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## Joyful Education



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## EDITORIAL

Dear Reader

Welcome to the Summer 2023 edition of *Forum* magazine.

In January 2023 I attended an excellent meeting of the Faculty of Science's Pedagogy and Practice hosted by the Department of Biology. The central theme of 'joyful education' covered a spectrum of pedagogical topics centred around 'joy', what that means to us, and what that means to our students. I was so impressed with the diversity of thought on, and responses to this concept that I asked the primary organisers of this session, Penn Holland and colleagues, to provide us with a summary of the event. Their efforts have produced the fantastic feature article of this issue: "Cake: An apt analogy for joyful education?".

'What is Joy?' at first pass may seem like an entirely subjective, abstract and potentially even esoteric question. However, for educators there are clear tangible benefits to leveraging this construct (or at least keeping it in mind). Its multifaceted nature aligns well with the potential diversity of student populations and their varied learning styles. Be it through fun, satisfaction, humour, play, insight, interaction, bonding, or many of the other ways we derive joy through education. Perhaps at the centre of this 'jolly nexus' is a celebration of student and staff engagement with the shared goal of learning. This, in and of itself, makes it an important and joyful thing to discuss.

Throughout this issue we will see how colleagues at York, some of whom directly contributed to the aforementioned Pedagogy and Practice meeting, discuss their unique and valuable approaches to joyful education. Card games, digital escape rooms, interactive polling software, cosy fireside chats, reflective timelines, student-led discussions, Japanese street theatre and cake(!) are all discussed as ways of joyfully engaging with students. A strong emergent thread throughout the issue is that we, as educators, find this process enjoyable too.

As always, I'm thankful to each of our contributors for dedicating time to write for us. My gratitude extends to the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Forum Louise Rudd, and Administration Coordinator Gemma Wheeler, for their invaluable support of this publication. A big thanks also to the Forum editorial committee for their contributions: Lisa Clark, Kelly Deveney, Rachel Hope, Rebecca Hudson-Tandy, Claire Illingworth, Dan Jones and Josie Rawes, and our new hard-working Sub-editor Lucy Turner-Voaks (welcome Lucy!). The team at Design Solutions also deserve credit for their fantastic work on the new graphics overhaul and formatting for this issue. Thank you everyone.

With all my best wishes and joy for the future,  
Alex



# Cake: An apt analogy for joyful education?

Pen Holland from the Department of Biology reflects on the Faculty of Science's Pedagogy and Practice meeting in January 2023 with Amanda Barnes, Rachel Hope and Richard Maguire, in an attempt to answer the question of, "What is joyful education?".



Figure 1. Mentimeter word cloud from Faculty of Science Pedagogy and Practice participants responding to the prompt: "What does joyful education mean to you?" We note that this poll was conducted some time before the afternoon refreshments entered the room.

**J**oy is "the emotion evoked by well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires" (Merriam-Webster.com). That seems like a good thing to have in education, but what does a joyful education encompass, and how do we make it happen? When the Department of Biology hosted the 2023 Faculty of Science Pedagogy and Practice meeting in January, we asked participants what *joyful education* meant to them. Responses touched on many of those aspects of joy outlined in the dictionary definition, but (as is often the way) the open text responses contributing to the live mentimeter word cloud also included a somewhat unexpected term: cake (Figure 1). In this article, we reflect on the joyful presentations and discussions that took place throughout our meeting, and explain why cake is in fact an excellent lens through which to

frame the many aspects of joyful education in which we engage at York.

The meeting was divided into three sessions, starting with **confidence, connections and comedy**, moving through **community and support**, to **technology and interactions**. Across each of these sessions an emerging theme was that of diversity in how people define, experience and seek joy in education.

### Confidence, connections and comedy

How students feel as they learn is crucial to longer term learning gains, and how staff feel as they facilitate student learning can transform the learning experience for everyone. *Alex Reid* (Psychology) discussed how humour can be used to create joyful education for staff and students, building rapport with the class as a whole. Alex explained how a strategic

use of sensitive humour, without pressure to be personally hilarious, can lower stress and anxiety for the speaker as well as providing a positive classroom environment that ultimately makes key learning objectives more memorable.

Group learning can be exuberantly joyful, but quiet moments of enlightenment alone or in small group staff-student interactions are also crucial for many learners. *John Bissell* (Physics) explained how he used a staff-student partnership to help students in an extra-curricular activity make connections between mathematics and physics in practical work on dimensionless scaling with Hooke's Law. The partnership fed back to the wider class to enhance the curriculum, demonstrating that joy as well as learning can be scaled from small to large groups with careful design.





Figure 2. Having a variety of ways to engage is the key to a good afternoon tea experience, as well as the key to accessible and joyful learning. [Cake and photo credit: Pen Holland]

Rosanna Lyon (Education) presented CREATE (Hoskins et al. 2017) pedagogical tools for helping students improve their critical analysis skills. This framework for Considering, Reading, Elucidating, Analysing, and Thinking of the next Experiment can increase confidence and improve engagement and appreciation of primary literature, helping students to find the joy in learning the foundations of academic endeavours.

**Community and support**

Do students expect to enjoy their education? They would certainly notice if there was no joy at all. But joy, like play, is something that sometimes adults need to be given permission to embrace. A joyful learning experience doesn't underplay the challenge or achievement of a task, but it can make a big difference to our desire to persevere. Helen Bedford and Carole Lindsey (School of Health Sciences) talked about finding joy and nurturing hope in midwifery education at the University of York. Bringing new life into the world is one of the most joyful and important jobs there is. The last few years of local and global change have brought new challenges into the training and implementation of that role. It is not always joyful to prepare

and implement big changes, but it's certainly good to get to the end of the process!

Student-led support gives agency to students to find the right help, at the right time. Sally Quinn, Karisha Kimone George and Amanda Hickey (Psychology) discussed their use of student support initiatives to generate joyful learning. Central to this work is a 'Resilience Hub', allowing students to dip into accessible resources for support but also proactively create their own individualised support system with the aid of staff when required.

Katie Smith with Amanda Barnes, Tim Doheny-Adams and Richard Maguire (Biology) raised the important role of academic departments in building the student community. To learn and be curious, students need to be at ease and trust the people with whom they are working. Helping study groups to form and work together within modules as part of the learning process by providing information about what a study group can do, and making time and space in the timetable for study groups to meet, can make learning more enjoyable, more effective and increase students' sense of belonging.

