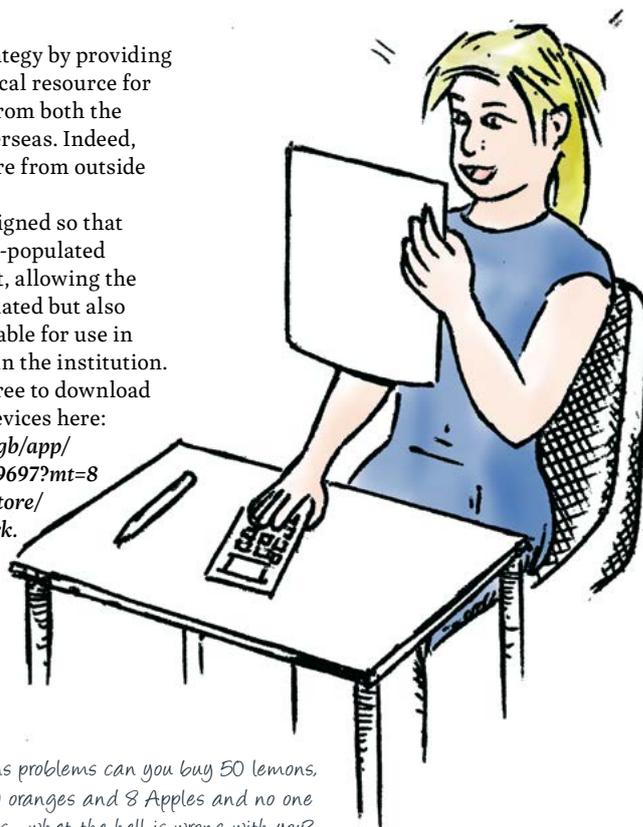


left: Screenshot of the app

internationalisation strategy by providing an additional technological resource for prospective applicants from both the United Kingdom and overseas. Indeed, 49% of app downloads are from outside the United Kingdom.

The app has been designed so that the framework can be re-populated with appropriate content, allowing the resource to be easily updated but also making the app translatable for use in other departments within the institution.

The app is available free to download on Apple and Android devices here:
<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/chemistry-york/id1155539697?mt=8>
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.ac.york.Chemistry&hl=en_GB



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"Before seeking support from the Centre I wondered how on earth I was going to be able to manage my data. Now I have some ideas, but know I can go back any time for help"

Postgraduate Research student,
 (Workshop & Appointment)
 2015/16

MATHS SKILLS CENTRE

"I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude and appreciation for all your effort in patiently clarifying my queries"
 Undergraduate Economics,
 (Drop-in) 2015/16

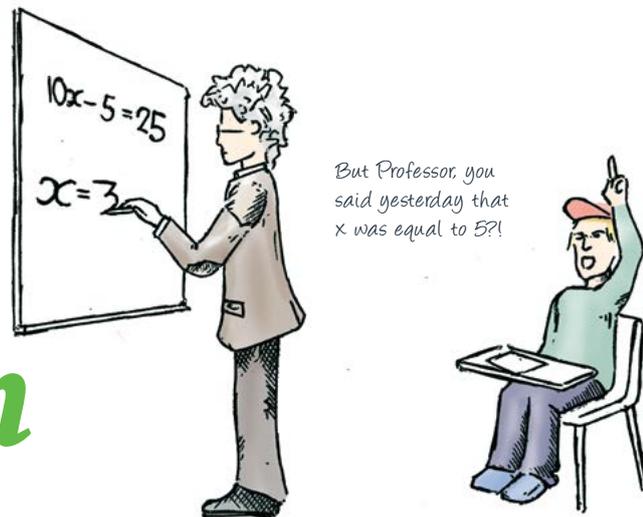
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Engaging in the York Professional Academic Development (YPAD) scheme:

recognition and reflection



Helen Bedford reflects on achieving recognition as a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (HEA), and the value of supporting peers to success via the York Professional and Academic Development (YPAD) scheme at the University of York.

Demonstrating, sustaining and advancing excellence and innovation within teaching and learning is a key expectation within contemporary UK higher education (HE). During my career, engagement with the Higher Education Academy (HEA) (2011) 'UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education' has provided a valuable scaffold for continuing professional development (CPD).

