

# Forum

Learning and Teaching Committee



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*of York*

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**Sustaining learning  
communities in turbulent times**

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# Editorial

Dear Reader

Welcome to the Summer 2021 edition of *Forum* magazine.

The changing patterns of teaching, assessment and exam boards this year have resulted in a 'stretched' term for many of us, with June activities moving into July and so on. Where the magazine at this time of year would usually feature reports and articles related to the annual Learning and Teaching Conference, because of the change in production schedule and the changed timing of the conference, that has not been the case with this issue. The Learning and Teaching Conference took place on July 2nd 2021, with the theme of 'The Changing University' and featuring a keynote from Professor James Pickering of the University of Leeds. More items and articles drawn from the conference will follow in future issues.

I mention this altered schedule because it illustrates in a small way the much bigger and more consequential kinds of changes and adaptations we have needed to make in the last academic year. As Covid has become a challenge in the medium term – as opposed to an emergency requiring a lockdown response of a few weeks, as initially indicated – so we in Higher Education have had to think beyond the immediate solutions of 2020 that were designed to ensure that students could progress onto the next stage of their programme or graduate. We have had to envisage learning and teaching projects and initiatives that have been planned, begun, or carried out under Covid restrictions (sometimes all three). As Director of Learning and Teaching for TFTI, I have seen at first hand how the different levels of Covid alert have required in-course and even in-term changes to teaching delivery and on-campus activity. Making these changes while preserving the integrity of the programme design has been an extraordinary challenge, in which colleagues across the University have demonstrated great care, expertise and creativity. Hence, the theme for this issue is 'Sustaining Learning Communities in Turbulent Times'.

Each of the articles in this edition engages with the challenge of building or maintaining a team or learning community at a time when in-person interaction was often ruled out – and when the list of permissible activities was subject to change at short notice. In such a context, how do we not only teach the material and conduct the assessment partly or wholly online, but also maintain the sense of purposeful activity, 'buzz' and togetherness, those important intangibles of campus life? How might new initiatives thrive when they are begun under Covid, perhaps with staff and students who have not yet met in person? In this issue, Tamsyn Kiss and Jenny Pollard discuss their approach to easing students' transition to a placement year in Environment and Geography; Helen Bedford reflects on how the Leadership in Action programme influenced her role as Subject Group Lead for Midwifery through the pandemic; and Lilian Soon discusses the establishment of a Digital Accessibility Voluntary Work scheme. In a new departure for the magazine, I've invited a student contribution from TFTI's department rep, Emily Patterson, representing the invaluable work that our student reps have been undertaking in maintaining lines of communication and community cohesion during the past year. Another important dimension of this edition's theme is represented in a piece by the Decolonising Education Collective, a group of staff and students in the Department of Education. The article shares multiple perspectives on the Collective's value and significance in building towards sustained and meaningful change to the discipline and to the University.

This edition of *Forum* will be my last as editor. I have really enjoyed my term of service on the University's Learning and Teaching Forum and I would certainly recommend it as a way of building cross-departmental partnerships and activities, and seeing the range of innovative, creative and reflective activity that is taking place, both at the University and in its growing network. As always, I'd like to thank all the contributors, and also Glenn Hurst, Chair of the Learning and Teaching Forum, and Julia Hampshire in the Academic Support Office for their support of the magazine. Thanks also to the *Forum* associate editors this year: Mark Egan, Alex Benjamin, Alex Reid, and Phil Robinson-Self.

With my best wishes for the rest of the summer and for the year ahead,

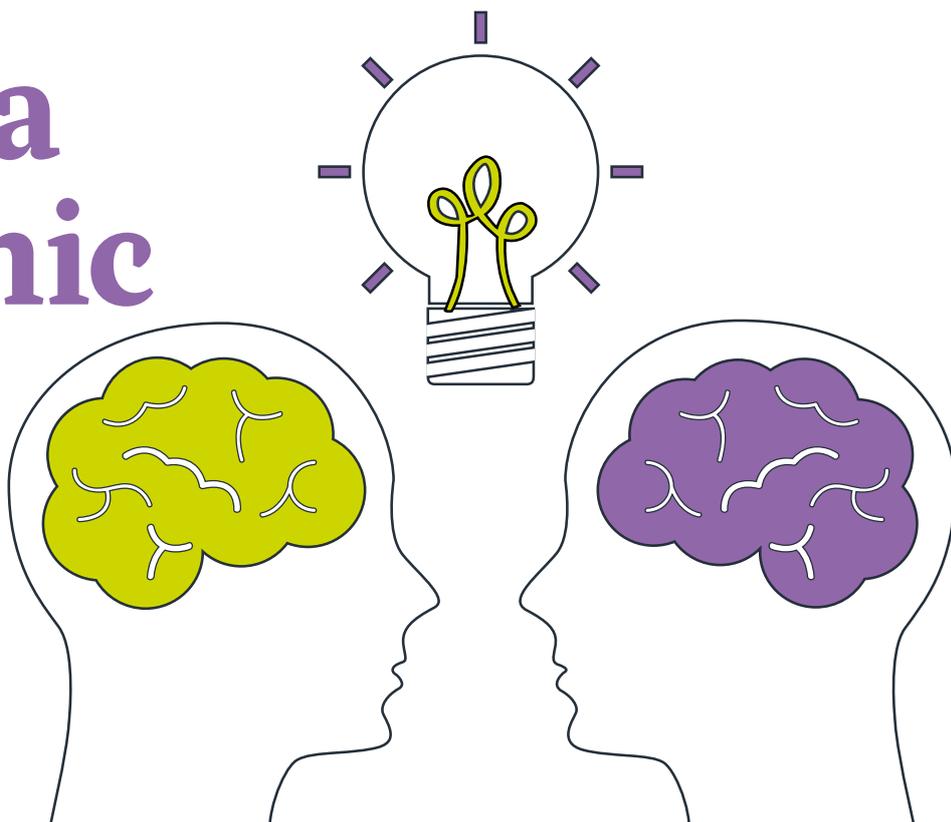
**Benjamin Poore** (Theatre, Film, Television and Interactive Media)  
Editor



# PAL in a pandemic

Jessica Hargreaves and  
Sue Russell.

*Experiences from the (online) chalk face – introducing peer assisted learning during a global pandemic.*



## Introduction

Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) schemes are primarily used to provide study support to first year students from higher year students (typically with guidance from staff). There is variation between schemes, but some of the core principles of PAL are that it is designed to be run by students, for students and that it involves working with “students as partners” (Sedghi and Lunt, 2015).

PAL schemes in the UK are typically based on the SI-PASS (Supplemental Instruction Peer Assisted Study Sessions) model, with trained student PAL Leaders working collaboratively with staff to run peer learning sessions for first year students (see Arendale (1993), for example). PAL schemes not only enhance transition into university, but can also improve student progression, achievement and satisfaction (Dawson et al, 2014; Keenan, 2014).

In this article, we will discuss the details of, and feedback for, a PAL Scheme within the Mathematics degree at the University of York, which took place entirely online during the Covid-19 pandemic. This PAL Scheme was first introduced *during* the pandemic and therefore, in contrast to most teaching provision this academic year, it was designed to run online from inception. This article explores the challenges and benefits of *online* PAL schemes, from staff and student perspectives. We then discuss the aspects of PAL in a

pandemic that we would (or would not) take forward to a blended or in-person approach in the future.