**Technology and interactions**

In the final session of the day, we examined how technology can facilitate and build joyful and interactive environments, whilst still being inclusive and accessible to different learners. Rob Shaw (PDLT) with Gareth Evans (Biology) and Sally Quinn (Psychology) discussed very positive feedback from students about using the classroom polling software Mentimeter in teaching. Across the university there has been a steady doubling of staff using Menti over the last 9 years, and in some departments its use is firmly embedded throughout programmes in both small and large group teaching.

Lilian Joy and Amy Street (eLearning and Accessibility team) talked about escape rooms as a low stress and fun way of interacting with course materials. They gave attendees the opportunity to tackle some of the challenges they'd designed, highlighting how problem

solving and games can provide an engaging and rewarding learning experience for students charged with creating an escape room, as well as escaping from it!

Finally, Thomas Davies (Psychology) brought us back full circle to the idea that how people feel when working together is key for learning together. Communication and trust are everything: he uses Mentimeter to set a welcoming tone that enables everyone to participate in intellectually rigorous conversations about difficult topics, while remaining mindful of each other's differences.

**Time to digest**

After a thought provoking and entertaining meeting, there was a sense that an education that inspires learners to master a subject or skill and feel the moment when it 'clicks', and encourages learners to persevere to achieve their goals, is fundamentally a joyful education. Participants suggested that joyful education is:

- ...a natural state that we observe in young children and gradually squash out of them through school. It's something to be sought and treasured.
- Where learning is fun and engaging and not just about how much we remember or attaining a mark.
- Acceptance, freedom to be yourself, opportunities to explore what engages you.



Figure 3. Even happy basilisk cakes with golden stars are essential items rather than a luxury. Why not make your education similarly spangly? [Cake and photo credit: Emily Evans]



Figure 4. Cake is more than the sum of its parts. [Cake and photo credit: Emily Evans]

- Making students feel as supported as possible in their learning, allowing them to achieve their full potential.

Effective joyful design might include playful activities and choice, careful use of technology, and strong student support, to set a culture of a safe space in which to learn and fostering a community of collaboration and reflection where acceptance and inclusion are the order of the day.

So where does the cake come in?

**Cake is diverse**

The number and combination of possible cake flavours, textures and toppings is almost infinite, and even cakes that go by the same name can be made using different recipes to suit different palates or diets. Like cake, joy comes in many forms, and joy in education is experienced differently by teachers and students, introverts and extroverts, individuals and groups. Having a variety of cakes on offer (Figure 2), alongside the option to eat something else, or nothing at all, means that everyone has a good chance of finding something that meets their needs in the right place at the right time.

**Cake is not a luxury item**

Those who followed the Jaffa Cake controversy of 1991 will know that cake is not classed as a luxury item, regardless of flavour or toppings (HM Revenue & Customs, 2022). We would like to think that joy is an essential part of education. It

shouldn't simply be scattered on top, like the added luxury of melted chocolate on top of a digestive biscuit; it should be firmly embedded in the very fabric of learning design, like the chocolate chips and cocoa in a brownie. That means providing the right support and motivation for all learners, in all aspects of an accessible and inclusive education, from multiple means of engagement with the learning materials to putting people at ease so that they have trust, and can learn and be curious. Joyful education gives agency to learners, but not all learners need the same thing. You might like to reflect on what flavour your joy comes in, and whether it is perceived in the same way as the students with whom you are working.

**Cake is more than the sum of its parts**

Cake is more, much more, than the sum of its parts; the process of baking creates a delicious end product that bears little resemblance to its ingredients. The teaching and learning community of staff and students at the University of York is much the same. Individually we can do great things, but together we can make space for new ideas and new joy, and change the world in ways that one person alone cannot.

If you're thinking about joyful education, you are probably thinking about Creating Active Knowledge and Engagement, or perhaps establishing a learning Community that is Accessible, Kind and Effective. When you get down to it, it's all about cake.

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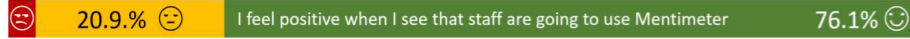
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# Does the use of Mentimeter classroom polling spark joy (or at least some positivity) in learning and teaching?

**Rob Shaw from the Programme Design and Learning Technology Team provides an overview of student and staff engagement with the interactive polling software Menti at the University of York.**



This article reports on recent feedback from students on their experiences of the University's supported classroom polling tool, Mentimeter, which is used by staff to support a variety of activities and interactions in teaching spaces, such as to provide a channel for questions, diagnostics, knowledge checking, brainstorming, or warmer activities. The feedback suggests

that the efforts of staff to include it in teaching sessions to encourage greater interaction and dialogue are paying off. 76% of students in a recent survey reported feeling positive when they see that staff are going to use Mentimeter with 21% feeling neutral and 3% feeling negative. 97% felt that staff should continue to use it, 94% found it engaging, 93% found it useful and 91% found that it helps

staff to create a good atmosphere in teaching sessions.

### Classroom polling with Mentimeter at the University

Classroom polling tools have great potential in supporting active and inclusive learning environments, and research across the sector has suggested that integrated use of such tools can enhance learning, facilitate enjoyment and promote the student voice (Mayhew et al., 2020; Draper, 2009; Simpson and Oliver, 2007). Case studies of use at the University of York give testament to this, showing how staff have used classroom polling to promote active and inclusive learning environments (UoY, 2023), with reported benefits for:

- Active learning
- Student engagement and the inclusion of a greater diversity of voices in teaching sessions

- More effective and immediate feedback and support for students

The University polling tool, Mentimeter, is one of the most widespread examples of a 'new generation' of such tools offering increased ease of use via personal devices, and increased flexibility of interaction options and question types (Mayhew et al., 2020; Compton, 2021). Mentimeter allows educators to display questions or other triggers for response through a web browser during teaching sessions. These include MCQ questions and quizzes along with more open text-based interactions, word clouds, sliders and pin on image activities as well as functions for questions to be received, shared, and up-voted during a session. Students can respond using an internet-enabled phone, laptop or tablet by scanning a QR code or entering a 'session code' at <http://www.menti.com>. Responses can be individual or based on small-group consensus, and it is possible for more than one person to respond on the same device. Although primarily used to increase interactivity in live teaching, Mentimeter can also be used asynchronously via links embedded into a virtual learning environment (VLE).

The first free Mentimeter account was activated at the University in October 2014, and since then the number of users has steadily grown. Feedback from staff suggests that the entry barriers to using Mentimeter are very low and that the anonymity and variety of question types on offer can do much to support active engagement and inclusion in teaching and learning (Shaw, 2022). It has been available as a supported tool for all staff and students since October 2021 and usage has increased rapidly over the last two academic years following the remote teaching phases of the pandemic.