I attained HEA Fellow status on completion of a HEA endorsed Postgraduate Certificate programme, equivalent to the University of York Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) (University of York, 2016a). As I subsequently gained experience leading undergraduate and Masters level programmes and engaged in interprofessional education (IPE) and international initiatives, professional advancement through the UKPSF felt like a natural progression.

In 2015 I was recognised as a Senior Fellow of the HEA (SFHEA) via an accredited programme undertaken at my previous University. Selecting appropriate evidence to meet the UKPSF descriptor for Senior Fellow (HEA 2011) and structuring the reflective portfolio was challenging. It called for thoughtful enquiry as well as rigorous consideration of achievements to demonstrate sustained leadership, organisation and/or management of specific aspects of teaching and learning provision. The submission had

to demonstrate clear evidence for the required **areas of activity** (eg designing and delivering learning activities and/or programmes of study, assessment and feedback), indicate **core knowledge** (eg of subject material, appropriate pedagogies, learning technologies and quality) and express my **professional values**, as enacted within my role (HEA 2011).

Creating a suitably contemplative submission was also essential, and it offered a meaningful opportunity for reflective writing (Bolton 2010). As a registered midwife, reflection is integral to my professional role (Nursing & Midwifery Council 2015 & 2016). Taking the time to undertake a substantial reflection proved enlightening, acting as an opportunity to do more that summarise achievements for formal recognition before moving to a new role. Engaging in reflective and reflexive writing that was both retrospective and future-focused was revealing and valuable, and two aspects stood out. Firstly, exploring the values instilled during my early educational experiences as an undergraduate nurse (at that time an unusual route into the profession) made me realise their sustained impact throughout a career that has transitioned to midwifery and spanned practice, education and research. Secondly I identified internationalisation (HEA 2014) as a key area of interest for ongoing scholarship. I subsequently perused this (Bedford 2016a & 2016b), illustrating a UKPSF aim to promote professionalism

and maintain good standing via CPD (HEA 2011).

I joined the University of York at an opportune time to support implementation of the York Professional and Academic Development (YPAD) scheme from the initial pilot onwards (University of York 2016b). The scheme offers opportunities for academic and professional staff in student-facing services to seek HEA recognition against all four categories, from Associate Fellow to Principal Fellow (HEA 2011).

A core feature within YPAD is undertaking a peer supported exercise, underpinned by the Peer Support for Teaching (PST) Policy (University of York 2011 & 2015). It has been my professional privilege to support colleagues' engagement in YPAD PST action learning groups. The small size of the groups (typically three to four applicants seeking recognition under the same HEA fellowship category) and the interprofessional focus is engaging and stimulating. In the groups I have facilitated, peer support has combined pedagogic discussions, exploring common challenges, networking and sharing resources. Having compiled my SFHEA application during the early operation of a new scheme which did not feature a peer-support element, it felt like quite a lonely process. My experiences of facilitation within the YPAD scheme however are that it is energising, highly collegiate and participants act as valued 'critical friends'.

In summary, engaging with the

UKPSF (HEA 2011) has created a wealth of opportunities for my CPD within a framework that is benchmarked across the UK HE sector. The YPAD scheme offers a comprehensive and engaged means of seeking recognition across all HEA Fellowship categories and I would encourage interested colleagues to find out more at: <https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/develop/ypad/>.

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What is EXCELLENCE?

Tamaki Laycock and Kimi Smith report from this year's YUSU Excellence Awards.

The YUSU Excellence Awards are traditionally a wonderful way for students to show appreciation to the staff making a difference to them. This year we wanted to try out new ways in which to highlight the kind of teaching and learning that students respond to and improve the way in which we share the best practice demonstrated by the award winners. That is why on the morning of Friday 16th June, we hosted a student-led symposium looking into students' engagement with their studies.

The agenda showcased previous winners of the Excellence Awards as well as allowing student speakers to share their experiences.

Topics included:

- Techniques on how to create engaging learning environments
- Ideas on how to bring modules into the real-world
- Innovative teaching that helps maintain student engagement
- Interactive workshops and demonstrations of student-approved methods.

Feedback from last year's event said students wanted to interact more with staff and a symposium seemed the ideal way to address this. We wanted to foster a sense of community through both the awards and the symposium, to develop the relationship students and staff have, in order to gain further knowledge and understanding of subjects they are passionate about.