## Background and Approach

One of the core principles of PAL is that the peer learning sessions should be embedded within the teaching provision of a specific “historically difficult” module (Arendale, 1993). Therefore, with the intention of introducing a PAL scheme in the academic year 2020-21, we liaised with students in June 2020 to ascertain which module(s) they felt would benefit from this provision. In particular, focus groups were held with student representatives from the Students’ Union (Mathematics Society (MathSoc); the Department representative and relevant Year/ Course Representatives). Upon consultation, the students voted for PAL sessions to support the Introduction to Probability and Statistics (IPS) Stage 1 module. This was for various reasons, some of which are outlined in Table 1. Therefore, in response, in the Autumn term, PAL Sessions were introduced for the IPS module. This module is compulsory for the single subject courses (and many combined courses) in the Mathematics Department.

## PAL Leader Training

At the University of York, PAL is a collaborative project between Learning Enhancement (LE) and a number of

academic departments. In response to the pandemic, LE developed online training modules for general (online) PAL training and delivered an online “live” training session to the PAL Leaders. The LE Maths Lead and the IPS Module Leader then developed and delivered a departmental specific training session for the Maths PAL leaders- showing them the various tools that could be used for online PAL sessions (including Jamboard, Padlet, Kahoot, Zoom and breakout rooms) and discussing the particular techniques that were more likely to work in mathematical subjects.

## Preparation and organisation of PAL sessions

The PAL sessions introduced this year were designed to complement other support provided for the IPS module. PAL was made available to all students enrolled on the module and integrated into the curriculum. In particular, all students were timetabled to one of three weekly online sessions (on Zoom) of one hour; however, attendance was optional. As these sessions were not compulsory, attendance varied from between 5-40 students/week (out of approximately 200 students registered on the module).

The exact format of the sessions varied from week to week. Typically, the sessions were divided into three sections:

1. Drop In- “ask us anything”: Student led, with no fixed plan;

adapted to suit those that attend. This was intended to ease the transition and help students settle into university life (Byl et al., 2015).

2. “Legal Hints”- tips for the weekly assessment (approved by lecturer): Providing this information was mainly to improve attendance, so students see a tangible benefit to attending (Sloan et al., 2019).
3. Interactive Pre-Planned Activity: Designed in advance with activities relating to current module content or assessment. These activities involved online tools such as Jamboard, Padlet, Kahoot and Zoom features (e.g. chat function, “emoji reactions”, polls and “break-out rooms”, etc).

Each PAL session was followed by a “de-brief” attended by the module leader, PAL Leaders and a member of the central university PAL Team. The de-brief session gave the PAL Leaders the opportunity to feedback and reflect on the previous sessions and then work collaboratively with staff to plan the next session. The collaborative nature of this session emphasised the central ethos of PAL: working with the students as partners throughout all stages of the development and on an ongoing basis (Sedghi & Lunt, 2015).

The initial PAL sessions were planned by the Module Lead. However, as the PAL Leaders grew in confidence, they took a more active role as partners in the design of the sessions. For example, the PAL Leaders devised the “PAL-athon” concept. This involved combining all three timetabled

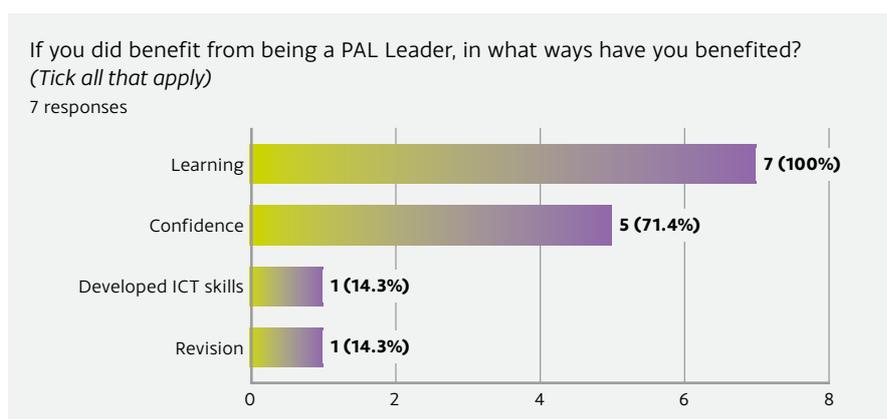


Figure 1 PAL Leader's perceived personal benefits of the scheme

sessions into one 3-hour revision session. Stage 1 students were invited to attend all three sessions to revise the entire module. In the literature, lengthy, intensive sessions are not usually recommended in online settings (Slemmons et al., 2018), and this view was generally supported by the student feedback in our department, so it was somewhat surprising for a student to suggest this. However, this session was the best attended and feedback from the Stage 1 students was overwhelmingly positive: “The PAL-athon helped with revision of the subject and hearing the PAL leaders' personal tips on how to revise etc helped me to find a revision method that worked for me.” We feel that the critical difference here was the direct link to upcoming assessment (students are familiar with an intensive “cramming session” before an exam) which counteracted this issue. Furthermore, the fact that it was so different from other teaching provisions at this time gave it a

“unique selling point” and made it more memorable and hence marketable to first year students. However, some students did feel that this format was not preferable: “I think it was a long session covering a lot of information, so I feel like it would be more beneficial if it was split over the term or the final week, so that each section could be covered in more detail and people would have more energy to focus”. In the subsequent PAL Debrief session, the PAL Leaders also (independently) identified that this type of session would be useful earlier in the term. In particular, they identified specific points in the term where this would have the greatest impact (e.g. before the first assessment quiz, around Week 5 when some students begin to fall behind and start to avoid seminars). Therefore, next year, we plan to continue to work with students as partners to embed these sessions strategically throughout the term.

## Reflections

Staff and students involved in this PAL scheme were invited to give feedback on the process. In this section, we briefly present the results of this process through staff and student reflections and questionnaire responses.

To summarise, all those surveyed (staff, PAL Leaders and attendees) felt that they had benefited from being part of the PAL scheme. In particular, all groups indicated that PAL had increased the sense of departmental community (see reflections below). All (fifteen) students surveyed (including PAL Leaders) felt being involved with PAL had improved their subject knowledge.

## PAL Leaders

Feedback from our PAL Leaders suggests that they found the experience beneficial in numerous ways, including increased confidence (“I have more confidence to do things that [I] don't think I'm good enough

REASON	EXAMPLE STUDENT COMMENT
The broad range of statistical experience within this cohort impacts students' attitudes to, and perceived aptitude for, the module.	<i>“As an international student, I found the module challenging, because I hadn't done any stats at school.”</i>
For various reasons, students that have previously studied statistics sometimes develop negative perceptions of the subject.	<i>“IPS is my hardest module - statistics isn't a section of mathematics I'm particularly fond of, so I was always bound to find the content more difficult and the work more tiresome; I'm more of a pure mathematician.”</i>
The module is taught entirely within the first term.	<i>“[IPS] was the first module that we completed fully, so it was nice to have the older students sort of guide you through a module (lectures, assignments, exams etc) and give their advice which you can then apply to later modules.”</i>

Table 1 Motivation for embedding PAL in IPS.