As of March 2023 there are 2332 Mentimeter users at the University, and our record month for most prolific Mentimeter use in October 2022 saw:

- 668 presentations created

- Participants connected to a presentation 23,451 times
- 88,520 votes/responses received

### Evaluating the use of classroom polling with students

As part of attempts to evaluate the service, the Programme Design and Learning Technology team (PDLT) has been carrying out research into the experiences of staff and students in the Departments of Biology and Psychology, both of which make considerable use of Mentimeter across a variety of teaching contexts. Our inquiry aimed to explore the ways in which staff integrate the tool into learning and teaching, the purposes of use, the challenges involved,

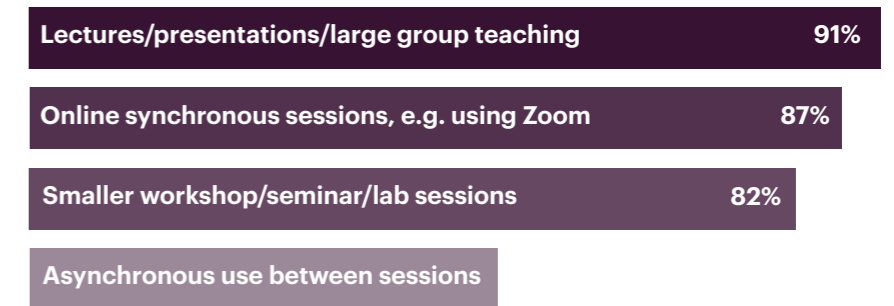


and the perceived benefits for learning. It involved analysis of shared Mentimeter slides and recordings, interviews with staff (n=9) and students (N=16), and a student questionnaire focusing on experiences and attitudes (n=130). Key findings from the student questionnaire are outlined below.

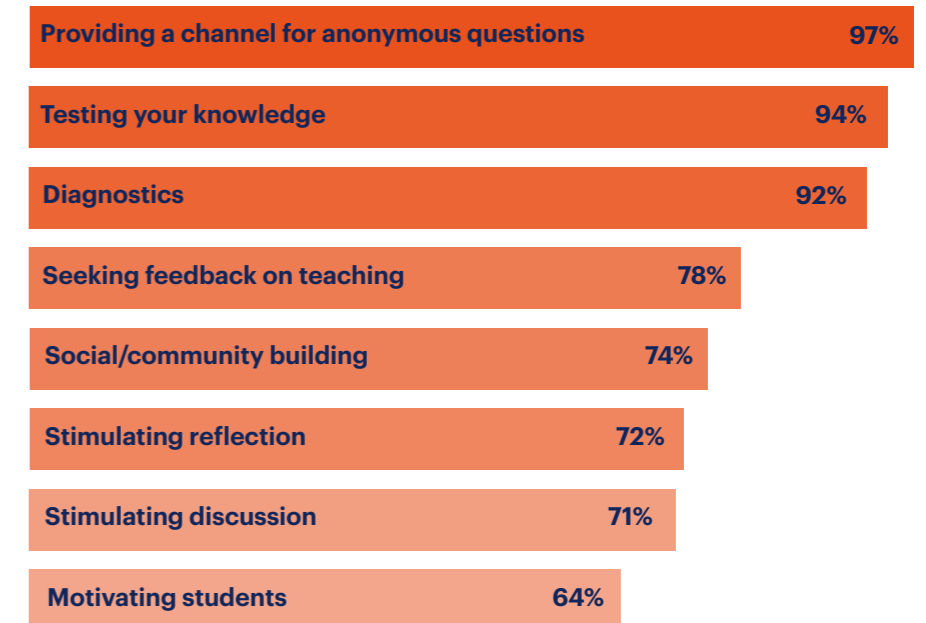
### Who responded?

The questionnaire was circulated via an email update to all Undergraduate students in the departments, and it was completed by 88 Biology students and 42 Psychology students. Although this represents a minimum response rate of only

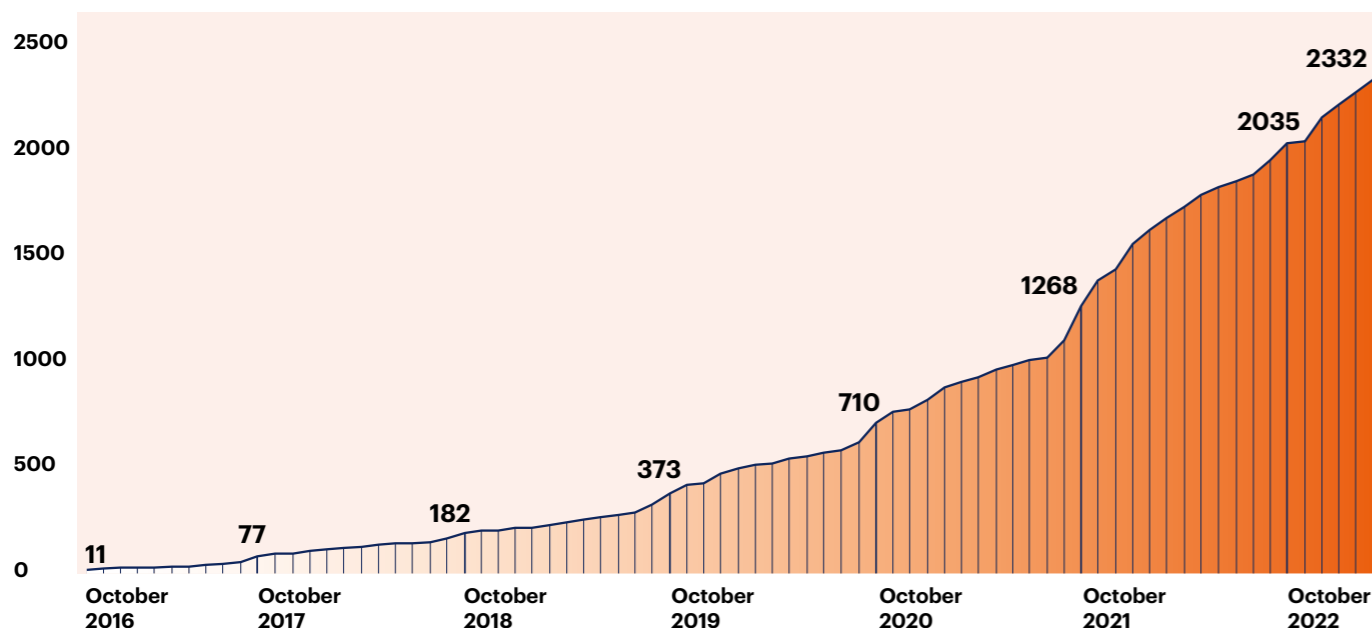
### How useful do students find Mentimeter to be in different contexts? (% responding moderately, very or extremely useful rather than slightly useful or not useful at all)



### How useful did students find Mentimeter for different purposes? (% responding moderately, very or extremely useful rather than slightly useful or not useful at all)



Number of Mentimeter users at the University of York October 2016 - March 2023



“Students were positive about the use of Mentimeter in large group, smaller group, and online synchronous contexts with 91%, 87% and 82% of students respectively reporting that they found it **moderately**, **very** or **extremely useful** rather than slightly useful or not useful at all.”