The morning was well-received by University staff, students and external delegates from academic teams in students' unions in the region. The event explored the reasons behind the award nominations and what excellence really means to students at the University of York. It also gave students a chance to think about their own academic

“ It also gave students a chance to think about their own academic experience.”

experience, reinvigorate their desire to learn, and spot a few new techniques to take back to their departments.

A key aim was to amplify the student voice and we hope that the sessions enabled staff to better understand what their students are thinking amidst changes in higher education, and consider how we can better promote a culture of engagement and scholarship. Feedback has been really positive, with both speakers and attendees thoroughly enjoying the content which has encouraged us to do something similar next year.

Please do come along next year and join us as we continue to explore themes of excellence with both staff and students!



Kimi Smith is the Student Engagement Development Coordinator at YUSU. Her role involves supporting all academic reps and ensure that the student voice is heard. A graduate of the University of York, she has a background in community development and engagement.



Tamaki Laycock has served as the Academic Officer of the University of York Student's Union (YUSU) and, previously, as Black and Minority Ethnic Officer, working to promote issues that matter to students and staff alike. She is a graduate of the BA in Politics with International Relations.

INTERVIEW WITH

Anne Phillips

National Teaching Fellow

Anne Phillips is Senior Lecturer in Diabetes Care in the Department of Health Sciences, and was recently awarded a prestigious National Teaching Fellowship (NTF) by the Higher Education Academy. Forum Magazine took the opportunity to talk with Anne about the award, and to consider what it really means to be excellent in teaching and learning.

What prompted you to apply for the NTF award?

"I put myself forward for the National Teaching Fellowship, an award which recognises impact on student learning and the teaching profession, following a recommendation from my former head of department, Professor Hilary Graham. I'd been awarded the Quality in Care award for Outstanding Educator in Diabetes, which is the national award that recognises impact on practice; it was a real honour to receive that. But it was quite different applying for something that is judged on written criteria and an abbreviated curriculum vitae; you don't of course get to meet the assessors, who can only judge your work based on what you've

written about yourself. I am not someone who naturally goes forward and says what I do individually is excellent. I work in a team, with lots of other people, and what we all do together is what makes a real difference to practice.

To go for the NTF award, you have to be strong in saying "this is excellence; this is what I do; this is how I do it." I benefited from a lot of guidance from Cecilia Lowe (Head of the Learning Enhancement Team at York), who was incredibly supportive throughout the process. She helped me turn my application around, helping me to get across what it is that I do, and how it has transformed the practice of others. As soon as I thought of it that way, it became an easier thing to do."

Is that a characteristic of teaching in Higher Education? The difficulty we experience in championing ourselves?

"Absolutely, I think that's it in a nutshell really. As teachers and scholars, we do what we do because we care, passionately: the outcomes for our students, and in my case the outcomes in practice for people who are recipients of care, those are the things that feel important. It's not that we see what we do as excellent, but that we see the outcome of what we want through our students to be excellent. So it's quite

hard, when we just see what we do as being normal, to say that what we're doing is special. But, actually, it is special: we're there to transform students; we're there to transform their ideas; we're there to transform their experiences. That, really, is our everyday job. I would not have ever said I judge what I do as excellent; I would have just said this is what I normally do."

There's actually a new, joint award, CATE (the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence), aimed at teams working in teaching and learning. I really would encourage people to go for that one – it's a brilliant idea by the Higher Education Academy because it recognises group excellence, recognising the whole value of a team working on a project or engaged in innovative practice. Because we don't do this on our own, we do it with a huge group of people who all deserve recognition."

Has the York Pedagogy helped with that sense of recognition?

"I think so: the York Pedagogy is valuing teaching so much more, it's valuing the output of that teaching so much more, which I think is really important. Research is very important, and we need to harness and use research in our teaching, but it's also about how we deliver what we deliver, how we inspire



You have to get the skills in right at the beginning, the skills to offer people hope, understanding..."



*As teachers and scholars,
we do what we do
because we care, passionately.”*

students through good teaching – that’s the most important thing to me.”

Tell us a bit more about teaching in your subject area.

“My focus is diabetes care: trying to help practitioners do the best they can to help people with diabetes self-management, develop their understanding about the condition. It’s a condition that can be very much life-dominating; it can have a massive effect on people’s lives regardless of age, and we need to teach people the skills to allow them to manage their own condition in the way that’s most effective for them. There’s an awful lot of blame in diabetes care, and unfortunately because we’ve got such an epidemic going on globally, and particularly in the UK, we’ve got to be able to teach practitioners in this area the skills necessary for them to hit the ground running. You have to get the skills in right at the beginning, the skills to offer people hope, understanding, the practical knowledge people need in order to live successfully with the condition.”