ASPECT OF ONLINE PAL	ADVANTAGE	DISADVANTAGE
<b>Participation</b>	<p>For attendees: "Lower committment, its [sic] much easier to be a passive participant online".</p> <p>For attendees and PAL Leaders: "They can be a little less nerve wracking because you are on the other side of the screen, you can be anonymous."</p>	<p>For PAL Leaders: "People don't have to actively participate which can make the sessions hard to run".</p>
<b>Logistics</b>	<p>"Flexibility in numbers."</p> <p>"Like all online classes, they are more easily accessible as you don't have to go across [or come on to] campus to get to them".</p> <p>"You don't feel like you're wasting anybody time - it's easier and more convenient for everyone to do these sessions online but when it's in person it makes it less convenient and makes you wonder if it's worth it going all that way for just a small question".</p>	<p>"The usual tech issues: internet, students in countries without Zoom, no mics or cameras."</p>

Table 2 Student perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of online PAL.

for because I can do things that are a little challenging.") and subject knowledge (Figure 1). Furthermore, the change of perspective also impacted their behaviour in their own teaching sessions, with all PAL Leaders now reporting that they consciously actively engage (e.g. turning their cameras on in Zoom meetings and answering questions) as they now know how difficult it is when participants don't engage! Finally, the PAL Leaders felt that the experience made them feel more integrated within the Department, "I got to meet a lot of new people in the maths department, very valuable especially this year."

### Member of the Learning Enhancement Team

Personally, the scheme exceeded my expectations and delivered a range of unexpected outcomes. I looked forward to the Friday debrief sessions as I enjoyed being part of the Maths PAL community and getting to know the PAL leaders. It was really enjoyable and satisfying watching the PAL leaders grow in confidence, share their experiences, and develop their relationships with each other and the module leader. An outcome of their involvement was that we filmed a question and answer session for the SI-PASS conference with two PAL leaders. Their overwhelming positive experience was brilliant to see!

### Module Lead

I'll be completely frank – in the summer of 2020, I had decided to shelve our plans to implement PAL in IPS in September

2020. Although I had seen the benefits of PAL schemes first-hand in other departments and institutions, and although a lot of work had gone into "the launch" already, the prospect of building another thing from scratch (along with everything else I needed to do for the first time- e.g. recording hundreds of lecture videos) felt a little too ambitious. However, I met with the LE contact who convinced me that PAL was needed this year more than any year. And they were right! In my opinion, everybody involved has benefitted from this scheme. Personally, the weekly debrief sessions with the PAL Leaders were the highlight. They provided honest feedback on the progress of the IPS cohort. They gave me an invaluable insight into the student experience of the pandemic. And they reminded me that I was a lecturer at the University of York and of all the best things about that job!

### Challenges and Benefits of Online PAL

Students (participants and PAL Leaders) were asked to outline their perceived advantages and disadvantages of Online PAL (as opposed to in person). The results are summarised in Table 2. Interestingly, some of the perceived disadvantages are simultaneously an advantage. For example, all students valued the anonymity afforded by the online sessions. Conversely, all students wanted the (other?) participants to engage more. This paradox suggests that there may be some aspects of "PAL in pandemic" that

we may take forward to a blended or in-person approach in the future. This will be explored in the next section.

### Evaluation

All students (both PAL Leaders and attendees) were surveyed as to their preferences for the modality of PAL delivery in future (both as attendees and leaders of the sessions). The results (for the PAL Leaders) are shown in Figure 2 and student comments regarding the online element are also presented in Table 2. There was a strong preference for having both online and in-person options available (73%) with both individual options also receiving support (online only (7%) and in-person only (20%)). These findings suggest that students would like to retain an online option in future. Interestingly, there is evidence that students have different preferences depending on their role in the session. This further supports the results in Table 2, that the perceived disadvantages of online PAL are simultaneously an advantage (but perhaps for the other stakeholders present).

### Plan for the Future

The plan for the future of this PAL scheme is to retain the three-part structure (outlined above), but transition the sessions to in-person (when permitted). However, the drop-in section of the session is well-suited to online delivery, due to the flexibility and ease of access and anonymity afforded by this modality (see Table 2). Therefore, we will also hold a weekly online PAL drop-in /

question and answer session in future. Furthermore, technology enhanced learning could be utilised within in-person sessions to give an anonymous communication alternative.

## Summary

Everybody involved in the IPS PAL Scheme (staff, PAL Leaders, students) found the experience beneficial. In particular, PAL schemes can develop community by connecting students to students and also to the department. They can provide opportunities to consolidate learning and share experiences with other students (both peers and in other year groups). This is important in any year, but in the year of lockdown and remote learning, it was more important than ever.

Through this experience, we have found that the main benefits of online PAL sessions are the flexibility (Vlachopoulos and Jan, 2020) and option for anonymity afforded by this delivery method. However, although staff and student feedback indicated that the online PAL sessions had, despite the challenging circumstances, developed a sense of community and enabled interactive activities, most participants felt that, for these aspects, the

in-person experience is preferred.

However, the intrinsic structure of a 'Drop-in' or 'Question and Answer' session facilitates the transition to an online setting, as most aspects of the in-person experience are retained, with the additional benefits outlined previously (Table 2). Therefore, within this PAL scheme, some online provision will be retained in future. This will ensure that PAL is more flexible for students, preserves anonymity (if required) and, hence, is more inclusive. Furthermore, the dual option of in-person and online will hopefully mean that more students engage with the sessions (than if there is only one option).

Furthermore, the experience of teaching and learning online has exposed both staff and students to a range of online tools that can also be utilised in traditional settings. Using anonymous methods of communication in in-person sessions can be beneficial, as an efficient method to gauge understanding and to encourage participation. Therefore, both within PAL and across other teaching provision, we will embed technology enhanced learning in future.

In conclusion, we have found that online PAL has both advantages and

disadvantages. Looking forward, it would appear that we have found a "silver lining" of PAL in a pandemic, and the format forced upon us in a very challenging year turns out to have its benefits and is actually preferable for some students.