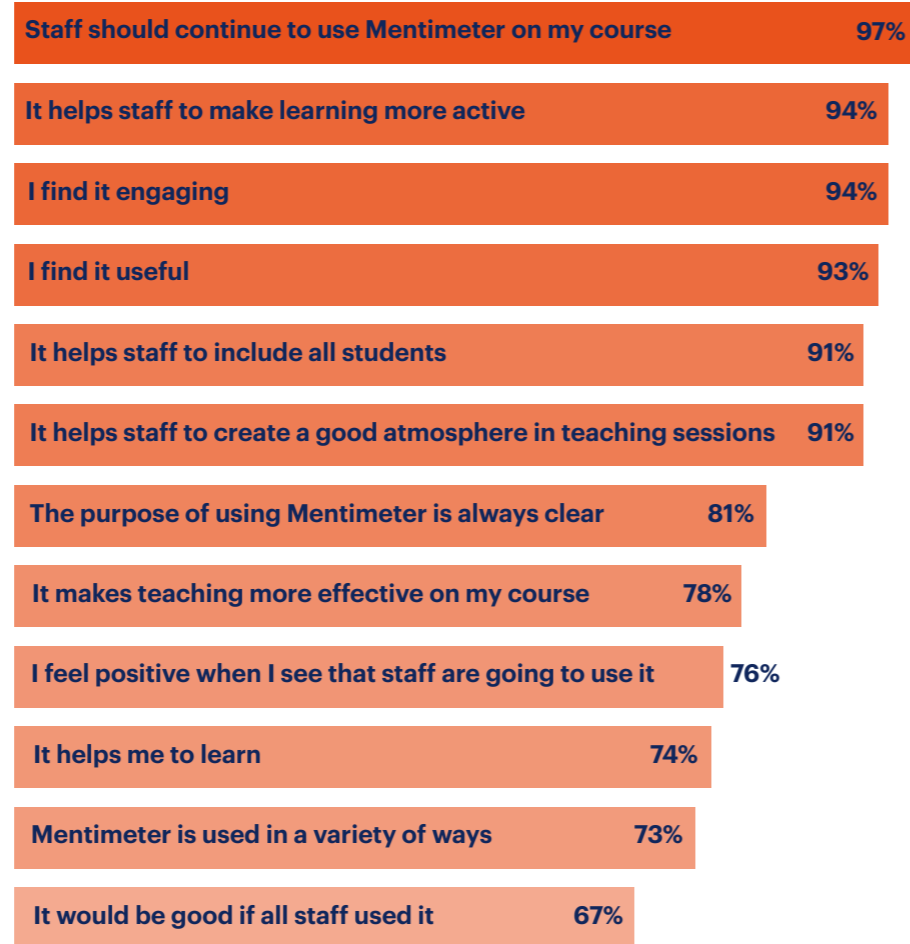
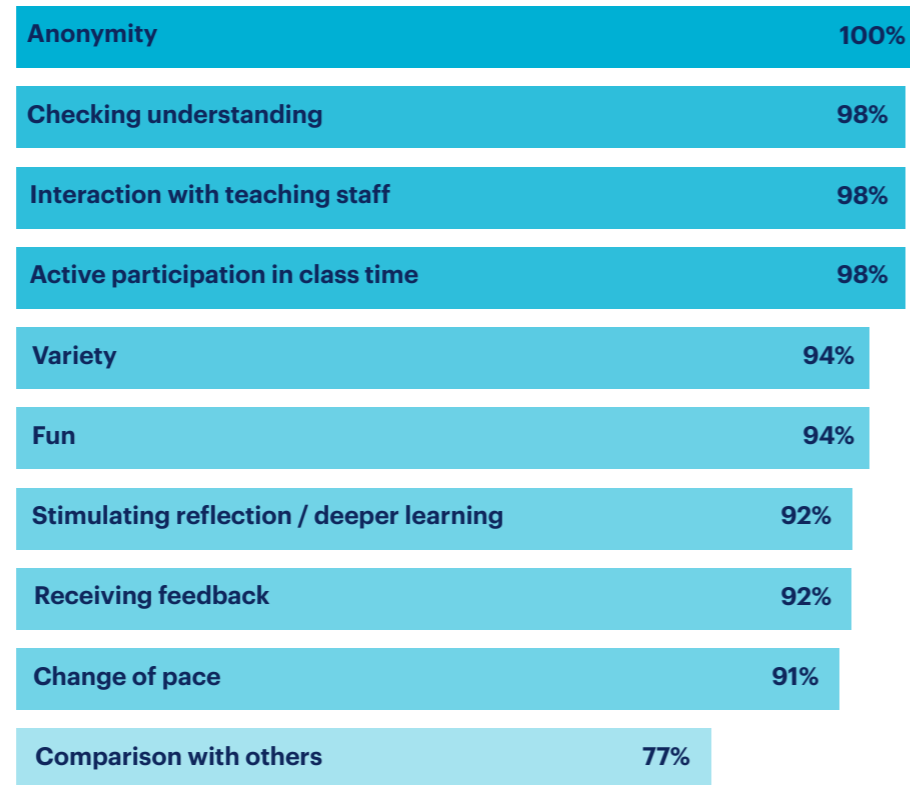
7% and 6% respectively, responses were spread between all year groups with 39% from level 1, 29% from level 2, 24% from level 3 and 8% from level 4. A series of self-assessment questions were used to explore respondents’ levels of academic and social engagement on the course. Results varied within and between the departments.