You’ve had something of a history of awards as an educator in this field.

“Yes, I’ve been very lucky, and I think what I’ve done has been appreciated by students. The impact of what you do, if you know it’s working, is something

that doesn’t go away. What I really am delighted by, is if I see students a few years after they graduate, if I bump into them or if they come back for another course, and I see what they’ve achieved. I see how they’ve become excellent healthcare practitioners who are really skilled, interested and invested in what they’re doing. And then I know that my colleagues and I have done our jobs well. We’ve turned that person who came in at eighteen into a skilled, highly sophisticated practitioner who is strutting their stuff in practice and doing really, really well. That’s what it’s all about.”

Finally, you mentioned having been with the University for several years – what kind of changes have you seen?

“Well, with Health Education England (HEE) money being withdrawn last year – that had a huge impact. In Diabetes Care, we had a UK-wide student base and had European students showing interest, students coming from abroad for modules. But of course when the HEE funding went, that was it. There was a massive impact, and of course that particular education isn’t being provided anywhere else either. So we’ve now got a situation in the country where practitioners simply aren’t

able to progress their skill-set for the patient base that they have, for example in type 1 diabetes with insulin pumps. It’s advocated in NICE (the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guidance that we use insulin pumps, children start with insulin pumps at diagnosis or shortly after diagnosis, and we were the centre in the UK for providing that education. And the funding got taken away.”

Given those kinds of issues, and I think similarly hard ones will also be faced in other subject areas, the million dollar question: is this still a job worth doing?

“Absolutely. It will always be a job worth doing, and when the winds change and the sails turn it’ll certainly be a job worth doing. It’s a lovely area to be working in at York, with colleagues and with students – it’s always great to be working with them. I take the NTF as recognition of that.”

Anne Phillips was speaking to Phil Robinson-Self (*Forum* magazine sub-editor). The second edition (2017) of Anne’s edited volume, *Principles of Diabetes Care: evidence-based management for health professionals*, is published by Quay Books. Email: anne.phillips@york.ac.uk

Learning and Teaching Conference



I worry that technology is killing meaningful communication.



The articles in the present edition of Forum stem from the University of York's 2017 Learning and Teaching Conference. What a day it was!



With 150 delegates from across the University and a good number of externals, the stage was set for rich dialogue and a range of fascinating sessions – as the photographs on this page and the materials throughout this issue amply testify. Recordings of all of the conference workshop and lecture sessions, along with slides and other materials, are made available to University of York staff via the Learning and Teaching Forum blog: <https://yorkforum.org/the-annual-lt-conference/2017-conference>. So if you weren't able to join us on the day but your interest has been piqued by this issue of *Forum* magazine, do visit the blog and find out more. Or, if you did join us on the day and just couldn't decide which session to attend (or perhaps you're missing that one vital reference you wanted to look up), fear no longer. Even if you only have time for a quick taste of the day, the blog also includes useful overviews from the Chair of each session.



InnoConf16

ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY

A peer reviewed volume with a selection of papers – including a foreword by Jocelyn Wyburd and her opening paper – from last year's conference held at the University of York on 17 June 2016.

In the twenty-first century, technology develops fast and we all need to learn, adapt and evolve faster than ever to keep up with the times. To maximise their potential, students need to be exposed to, and to grow comfortable with, a range of different technologies. They need to be able to effectively and efficiently access, produce, edit and share information appropriately, being able to work collaboratively and independently.

Now more than ever, with the high increase in university fees, language students – and everyone else – need not only to be able to develop but also to evidence a wide range of skills in order to compete in the current job market. As educators, we must be aware of what employers look for in graduates, to be able to openly discuss this with students and to help them become aware of their development needs.

Throughout the book, authors share

“ Students who now fund more of the cost of their higher education demand higher quality, transparency and value for money. Employers want highly skilled graduates who are ready to enter the workforce. And the country needs people with the knowledge and expertise to help us compete at a global level.”

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2015

good practice: drawing on research, such as the British Academy's Born Global project, and reflecting on their experience to promote student engagement, inclusivity and collaboration, fostering a successful learning environment while developing employability skills, reviewing course content and assessment, and developing new modules to promote intercultural competence, inclusivity, critical thinking, collaborative work, digital skills, and employer engagement.