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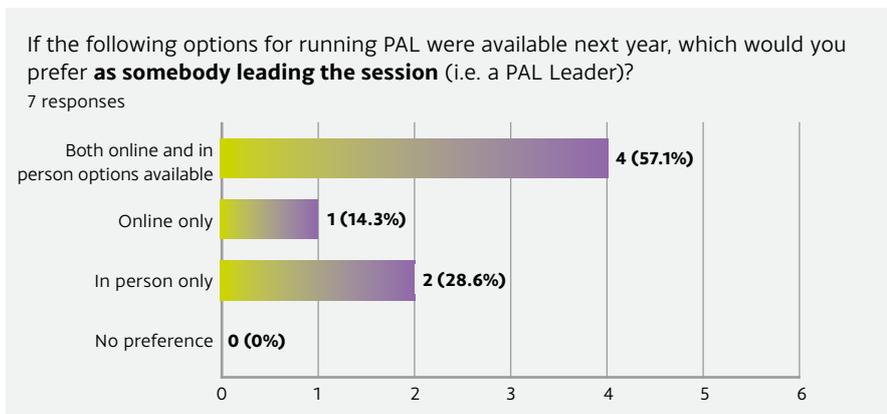
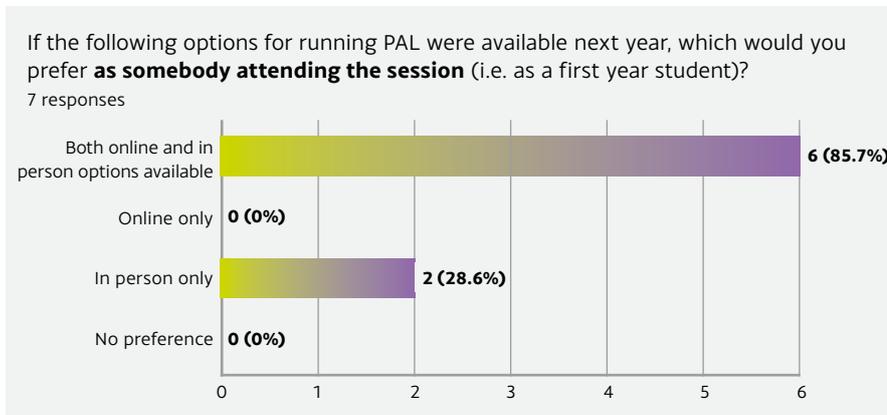
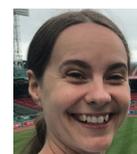


Figure 2 PAL Leader preferences for delivery of PAL in future, from both the attendee and PAL Leader perspective.



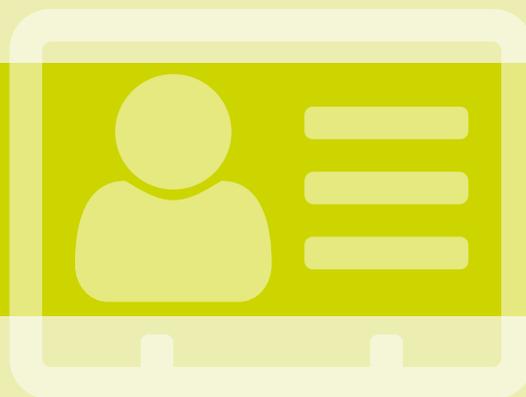
**Dr Jess Hargreaves** is a Lecturer in Statistics in the Department of Mathematics. Her research interests include: time series analysis; the application of statistical methods and tools to sport; and teaching and learning pedagogy.



**Sue Russell** joined the University of York in September 2018 as the Maths Skills Centre Manager and is now Academic Skills Manager with responsibility for developing Academic Skills online resources and managing the Writing Centre and the Maths Skills Centre. She enjoys collaborating with colleagues and students across the University.

# The life of a department representative

**Emily Patterson**, a second-year Interactive Media student and TFTI (Theatre, Film, Television, and Interactive Media) Department Rep, discusses her role and experience as an academic representative.



Back in the Summer of 2019, I didn't know what I was getting into when I signed up to be a Department Representative. I had just received an email from the 'recommend a friend' system letting me know that someone thought I'd make a good Department Rep for TFTI. Thinking back, I don't think I could tell you what specifically drew me to the role, but I felt that I had what it took to make a difference in my department – and I believe this encapsulates the motivation behind all of my accomplishments this year. I was over the moon when I was selected and couldn't wait for the next academic year to begin.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic became much more serious. My first few months of term were some of the most challenging of my life, as I was forced to adapt to online learning while coming to terms with a cancer diagnosis of a close family member. The stress I was under was immense, which you can imagine on top of my voluntary role was difficult to balance. And yet being Department Rep was, I think, what helped me get through the pandemic. At a time when everyone felt like they had no control over their lives, I had something to latch onto. I could help, and I had the opportunity to make a difference.

## Challenges

I find it difficult to describe my role because there are so many aspects to it. On the one hand, I champion the views and needs of TFTI students to the department and wider university. On the other hand, I solve problems that occur in everyday academic life. I also give feedback on university plans and policies that will affect TFTI students. Additionally, I work with other department reps, course reps, and the student voice team to identify and tackle university issues. One of the biggest

*...being Department Rep was, I think, what helped me get through the pandemic. At a time when everyone felt like they had no control over their lives, I had something to latch onto.*

challenges for me was at the beginning of 2021 when the UK went back into lockdown. It was an incredibly confusing time for both staff and students who had to adapt to online teaching and learning. Although I couldn't alleviate this stress, what I could do was help demystify the department's plans. Organising a Q&A style Student-Staff Forum, students were asked to submit questions about the upcoming term which staff members across the department could answer. With over 130 people attending, it was very successful.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

On top of adapting to the pandemic, I also wanted to accomplish my own goal: to promote Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). In November, I organised a month-long campaign, *Together We Are TFTI*, with the help of EDI committee chair Fiona Keenan. Working with the TFTI Instagram marketing team, we signposted students to resources such as Report and Support, as well as organised webinars discussing the broader issues of EDI and accessibility. This was so successful that we held a Student-Staff Forum in Spring Term centred around EDI. My work continued with a student-only event this term discussing decolonisation and diversity within the TFTI curriculum, organised with Liv Woodward, a first-year Business of Creative Industries

student and TFTI's new EDI rep. We will be feeding this discussion back to the department and Inclusive Learning @ York to share what TFTI students believe is a diverse and decolonised curriculum.

I'm excited to continue my Department Rep role next year because I want to continue to use my platform and role to celebrate TFTI and its values. I couldn't have been successful this year without some very special people. I'd like to thank Simon Van Der Borgh for his continuous support and guidance, Matt Johnstone for his constant encouragement of the Department Reps, the Student Voice team whom I've become incredibly close to this year, Fiona Keenan for her collaboration on my various projects, the TFTI staff for being an absolute pleasure to work with, and, most vitally, the courageous and resilient TFTI students.



**Emily Patterson** is Azerbaijani-British and is in her second year studying BSc Interactive Media. She is well known for her Department Representative work in TFTI (Theatre, Film, Television, and Interactive Media), such as working with the EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion) committee on organising events, discussions, and campaigns. She is also the President of the Tai Chi Society.  
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# Investing in leadership – reflections on the Leadership in Action (LiA) programme

**Helen Bedford** reflects on the value and ongoing impact of undertaking the University of York’s Leadership in Action (LiA) programme, illustrating its positive legacy whilst fulfilling the new, strategic role of Subject Group Lead for Midwifery (SGLM) during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Introduction

Investing in leadership is a key aspect of organisational development in all sectors, with Higher Education (HE) being no exception. The COVID-19 pandemic has created waves of challenge within HE, requiring effective, timely, compassionate and emotionally intelligent leadership responses (Parkin 2020).

Towards the end of 2019 I was fortunate to complete the University of York’s flagship Leadership in Action (LiA) programme (Cohort 20) to enhance my continuing professional development (CPD). As a Teaching and Scholarship academic, engaging in such substantive CPD

demonstrates an ongoing commitment to the UK Professional Standards Framework (Advance HE 2011) and continued professional growth (Clark and Sousa 2018). This article outlines the LiA programme, and shares insights from ongoing learning and implementation of the LiA ethos whilst undertaking a new midwifery leadership role within the COVID-19 pandemic.