**How was Mentimeter used?**

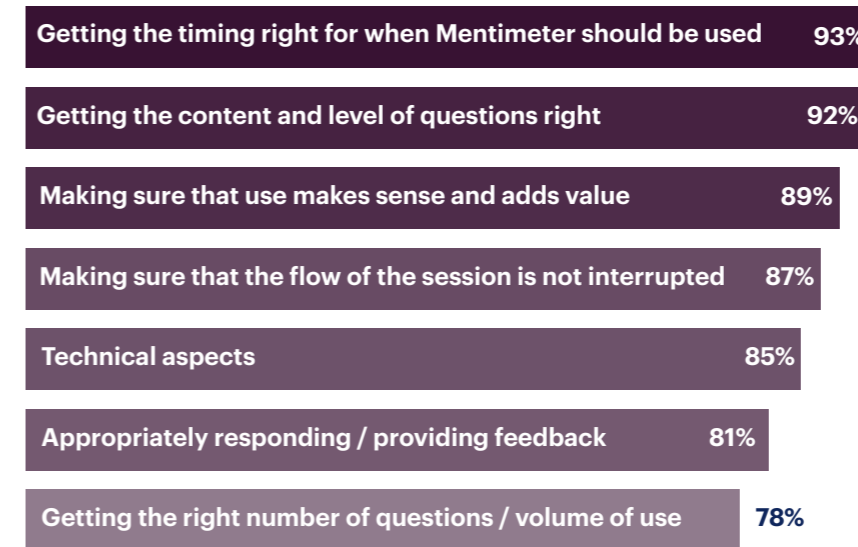
Students reported on experiences of Mentimeter from across a broad range of different contexts and for a range of perceived purposes. In both departments, students were exposed to a wide range of question types with multiple choice questions, word clouds, open ended questions and Q&As among the most common.

Differences found in Mentimeter use, both within and between the two departments, reflect different approaches to learning and teaching. One key factor seems to have been the balance between various types of on campus teaching (e.g. workshops, lectures, seminars and labs) and the use

**How important do students consider the following aspects to be?**  
(% responding moderately, very or extremely important rather than slightly important or not important at all)



**How far do students think staff get the following aspects right?**  
(% responding always or usually get it right rather than about half the time, rarely or never seem to get it right)



of blended learning approaches that combine on campus and online activities.

**How useful did students find Mentimeter to be in different contexts?/Student evaluation of Mentimeter across group sizes**

Students were positive about the use of Mentimeter in large group, smaller group, and online synchronous contexts with 91%, 87% and 82% of students respectively reporting that they found it moderately, very or extremely useful rather than slightly useful or not useful at all. Ratings of usefulness within smaller workshops, seminar and lab sessions were lower, at 82%, but were significantly higher amongst those who had experienced use in these sessions (90%, n=71) compared to those who had not (73%, n=59). Respondents who had experienced Mentimeter within smaller group teaching seemed to value it just as highly as lectures and online sessions.

Attitudes to Mentimeter were positive across the board with a majority of respondents reporting that they found it useful for a range of different purposes. Students were particularly positive about use for anonymous questioning and for knowledge checking and diagnostic purposes such as finding out what students already know, what they need to focus on, or what their priorities are.

**What do students think of Mentimeter as a tool for teaching and learning?**

Students rated use of Mentimeter very highly on their courses with a clear majority expressing agreement with positive statements relating to its use: 97% felt that staff should continue to use it, 94% found it engaging, and 93% found it useful.

**What do students value about classroom polling with Mentimeter?**

Respondents indicated that they value many different aspects of Mentimeter and anonymity was identified as of greatest importance by those who took part in the research. Many of the responses to open questions also highlighted the benefits of encouraging responses from a wider range of students without fear of judgement or embarrassment.

**What do they think of how staff deal with Mentimeter in their teaching sessions?/What are student perceptions/views of staffs’ use of Mentimeter in teaching sessions?**

Students who responded to the survey generally endorsed the way that staff use Mentimeter, feeling that they addressed the challenges involved effectively and ‘got it right’ in terms of the different aspects of use. The most common open comments related to this involved a desire for increased usage within and across sessions.

**Adding positive value**

Research into staff experiences of Mentimeter suggests that they find it invaluable in supporting active and inclusive learning, offering opportunities to gain input from students and respond accordingly. The feedback so far suggests that this is paying dividends and students who responded were clear that they value these efforts greatly.

If you would like to find out more about classroom polling at the University, please see the following webpage for guidance and links to case studies and resources: [Mentimeter at the University of York](#)

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# Joy, enjoyment and a sense of agency in learning



Sally Beckenham from the Interdisciplinary Global Development Centre reflects on agency-centred joy through the example of a successful discussion facilitation exercise in Thailand.

There seems little consensus on how we might define 'joyful education', particularly in Higher Education, but it can be seen as an overarching term for a pleasurable teaching and learning experience. Studies have noted particular factors – including motivation, discovery and curiosity, and a sense of fulfilment and achievement – as present in joyful learning (Udvari-Solner, 2012). It can be useful to see these factors as connected by agency, understood as the freedom, ability and desire, at any given point in time, to act independently in order to effect change in the internal or external environment (Bandura, 2001; Zyphur, 2020). Giving students the opportunity – the space, time and resources – to develop and explore

their individual sense of agency can increase, not only their motivation to learn, but also their curiosity and sense of fulfilment – both academic and personal. The development of a sense of agency can thus provide the conditions for students (and teachers) to experience a form of joy.

For educators interested in how this notion of agency-centred joy might improve their teaching and

scholarship practices, it is important to understand how it might manifest. What changes are anticipated when 'agentic joy' is central to practice? From the agential perspective, joyful education is not just about overt, potentially fleeting expressions of joyfulness in learning – a commodifiable end product in which we might see noisy and active classrooms, declarations

a subtler experience of joy that unfolds incrementally as an individual comes to realise his/her/their own **abilities** and **desires** to effect change, and the discovery that they have the space to do so.

of a love of learning (or the subject), laughter, or even what has been described as the "aha' moment' in students (Willis, 2007). It is more frequently about enjoyment as the slow process of taking pleasure in learning, a subtler experience of joy that unfolds incrementally as an individual comes to realise his/her/their own abilities and desires to effect change, and the discovery that they have the space to do so. This connects to Sheldon's (2017) work to reconceptualize learner agency as not just an active, but also a receptive experience, in which students are exercising their agency as observers.

An example of this is an in-class assessment activity I ran with approximately 12 exchange students from Southeast Asian

countries and across the US on a Global Environmental Politics course at Chiang Mai University. They had never previously met, and many had never previously left their home countries, so this was a huge undertaking for them. One particular cohort stands out. Three of the students were confident and eager to contribute to seminar discussions about global environmental challenges, while the rest were less forthcoming. The first formative assessment activity was 'discussion facilitation', in which each student led a 15 minute seminar. Prior to the assessment, the students and I created the following rules/guidelines together:

- The teacher must be silent for the full 15 minutes, unless in exceptional circumstances;
- Each student's seminar will be timed;
- All students will come prepared;
- Students may choose the order of the seminars;
- Students have two opt-out cards to lay down: *I'm struggling*, and *I'm finished*.