Whatever the language or subject we teach, there are a number of skills, behaviours, attributes and attitudes which staff and students should be aware of in order to enhance teaching and learning, and to maximise student potential and employability prospects.

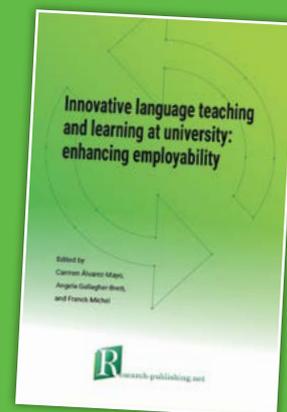
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Carmen Álvarez-Mayo is an Associate Fellow in the Department of Language and Linguistic Science and the Languages For All Spanish and Portuguese Coordinator. She is a

Certified Member of the Association for Learning Technology (CMALT) and a keen learner whose main interests are developing learning and teaching materials, intercultural competency and communication/internationalisation, interdisciplinarity, and equality, diversity and inclusivity.



Support, development and recognition for LEARNING AND TEACHING

FORUM WORKSHOPS

The Learning and Teaching Forum organises an exciting series of one-off workshops and events, delivered and facilitated by experienced academic and support staff. Workshops are open to all staff and postgraduate students. If you are unable to attend an event but would like a copy of the materials, please let us know. For further information, see: york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/sharing/sharing-practice/workshops

THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING NETWORK (SOTLN)

The SoTL Network brings together a suite of resources, professional development, discussion and dissemination opportunities focused upon looking at teaching and student learning in a scholarly and research-orientated way. The current range of activities organised as part of the network includes an annual SoTL journal, invited speakers, and a strand of seminars designed to engage colleagues with key and emerging pedagogical literature. For more information, see: york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/develop/network

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Rapid Response Fund supports small-scale short-term projects, initiatives or purchases to enhance the quality of learning and teaching by addressing a clearly-identified need or issue. Funding is limited, and grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis; please also note that departments in a stronger financial position may be asked to fund initiatives from their own resources. For more information, see: york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/support/funding

THE YORK PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT (YPAD) SCHEME

The YPAD scheme is based upon the University's Peer Support for Teaching policy, and involves participants working to develop their practice in groups supported and facilitated by an experienced colleague. The scheme is designed to be inclusive of all staff groups who teach or support student learning (including PGWTs, research staff with teaching responsibilities, associate staff and learning and teaching support staff) and caters for all levels of experience. YPAD is accredited by the Higher Education Academy; this means individuals who successfully engage with the scheme will secure professional recognition through the award of an HEA Fellowship category appropriate to their role and their level of responsibility for teaching and supporting learning. For more information, see: york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/develop/ypad

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S TEACHING AWARDS

One of the ways in which the University rewards excellence in learning and teaching is through the Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Awards, introduced in 2006. Nominations, in which students play a part, are invited from departments in the Spring Term of each academic year. The scheme recognises staff (either individually or in teams), including postgraduates who teach, who demonstrate excellence in teaching and/or learning support at York. Call for nominations for the Vice-Chancellor's Teaching Awards 2018 will be circulated in December 2017. For more information, see: york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/reward/awards

THE NATIONAL TEACHING FELLOWSHIP SCHEME (NTFS)

The NTFS Individual Awards form part of a nationwide, government-funded initiative to promote excellence in learning and teaching. Operated by the Higher Education Academy, the Individual Awards competition recognises individuals who have made an outstanding impact on the student learning experience. 55 awards of £10,000 each are available each year, to be used for personal, pedagogic and professional development in learning and teaching (there is no longer a formal project requirement). Details regarding the 2017 nominations will be provided by the HEA. For more information, see: york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/reward/ntfs

SUPPORT FOR TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LEARNING (TEL)

Technology enhanced learning refers to the use of online systems and tools in support of learning and teaching activities. TEL support at the University of York is provided by the E-Learning Development Team in the Academic Support Office. The team offers individuals and Departments support in the design, delivery and evaluation of learning technology interventions at the activity, module and programme level. This includes guidance on the use of the University's centrally-supported virtual learning environment *Yorkshare*, and advice on a wide range of learning technologies, including use of Google Sites for portfolios, multimedia and video, lecture recording, technology-supported assessment, in-class technologies and collaboration out of class. For more information, see: york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/support/technology