## The Leadership in Action (LiA) programme

LiA operates within a suite of activities



in the University’s leadership and management staff development portfolio, providing a range of opportunities targeted at staff with differing leadership needs and according to the University of York’s leadership principles. LiA is aimed at experienced or senior managers who have line management within their role, including staff who manage larger teams and other team leaders. The programme, whose objectives are listed in Table 1 below, centres on the following three core themes:

- managing and developing the self
- managing and developing others
- managing within the university.

The LiA programme is accessed via a competitive application process, which requires candidates to clearly identify their fit for the programme, secure line management support and commit to the substantive programme requirements/ planned dates. LiA represents a significant professional and institutional investment. The programme comprises eight modules (see Table 2) including pre and post module work to maximise engagement and impact. Over a nine month period the modules are delivered via ten days of training, interspersed with peer-to-peer co-coaching sessions.

Module content is highly interactive

The programme objectives are to:
■ provide the essential knowledge and understanding required to perform leadership and management roles effectively
■ develop relevant skills, attitudes and behaviours of those who hold leadership and management roles within the University
■ create a supportive and effective framework to share best practice and explore solutions to challenges within leadership and management roles
■ support University Strategy by developing and empowering leaders and managers to achieve high performance
■ maximise the potential of our managers and leaders
■ provide departments with management and leadership skills which will assist them in meeting their aims and objectives
■ contribute to a culture of continuous professional development

Table 1: Leadership in Action (LiA) programme objectives



*Module content is highly interactive and engaging, and learning from the activities seamlessly moves between self, others, institution and beyond, enabling meaningful professional application for individual participants.*

opportunities also extended beyond the LiA cohort, and I was privileged to be a guest speaker on the Springboard Programme, sharing personal career reflections on this focused personal development programme for women (now also open to transgender women and non binary people).

A personal highlight on my leadership journey on the programme was the 360° feedback tool, due to the detail and depth of responses and analysis presented, during a 1:1 feedback discussion. Areas of comparative strength and weakness were identified, enabling targeting of leadership skills development going forward.

**Professional impact for midwifery – innovative leadership within an advancing profession**

A key institutional intent of the LiA programme is a return on the substantial staff investment. LiA was an invaluable foundation to embark on the new role of Subject Group Lead for Midwifery (SGLM) in the Department of Health Sciences from Sept 2019. This senior and strategic rotational role includes representing midwifery institutionally and externally with a range of stakeholders.

Midwifery is a distinct and autonomous profession (Nursing & Midwifery Council

[NMC] 2021a). It is a well established professional and academic discipline at the University, being fully aligned to the strategic vision of a university for public good (University of York 2020). BA (Hons) Midwifery Practice students engage in a demanding three year programme (45 weeks per year) spending 50% of their time learning in clinical practice within the NHS. The SGLM role therefore also encompasses the strategic Lead Midwife for Education (LME) role, a regulatory requirement for institutions operating programmes leading to midwifery registration (NMC 2021a).

C21st midwifery is experiencing unprecedented development and advancement, which requires a commensurate growth in leadership. Internationally, substantive evidence for the value of midwifery care for maternal and newborn health has been clearly established in an acclaimed Lancet Series (Renfrew et al 2014). Nationally, the implementation of long awaited reform of maternity care (Department of Health 2016) is transforming models of clinical practice and service delivery (NHS England 2021), whilst also responding to national failings (Ockenden 2020). Within UK midwifery education, curriculum

and engaging, and learning from the activities seamlessly moves between self, others, institution and beyond, enabling meaningful professional application for individual participants. The programme also includes a bespoke 360° feedback tool, based on the university’s leadership principles which draws together self, peer, direct reports’ and managers’ perspectives.

The LiA programme was challenging and immensely enjoyable. It was predominantly delivered via days hosted at King’s Manor, enabling an ‘away day’ feel which minimized daily distractions and maximised engagement. LiA was exceptionally well planned and facilitated by the Leadership Development team, who skillfully created welcoming, non hierarchical and mutually respectful foundations for Cohort 20 to engage and bond, before delivering the programme at pace.

Participants were drawn from academic and professional staff and represented a broad range of university faculties and departments. This diversity, combined with key institutional speakers, generated a wealth of insights into the university’s operation and strategy, as well as ongoing supportive networking opportunities which have persisted beyond the final celebration event. Networking

LiA modules
■ Introduction to leadership and self
■ Coaching
■ Personal effectiveness
■ Communication for commitment
■ Leading and developing and effective team
■ Managing change
■ Achieving results through people
■ Organisational leadership

Table 2: Constituent modules of LiA programme in 2019/20



***C21st midwifery is experiencing unprecedented development and advancement, which requires a commensurate growth in leadership.***

reform is also underway via the ambitious Future Midwife standards (NMC 2020). The need for investment in all spheres of midwifery leadership is clear (Royal College of Midwives 2019; 2020), and educational leadership is reflected in SGLM role at the University of York.

### Educational leadership during the pandemic

Six months into the SGLM role marked the arrival of COVID-19. Beyond the move to online teaching, learning and assessment in HE, the pandemic heralded multiple, seismic changes to the complex midwifery programme in response to emergency and recovery standards (NMC 2021b). Responding to these statutory changes required effective educational leadership within and beyond the SGLM and programme lead roles, and included institutional and student consultation on options for study. Each midwifery cohort has been uniquely affected during the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years, and legacy impacts are ongoing. Examples of changes made include second and third (final) year midwifery students being given the option to contribute to the NHS maternity workforce on paid placements in the summer of 2020, or pursue alternative routes through their studies; first year students were prevented from engaging in clinical practice due to the emergency standards (NMC 2021b) however they were given the option to progress and undertake second year theory modules, before returning to practice in autumn 2020 when the emergency standards were withdrawn. Furthermore a new model of student supervision and assessment (NMC 2018) was implemented in clinical practice for all midwifery students.

Difficult but necessary collective leadership decisions have also been faced as a result of the pandemic's impact, including delaying curriculum development for a new programme to be approved to the NMC (2018) Future Midwife standards.

### Conclusion

On reflection, leadership in the SGLM role during the COVID-19 period has been characterized by reactivity rather

than proactivity, however opportunities for embedding LiA learning, reflection and growth have been plentiful and are ongoing. A key leadership intention within the SGLM role has been embodying authentic leadership (Thompson 2016), working with students, peers and colleagues within and beyond the institution; such a stance recognises and values the wealth of leadership skills, collegiality, resilience and role modeling displayed by so many during the COVID-19 pandemic. I was proud to enact this leadership style via the co-production of a padlet timeline/e-poster for this year's Forum Learning & Teaching Conference, engaging with students, alumni and colleagues to create "Reflecting on learning during the Covid 19 pandemic: a celebration of midwifery resilience." (please scan QR code) In addition I successfully nominated the midwifery team for a Departmental 'Making the Difference' award, to recognize their outstanding achievements.