With these rules in place, students knew they had full ownership of the seminar, and that the conversation would not be interrupted or redirected by the teachers. At the same time a respectful and equitable environment had been created in which I would intervene if necessary. The ability to end the activity if needed, offered learners a degree of control over the parameters of their learning; yet amazingly, the opt-out cards were never used. Students supported each other, ensuring that nobody's fifteen minutes of leadership was met with disinterest. I saw in real time how students worked through the class content and made connections between concepts. Some held more introspective sessions, whilst others held funny ones.

Afterwards, the group reported that this had been the most enjoyable activity of their university



career. One wrote in their evaluation "I could never have imagined being able to do that before." Through the semester and over the remainder of their time at the university, I saw with my own great pleasure a subtle transformation of the students' sense of their own abilities. In their agentic joy, they came slowly to a sense of learning as pleasurable, because they had accessed their own abilities to effect transformative change.

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# Midwifery education: finding joy and nurturing hope

At a time when midwifery education and maternity care are facing unprecedented challenge and complexity, Helen Bedford and Carole Lindsey led midwifery students and colleagues to pause, reflect, capture and celebrate the educational joy that drives them.



UK midwifery education and maternity care have been subject to unparalleled change in the last five years. Key, positive developments have occurred, such as the implementation of personalised maternity policy (NHS England 2020) and the launch of ambitious, evidence-based educational standards via 'Future Midwife' curricula (Nursing & Midwifery Council 2020). Despite such strengths and positive directions, lived experiences of midwifery education in Higher Education and clinical practice continue to be characterised by waves of difficulty and complexity. National challenges include student attrition (Health Education England 2022), shortages within the midwifery education workforce (Royal College of Midwives 2022), responding to the Covid-19 pandemic (Renfrew et al 2021) and recovery period, an unprecedented midwifery staffing crisis requiring key retention actions (NHS England 2022) and maternity reviews which have revealed the need for comprehensive national change (e.g. Ockenden 2022).

It was against this backdrop that in late 2022 the Faculty of Science Pedagogy and Practice group issued a call for presentations on the theme of 'Joyful Education'. As midwifery educators this stopped us in our

"To me, open days create a sense of **passion** to discuss and explain the programme, and help prospective students to **understand the joy of studying midwifery** at the University of York. I have particularly enjoyed performing skills in the clinical simulation unit on open days. It's amazing to see faces light up with excitement when they undertake their first (simulated) birth!"

**Mid 20 student, Beth MacKellar**

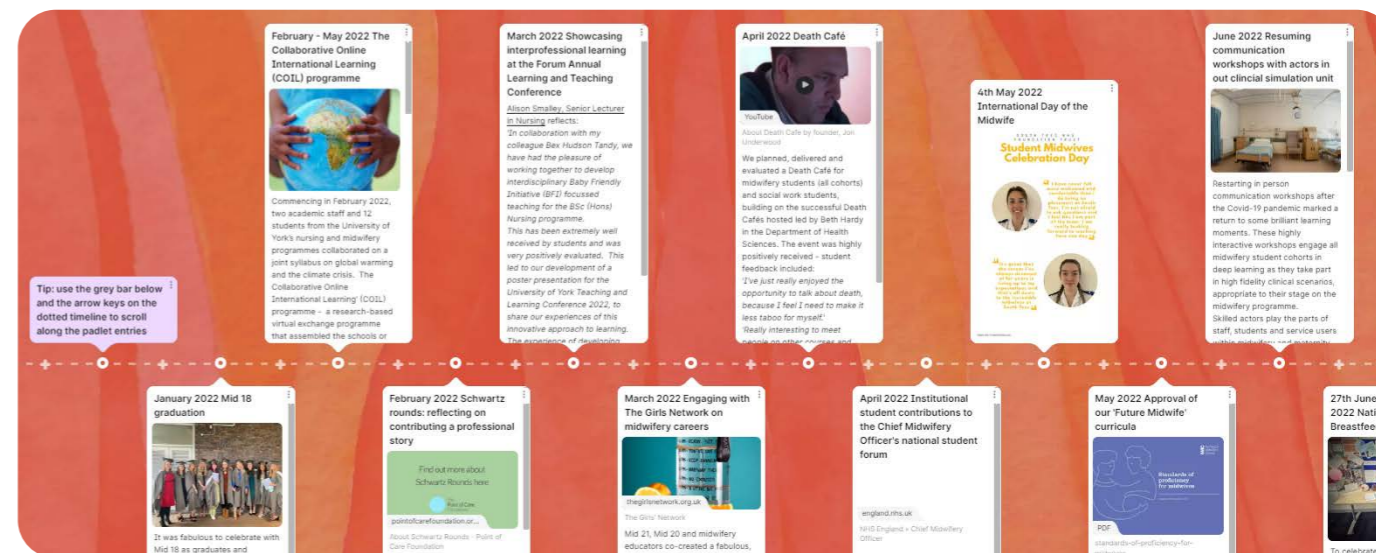


Figure 1: A representative part of our timeline Padlet. Please click here if you would like to see the whole interactive Padlet.

tracks. Where did educational joy lie within a professional landscape of ongoing turbulence, which posed unique challenges for students, education staff and clinical colleagues? We did recognise and experience educational joy, for ourselves and in others, but it could often feel fleeting and soon overshadowed by the ongoing pace of professional challenge and change.

During the Covid-19 period, the midwifery education team had actively captured key events, achievements and the lived experiences of students and staff, recording them in a timeline padlet of individual entries. This reflective account has proved important and invaluable, documenting for posterity a time of significant achievements that might otherwise be forgotten given the frantic pace of activity. Similarly, during 2022 many key events and moments of educational joy had taken place, and we identified the need to actively reflect, record, share and celebrate them. We therefore invited contributions from all cohorts of midwifery students and colleagues, seeking reflections on individual and collective educational experiences which had fostered joy in academic and clinical practice.

The resulting co-produced, **interactive timeline padlet** recording joyful midwifery education in 2022 (Figure 1). Examples of entries include reflections from Mid 19, Registered Midwife graduands whose studies

had been significantly impacted by Covid-19, and Mid 22 students who commenced our innovative BMid (Hons) Midwifery and integrated MMid Midwifery programmes (a combination unique within UK midwifery education). This successful programme approval, delayed by the pandemic, had been the culmination of years of collective effort with a range of staff, student and service user stakeholders. Collective Departmental achievements, such as a Sustainability (Gold) Award from the Baby Friendly Initiative and our pride at being the highest in achieving academic discipline within the University in the 2023 Guardian University Guide sat alongside individual reflections. For example student contributions such as Beth MacKellar's enjoyment at resuming in person open days (shared by us all), and recognising fabulous student achievements such as Mid 21 student Rosie Bakewell being elected to serve as the on the Royal College of Midwives' Student Midwife Forum.

The timeline Padlet has captured how midwifery at the University of York has positively and resolutely met the challenges of 2022, experiencing educational joy despite very real professional challenges. It's legacy is twofold; firstly as a resource for prospective midwifery candidates to engage with during open days, showcasing the joyful resilience of staff and student learning; and secondly as a reminder to continue to promote,

identify and share educational joy in 2023 within our supportive, professional learning community.

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# Our own special Ks: kamishibai and its joyful ‘kyoiku’ (educational) power in Languages For All programmes and community projects

Géraldine Enjelvin from the Department of Language and Linguistic Science discusses her work with colleagues Yumi Nixon and Ulrike Wray using ‘Kamishibai’ (pronounced ka-mee-shee-bye), a traditional form of Japanese street theatre in the form of picture card storytelling, and ‘kyoiku’ (educational) power for joyful learning.

Holfod (2022, p.74) explains that: “...playful higher education accentuates opening up to each other and the world, experimenting curiously and creatively together, and exploring new ways of being and knowing in playful and joyful subversions of the traditional learning spaces. These subversions [...] are often conceptualised as ‘magic circles’ [a term initially coined by Huizinga in 1955, meaning safe spaces facilitating playing and (consequently) learning].” Additionally, Waterworth (2020, p.112) emphasises that: “A joyful classroom draws upon the five senses of learners at a maximal level [and] we know that if we increase the avenues of input into the brain, the message of the learning activity will be reinforced”.

In 2016, I (Géraldine Enjelvin) attended a workshop on a centuries-old Japanese storytelling tradition called kamishibai (from “kami”, meaning paper and “shibai”, meaning play or theatre) and while participating in this session that I realised that this tool ticks many of the “joyful learning” boxes. Kamishibai storytellers insert large (A3 or larger) colourful picture cards in a “butai” (half picture frame, half theatre stage) and pull out the audience-facing cards one by one. Kamishibai offers storytellers a spectrum of possibilities: from

extreme top-down control (when the storyteller reads a published kamishibai story to a quiet audience) to practices giving their audience increasing levels of agency. For example, the performer may encourage audience participation by asking comprehension questions or questions related to either the storyline or the pictures.

At the other end of the spectrum, participants can be asked to create, then perform their own kamishibai. Hence, kamishibai affords an integrated approach to literacy, oracy, drama and visual art. Struck by this tool’s versatility, myself and two like-minded colleagues, Ulrike Wray and Yumi Nixon, decided to adopt kamishibai to create “magic circles” in six Languages for All (‘LFA’) German and Japanese classes at the University of York, ranging from beginners to advanced students, and (subsequently) in the context of three intergenerational community projects.

### Case study 1: LFA students (undergraduate and mature students)

**Elementary level (Japanese)** Since 2021, I have incorporated kamishibai into Japanese lessons at elementary level. My intention was to introduce imaginative and inclusive activities by making use of the power of kamishibai to elicit “kyokan” (a sense of togetherness)

among learners. The aims of the activities were to:

1. Introduce a traditional method of Japanese storytelling.
2. Make reading activities creative and fun while incorporating drama techniques.
3. Stimulate group interaction and engagement through collaborative story creation and telling.

Stories in Japanese textbooks at the elementary level often lack detailed descriptions and visual appeal for readers. Encouraging students to devise their own dialogues and stories using kamishibai stimulates imagination and increases engagement through the personalisation of content, thus creating joyful learning environments. The value of this approach is reflected in students’ comments: “Really loved it, it was super fun and so useful to see vocabulary in a larger context”; “I’m a creative learner so I have found it enjoyable.” Kamishibai activities also promote collaboration and inclusivity. Throughout the process of story-making and performance, students of various ages with different cultural and social backgrounds helped each other in coming up with ideas for storylines, writing out sentences, performing, and sharing their own stories in class. This helped to create an encouraging



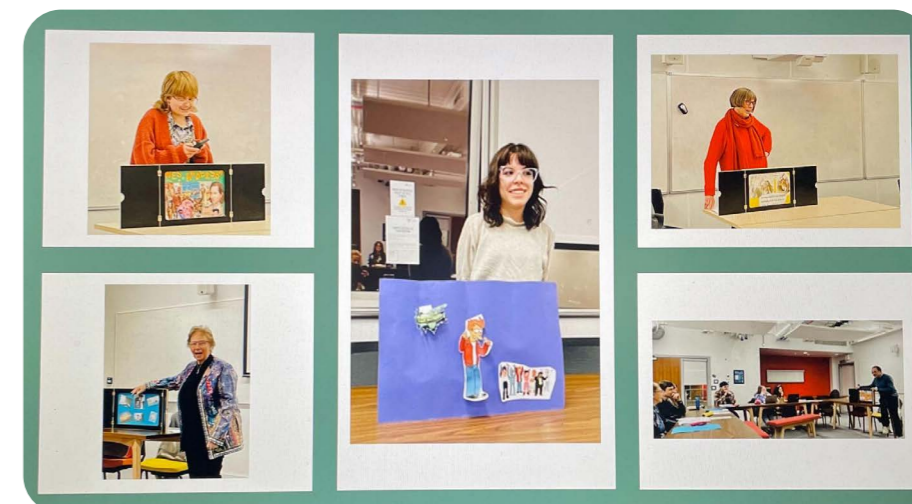
Ulrike Wray in February 2022: storytelling in a beginners’ class- joyful education even with a mask!



Community project with a local nursery school (15/2/2022): student volunteers telling their own kamishibai story about making friends, entitled “The rainbow fish”.



Yumi Nixon in November 2021: storytelling in elementary level class



Mature students presenting their story in class with self-made storyboards (February 2023)

learning environment. Kamishibai thus offers potential to create “magic circles” in Japanese classes. When used effectively, kamishibai can be enjoyed by all learners, whatever the language level and age.