Going forward, receiving detailed 360° feedback on the LiA programme has given me the confidence to seek open and constructive feedback on my leadership in the new SGLM during Covid 19 from colleagues for my PDR, with the clear intention of undertaking further actions to develop my skills and style. The LiA programme has been an invaluable part of my professional development and leadership journey, and I would highly recommend it to peers.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks to the skilled facilitators of LiA (Lindsay Coomer, Penny Foster and Katie Oates) and LiA Cohort 20.

Details of the LiA and Springboard programmes, and the University's leadership principles, can be found on the Human Resources web pages.

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# Where students lead

## digital accessibility student champions

*Lilian Soon* reflects on the power of student-led accessibility projects

Students are highly valued co-producers when it comes to digital accessibility projects at the University. A lot of the Programme Design and Learning Technology (PDLT) work to promote digital accessibility is done in partnership with students who join us as interns, user research participants or as active members of our working groups. Working with students gives us insight into the ways they use technology for learning, and helps us to provide better guidance to staff. However, much of this partnership is on our terms and based on things we need help with. A request from a student to work with us on a voluntary basis triggered the question: What would happen if students were able to design their own accessibility projects? What would they focus on? This was the rationale for starting up a Digital Accessibility Voluntary Work scheme. We wanted to “create a way for students to work with us voluntarily to channel their energy” (PDLT, n.d.).

As Digital Accessibility student champions, students were free to choose their own areas of interest to explore and promote. This has ranged from co-designing our web page on digital accessibility to creating resources to add to our guides. Students are even running workshops for the Academic Skills Community on topics of their choosing. Harriet Sleight from Environment ran a great workshop on why databases were a game changer for organising research. Jordan Cook from History of Art also ran a workshop for students who might identify with ADHD traits. In the workshop, we started co-creating a toolkit for



distractible students, with ideas and apps that have helped participants. As a result of her workshop, Jordan is now connected to like-minded students who are starting to run their own ‘distractible meetups’.

One unexpected consequence of the freedom to design their own projects was students choosing to work on things that were outside of the PDLT team’s area of expertise or responsibility! We turned this into an opportunity to bring another team (the Teaching and Learning team from IT) into the scheme as co-mentors. This partnership is a direct result of the students driving the agenda

and clearly highlights how students do not perceive the boundaries that we operate by as staff. Luckily, most of us are working seamlessly behind the scenes to blur that boundary. We expect the students will continue to stimulate more cooperation between different teams.

The student projects also triggered conversations between the teams about where student-facing information and events should sit. Instead of the silos of resources built by each team, we are starting to bring these together into one area (the Skills Guide) so students don’t have to go hunting in different areas for answers. Another example of boundary breaking is the Digital Accessibility student champions running their

workshops as part of the Academic Skills Community, an initiative run by the Learning Enhancement team. We expect the students will continue to bring many teams to work together in the future, whether they intend to or not.

And so, back to the question: what would happen if students were able to design their own accessibility projects? Apart from richer resources more targeted to student needs, and a more diverse offering of workshops, we are discovering new ways of working and new channels of communication. The students have forged their own path between the paths we originally laid down for them. Instead of ‘us’ including ‘them’, they are including us and the paths they are weaving are proving to be both inspiring and stimulating. As we look to our new normal in teaching and learning, we could gain a lot from asking, ‘What would happen if students were able to...?’

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**Lilian Soon** is an Educational Adviser at the University of York. She is passionate about digital accessibility and inclusive practice and thrives on communicating these topics. She co-chairs the Future Teacher series of webinars focused on more accessible and technology-enhanced teaching and learning. Follow her on twitter: @uoy\_tel, @ft30uk, @xlearn.

*We wanted to “create a way for students to work with us voluntarily to channel their energy”*

# Decolonising Education Collective

**Staff and students in the Department of Education discuss the vital work of decolonisation**

**T**he Decolonising Education Collective (DEC) is a group of students and staff in the Department of Education who meet fortnightly with the shared imperative to influence action to decolonise our curriculum. Our group has discussed priorities for intervention in the curriculum, pedagogy and decision-making processes as well as the barriers to these goals, such as the enduring legacies of colonialism and denials of racism, not to mention the time required to address fundamental questions regarding knowledge and pedagogy. In this article,

we present some of the individual transformative reflections from members of DEC discussing the work of our group, why it is important, and what we believe the University needs to prioritise in order to decolonise (and support decolonisation of) programmes of study. The group has been involved in a Departmental social media takeover, leadership in a compulsory project for all first-year students, organising a decolonising discussion group and the development of the trialling of decolonisation case studies by student mentors used in staff teaching and learning workshops and conferences.

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**Danny, 3rd Year Psychology in Education (PiE) student:**

I am surprised every meeting that DEC continues to grow, exponentially, with a variety of voices that share a similar 'pain' and 'hunger', be they 1st year students or experienced lecturers. The DEC's growth reinforces in me the belief that its goals are real and genuine, that have previously been felt in silence but are now finally being shared with a belief that something will happen, now that all this energy is out there working to effect change.

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**Constantino Dumangane, Jr, Lecturer, Programme Leader, BA in Sociology and Education; MA in Social Justice and Education, member of the Centre for Research in Education and Social Justice**

The DEC provides a respectful and 'safe space' for issues regarding discrimination, marginalisation and Empire within Higher education to not only be discussed – but also be tackled. From inception it was clear that students felt that the experiences and identities of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) individuals were historically and systematically excluded within the institution. As a lecturer and researcher of race and social justice inequalities in education, though I am not surprised, it is still frustrating to listen to many BAME students share their counterstories of isolation and frustration about being 'other'. Consequently, they also expressed experiences of being typecast by predominantly homogenous student bodies as the expected voices to 'speak up' on behalf of all BAME people when race or decolonisation issues were raised in course settings – as if there were one collective BAME voice, which there is not. This must stop. DEC is not just a



# PLANNING FOR SEMESTERISATION

## DECOLONISING PEDAGOGIES

listening forum – but also a space where active work occurs to ensure that the culture and curriculum within York’s Education Department is welcoming, inclusive and validating of the educational contributions of people from multiple ethnic backgrounds. DEC’s goal is to aid the Education department on its journey to functioning in a way that is racism-free, not dominated by one particular ‘Empirical’ voice and representative of all students and staff experiences.

### Georgia Ramsay, Curriculum Area Leader for the Geography PGCE:

I have found the opportunity to be part of discussions regarding decolonising the curriculum a valuable experience, in an environment that feels safe and where there is a huge respect for listening to the views of other people in order to learn. I am looking forward to the Department working together in a variety of ways to bring about real positive changes in the courses that we deliver, in order to celebrate diversity and model equality.

### Anjie Shah, 2nd year PiE student:

As the Department of Education we should be setting an example for other departments to follow which is why we need to alter the way we teach and what we teach to be more inclusive of students from all backgrounds. Embedding authors from BAME backgrounds into reading lists is such a simple yet effective way for BAME students to feel as though they have someone to relate to in the fields they are studying. BAME students should feel the course reflects them and their experiences the same way it does their white peers. The DEC meetings have been a safe space for me. I’ve felt heard and have learnt so much about my peers, but also hearing the views of lecturers and what they’ve already been doing has provided me with a lot of comfort. Although our Department and universities across the board have more work to do, this feels like a small step in the right direction and has really helped me to feel more a part of the department and I’m excited for what we’re going to achieve.

### Lynda Dunlop, University of York Science Education Group:

I was interested in the DEC as a place to understand and discuss what decolonisation means. The group quickly became focused on how to bring about change. It has created new types of relationships between staff and students around a shared sense of purpose. My involvement with the DEC has prompted deeper reflection on how the legacies of colonialism are evident in

As the department prepares for structural change as a result of semesterisation, DEC invites the department to use the opportunity to **plan for decolonised pedagogies**.

Perceived barriers to decolonising pedagogies include **cost**, student **expectations**, fear of being **racist** amongst white staff, **insecurities** amongst staff and students, and the extent to which all staff believe that decolonisation is a **priority**.

## DECOLONISING EDUCATION COLLECTIVE (DEC)

Decolonised pedagogies require **resourcing from the university beyond current levels**. Just as science departments have specialist resource needs for laboratory spaces, mathematics have computing needs, the education department has a **specialist need to create the educational conditions for decolonisation**. We should be University leaders on these processes. This requires:

### CURRICULUM TIME & FREEDOM

- To use **texts and experiences** from students’ own **linguistic and cultural** background and to value expression in ways that go beyond academic conventions.
- To **explore beyond** intended learning outcomes and go beyond the needs imposed by accreditation bodies.



### PROGRAMME REVISIONS

- To incorporate the ability to **speak about race and culture** into core **programme learning outcomes and assessments** to ensure all graduates of DeptEd at York can do this.
- To encourage more **authentic assessments** of students’ educational capabilities.



### SMALL GROUP TEACHING

- To develop the rapport and relationships between staff and students needed to create **brave spaces** to discuss difficult and/or sensitive topics and for staff and students to **make mistakes** and facilitate **active critical pedagogy**.
- This will require significant rethinking in terms of **module planning and workload allocations**, particularly for current UG stage 1 and 2 modules.



### STAFF TIME

- To revise **reading lists, images, materials** and other teaching **resources**. And to design **new modules** with decolonial approaches explicitly at their core. This can build on the work of the **internships** funded by Careers and the department this summer on mapping good practice.
- To **train and be trained** in language and sensitivity to enable safeguarding.



### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

The Decolonising Education Collective (DEC) is a group of students and staff in the Department of Education with the shared imperative to influence action to decolonise the curriculum in the Department of Education. The group has discussed priorities for intervention in the curriculum, pedagogy and decision-making processes and the barriers to this associated with the legacies of colonialism, denials about racism, not to mention the time needed to address fundamental questions about knowledge and pedagogy. DEC meets fortnightly during term time on Zoom. Everyone is welcome. To obtain the meeting link, email [lynda.dunlop@york.ac.uk](mailto:lynda.dunlop@york.ac.uk).

## feature

chemistry education and to re-examine how I talk about chemistry, its histories, and how it is practiced and used in the present. This work needs to be seen as essential and resourced as such.

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### **Kemi, 2nd year Bachelor of Arts in Education (BAE) student:**

The work being conducted by the DEC is imperative to the University of York's sustainability. The increasingly diverse undergraduate and postgraduate cohorts demand a much more liberated standard of curricula than would once previously suffice. The University needs to be trailblazing Decolonisation work if they are going to continue to attract talent in a competitive globalised education market – notwithstanding their moral and ethical duty to do so.

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### **Cara, 3rd year BAE student:**

Being a part of the DEC has raised so much awareness to the importance of having a diverse and inclusive learning environment. The work it is doing is so important and an essential starting point

for creating an education that is reflective of all cultures and theoretical lenses. I'm so happy to be a part of this group and have found the discussions we've had invaluable for my own understanding, as well as for the progression of a decolonised curriculum.

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### **Zahraa, 1st year BA in Sociology and Education (BASE) student:**

When talking about the curriculum it seems like a big process that students do not have control over. When I first learned about how the curriculum is racist, I thought we should have a diverse curriculum that speaks up for people and those who are disadvantaged, not speaking against them. There is a need to change the way we learn about racism. And this should be a priority shift towards diverse learning and teaching by having more practices, including lectures and seminars where students have to attend and thus have to learn about these topics.

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### **Vanita Sundaram:**

The actions that can be taken to

decolonise the curriculum have to be situated in a context that is honest, self-aware and politically conscious about racism (and can only be as successful as that context allows). There is a persistent culture of disbelief around racism and race-based discrimination in universities and in wider society, which needs to be addressed as part of interventions and initiatives to decolonise the curriculum. How can we achieve truly embedded decolonisation work in a cultural and educational context that may be characterised by disbelief/minimisation/trivialisation around these issues, and is still institutionally racist?

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### **Helen Granger, PGCE Maths Leader:**

I attend the DEC to listen to the issues raised. I find myself challenged during each meeting as I reflect on how the discussion of topics relates to my teaching. I am finding this reflective space so valuable in considering the learning environment I wish to foster, and how I can proactively remove the barriers to that being achieved.

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### **Smriti Safaya, 2nd year distance PhD student:**

The DEC embodies an action-oriented entity with practical, tangible and insightful ideas to address the endeavour that is decolonizing the curriculum at a department scale. I joined to listen and learn, and I've been humbled by the earnest motivation for change that comes from students and staff alike. Although I'm not in the UK to address these issues directly, I can apply this in my context as an educator in international schools currently in Hong Kong – so it's exciting that the work the DEC is doing is influencing change beyond the UK!

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### **Zara Sharif, 1st Year BAE student:**

A decolonized education department is one where diverse and decolonized teaching and learning is so natural I don't even notice it. It's a department where I can always feel comfortable discussing race, but don't ever feel that I am burdened by it. The DEC gave me a space where I can always discuss race without discomfort or fear, where I can connect with other students like me and see that I am part of a community within the department that's much wider and more welcoming than I imagined. The Department and the University still have a long way to go, but I know that there are people who will advocate and do the hard work of decolonizing even after I graduate.

UNIVERSITY OF YORK DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# DECOLONISING EDUCATION COLLECTIVE



**FORTNIGHTLY WEDNESDAYS 12PM ON ZOOM**

All staff and students in the Department of Education welcome.  
To join email [lynda.dunlope@york.ac.uk](mailto:lynda.dunlope@york.ac.uk)

### **Venessa Sambai Usek, MA Social Justice and Education:**

As an international student I would like to see diverse perspectives on the educational issues in relation to my course. This can be reflected in the reading list with writers from the Global North and South, in lecture content and context, lecturer-student engagement, and a safe learning environment. The DEC is a great starting point for the Department of Education to walk the talk. I am proud to see the partnership between students and lecturers in discussing issues related to decolonising the curriculum, and also finding ways to engage with these issues as a collective.

### **Eleanor Brown, member of the Centre for Research in Education and Social Justice:**

This is an area that I have been grappling with through my research for a few years now, but it has been inspiring to be able to come together with other staff members and students to discuss the importance of these issues in our teaching and the wider environment within the Department. Calls to decolonise are gaining traction, but the overwhelming number of fronts that need to be tackled to even begin to address this mean that it is in danger of being dealt with superficially or not at all. The DEC represents a first (baby) step towards the enormous task of creating an environment, curriculum and pedagogy in the Department that moves us towards decolonisation, and hopefully it will provide a foundation for the work that will build on these conversations for many years to come.

### **Sihem Salem, PhD student and GTA:**

The DEC group has been a great opportunity to learn how we can create inclusive experiences for students in increasingly diverse learning environments. Though practice seems somewhat difficult at the moment given that teachers and students might be unaware of how they can actually approach diversity for inclusivity. Organising training and workshops for both has been suggested as a fruitful way for decolonising the Education Department. I'm looking forward to seeing the brilliant ideas that we have been discussing in the DEC transformed into actions. Together we can drive our Education Department towards a more inclusive culture!

### **Priscilla Adjei-Twum, 2nd year BAE student:**

When I first heard about the new DEC

*The University needs to be trailblazing Decolonisation work if they are going to continue to attract talent in a competitive globalised education market*

**Kemi, 2nd year Bachelor of Arts in Education (BAE) student**

group, my first thought was that finally there will be an opportunity to be heard and have a seat at the table for the thoughts, feelings and experiences of ethnic minority groups who often go unnoticed. The DEC has shown me that if you want to see change, you have to start the process and be consistent. There will be results, even if the task at hand seems extremely challenging. This has awakened my desire to make a difference where I can – and not only on issues or topics that pertain to me directly.

### **Vicky J. Chang, MA Social Justice and Education:**

The DEC has been such an encouraging space to be in bi-weekly. I have been interested in decolonising the curriculum since I started working as a middle school science teacher eight years ago. I specifically chose my program at York to learn how to do that. While I've been able to learn a bit of how to do this through my modules, it's encouraging to know that I am not the only one both passionate about, and working towards, decolonising our curriculum.

### **Sarah Olive, Senior Lecturer:**

The group has been fantastic for helping this literature and cultural studies scholar realise that decolonising the curriculum goes way beyond decolonising the literary texts, literary criticism and critical theories that I teach. Before the group started, I developed a Histories folder in the departmental instagram account @deptedyork to collect together resources and texts on decolonising, anti-racism and related issues coming out of the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020. I had screenshotted these and shared them to our Stories. Making them Histories means that these otherwise fleeting images are preserved in our account and can be accessed by followers and visitors to the account at their convenience. Early on Daniel took the initiative to transcribe these posts as a Google Doc so that they're accessible and convenient to use (since hyperlinks are included where possible): an important, intersectional reminder

that while images can be an attractive way to communicate, they will not work for all. DEC has been a great impetus to keep spotting and sharing via our Instagram and Twitter accounts University and City-wide events and resources relevant to decolonising.

### **Paula Mountford:**

The DEC has offered a safe and challenging place to listen to our students and learn about their priorities and concerns. It has provided a platform to prioritise decolonising the curriculum issues, ideas, opportunities and collaborations. It is an active group, tackling issues, and collaborating to form change in practice, systems, processes and pedagogy.

### **Elpis Pavlidou, Lecturer:**

I was born with a privilege that comes with the colour of my skin. But the colour of my voice is always my choice. The DEC presents an unprecedented opportunity, a momentum to choose to reflect upon my practices and importantly to act upon them. As a psychologist I have experienced and struggled with the distortion which colonialism and racism have caused to our view and understanding of the human psyche, as reflected in research paradigms and the interpretation of knowledge. As a mother of a biracial child, I am moved and utterly proud that the 'birthplace' of such an initiative for York University is the Education Department. The commitment and drive of students and colleagues who joined forces in the DEC have restored my faith in the future of Higher Education; one that is truly inclusive for this generation and those to come.

For further information on the work of the DEC, please contact:

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# Support, development and recognition for LEARNING AND TEACHING

## 2022 NTFS and CATE awards – advance notice

AdvanceHE will invite the University of York to submit nominations for the 2022 Individual National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) and for the 2022 Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) to celebrate excellent practice and outstanding achievement in learning and teaching in higher education. Further information is available on the AdvanceHE website: NTFS and CATE.

- The purpose of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) is to recognise, reward and celebrate individuals who have made an outstanding impact on student outcomes and the teaching profession. The University will be invited to nominate up to **three individual members** of staff who can clearly demonstrate having an outstanding impact on student outcomes and

the teaching profession.

- The Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) is to recognise and celebrate collaborative work that has had a demonstrable impact on teaching and learning. Introduced in 2016, the scheme highlights the key role that teamwork plays in higher education. Each award will recognise a team which has enabled a change in practice for colleagues and/or students at an institutional or discipline level. There is no limit on the size of the team. The University will be invited to nominate **one team** that can clearly demonstrate having an impact on teaching and learning through collaboration.

We would like colleagues to begin considering their Department NTFS/CATE nominations in advance of the autumn opening date. The awards are

open to both academic and professional services colleagues and we will be seeking to identify colleagues to nominate on behalf of the University.

To support those interested in applying, and to complement the monthly ‘virtual roadshow’ webinars offered by AdvanceHE, we will again be holding lunchtime workshops. These workshops will outline our own internal process and the support that’s available to candidates and the dates will be published at the start of the new academic year together with the University’s nomination process and timelines.

Please do not hesitate to contact either Dr Duncan Jackson, Head of Academic Practice (NTFS) or Cecilia Lowe, Head of the Learning Enhancement Team (CATE) if you have any questions or require further details.

## Blended Learning Design and Delivery

A new resource is available to all staff on the VLE aiming to support the design and delivery of integrated in-person and online teaching and learning.

The design sections of the site focus on combining in-person and online modes of delivery to best effect. They also offer support with planning assessment and evaluation of blended learning modules.

The teaching/facilitation section focuses on supporting inclusive learning communities and groups and designing and facilitating synchronous and asynchronous learning activities in-person and online.

Supported by examples, the site is targeted at module leaders and all staff who teach or support student learning, including Graduate Teaching Assistants ([GTA Access request form](#)).

To access the site, staff can log into the University Virtual Learning Environment (Yorkshare) and search in the list of modules for ‘Blended Learning Design and Delivery’.

## Learning and Teaching Under Covid

What have we learned from our experiences of teaching and learning during the Coronavirus Pandemic online and on-campus?

What positives can we take forward and share from these experiences in the immediate future and in the post-COVID University?

These questions brought 140 staff and students together across two Forum/PDLT events in Autumn and Spring 2020-21 to share their experiences. The value participants placed on in-person

learning and teaching encounters and community building was clear throughout. When reflecting on the challenges of distance that we have faced this year, however, participants were equally clear in their desire to take forward the best of what we have learned about online and blended learning.

To find out more, see the following mini-site for [recordings, resources and discussions](#) along with summaries of key themes of [academic community](#), [inclusive learning](#) and [active learning](#).

## 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 Programme Design and Learning Technology team. 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 supporting learning technologies and activities including Replay for creating, editing and sharing videos, the anonymous assessment submission tool for online assessment, Responseware for live polling, Padlet for collaborative activities, and Blackboard Collaborate for running online synchronous sessions. For more information, see the [PDLT webpage](#).