### Beginners and advanced levels (German)

Since 2022, I have used kamishibai in German lessons at beginners’ and advanced levels in order to practise speaking in front of an audience. After I present a story to the students, I give them coloured cards to create their own about their favourite personality, which they then present in German. The

intention was to help students express themselves fluently and more freely whilst experiencing enjoyment in, and providing enjoyment via, their own story creation. This is an especially useful tool for those learners who may be shy or uncomfortable speaking in front of the group.

The approach appeared to engage all involved, both presenters and active listeners. The students’ interactions in both language levels were an inclusive way for mature students to interact with younger fellow students while also introducing or discovering new

personality facets of participants. Reading student feedback was itself a joy: “It reminds me of a puppet theatre at kindergarten, but it wasn’t childish at all. It was the funnest [sic] way of learning new words”; “I’m really shy, but nobody looked at me. They just looked at the picture in the “butai”; “I loved the creative aspect so much” and “It was wonderful to hear about the younger students’ favourite personalities.” Incorporating storytelling using kamishibai is an inclusive tool that (re-)injects “kyokan” (a sense of togetherness) into learning and practising a language.





**Community project with a local primary school (8/2/2023):** student volunteers telling their own story about two dragons' strained, then reinvigorated, friendship.



**Community project with a local primary school (8/2/2023):** student volunteer telling his own story about a panda encouraging humans to respect the environment so as to protect endangered species.



**Community project with a nursing home:** the student volunteer showing one of her own storyboards during a masterclass in February 2023.



**Community project with a local nursing home (15/3/2023):** residents looking at, and reading, the information on the back of the storyboards.

**Intergenerational community projects (2021-22 and 2022-23)**

Our three community projects chime with several aims highlighted in the University for Public Good document, namely "closer collaboration with local agencies, which will facilitate a diversity and richness of perspectives on which new learning experiences will be

based" and these clearly resonate with some components of joyful education.

In October 2021, we recruited our student volunteers via Handshake, the University of York's platform enabling students to look for information on careers and browse through job vacancies and (internal as well as external) volunteering opportunities. We

introduced them to kamishibai via master-classes. Our trainees collaboratively produced "The rainbow fish" (both storyline and picture cards) and presented it to 25 nursery school pupils. Our three volunteers undoubtedly enjoyed the experience: doesn't a picture speak louder than words?

One of the three trainees aptly commented: "I believe the children

"I believe the children were able to gain a greater **cultural insight** into alternative methods of storytelling – I believe this is extremely beneficial in western classrooms especially which tend to be rather rigid in their teaching methods. These children learnt that **both art, storytelling and English** can all be integrated."

were able to gain a greater cultural insight into alternative methods of storytelling – I believe this is extremely beneficial in western classrooms especially which tend to be rather rigid in their teaching methods. These children learnt that both art, storytelling and English can all be integrated."

Hence, as kamishibai enables users to raise their audience's intercultural awareness, it may be regarded as a valuable "Internationalisation at Home" tool. laH is "the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students [not solely the internationally-mobile] within domestic learning environments" (Beelen and Jones, 2015, p.71).

In October 2022, we divided our newly-recruited volunteers into two pairs. Each wrote a story in English, based on the cultural meaning of animals in the countries they/ their parents originate from, therefore incorporating a few carefully-chosen words in Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese and Spanish – which their young audience of Year 3 pupils discovered and practised in February 2023. As one of our international trainees aptly concluded: "When I find children are happy to see our performance, I feel the meaning we want to convey is conveyed to them. And it feels good to interact with people in real life".

**One project with a local nursing home (2022-23)**

Kamishibai is also effective when used to engage and support older adults, especially those with dementia, by incorporating their past experiences into stories, and combining them with movement, music and images. To this end, our student volunteer created two storyboards: one about her student life and one based on one of the residents' lives.

When the student presented the storyboards to the residents, passing them around, they engaged on several levels as various senses were stimulated: visual (colourful boards), tactility (boards decorated with beads, wire rings, crochet, etc.) and oral (storytelling). This prompted conversations with the volunteer, amongst residents themselves, as well as further memory recall. A family member visiting a resident with dementia immediately after the kamishibai presentation, said her relative appeared to remember things that had seemed lost previously. Another resident, looking happy, started to sing quietly as she was reminded of her youth.

**Concluding thoughts**

As illustrated above, kamishibai, although a centuries-old tool, can still, in the 21st century, create a "magic circle": through joyful activities, it still has the potential to promote communication, understanding and learning across different cultures, generations, settings and social contexts.

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# Room for Joy

Lilian Joy and Amy Street working for the Programme Design Learning and Technology team make the case for students to create educational escape rooms for a truly engaging and immersive learning experience.

Escape rooms are games that people play in a group, solving puzzles in a room, on a table or online in order to 'escape' from a particular setting. They are usually time-bound, adding to the sense of fun as participants race to uncover clues, solve puzzles and beat the clock. Physical escape rooms can be found in many cities around the world, with their popularity extending to both table-top and virtual versions. They can be based on narratives and themes and have learning outcomes designed into the game (Cain, 2019; Fotaris & Mastoras, 2019; Makri et al, 2021; Veldkamp et al, 2020) making them a good fit for educational purposes. A wide variety of educational settings from primary to higher education use escape rooms as pedagogical tools. STEM and healthcare disciplines in particular feature prominently in case studies on the use of digital escape rooms (Makri et al, 2021).

Educational escape rooms can have a positive impact on student engagement and stimulate teamwork, creativity, decision-making, leadership, communication

and critical thinking (Fotaris & Mastoras, 2019; Makri et al, 2021; Veldkamp et al, 2020). By ensuring constructive alignment with learning goals, the use of escape rooms can help to inject a sense of fun into the learning process.

Much of the literature looks at groups of students participating in escape rooms designed by instructors to help achieve a learning goal or other related outcomes. We shift from this focus to propose that involving students in designing an escape room activity has the potential to increase the pedagogical challenge and

During the summer of 2022, interns working with the Programme Design and Learning Technology (PDLT) team designed a digital escape room that would teach people about accessibility using Xerte, an online tool for creating interactive learning objects. The resulting two escape rooms, although lacking some polish, provided excellent and original ideas for using various Xerte page types for digital puzzles. These were showcased to staff during an Xerte workshop, which prompted amusement and competition among the attendees. Likewise, during the escape rooms presentation (<http://bit.ly/joyescape>) at the Science Faculty Joyful Learning Conference in January 2023, the audience did not want to stop playing the game being demonstrated, illustrating the power of these games to immerse and engage!

If playing these games can be fun and exciting, making them proved to be equally engaging and motivating. One intern, Amy, a Bioscience student, designed a Chemistry induction game as a proof of concept for a Chemistry lecturer. Amy was thrilled to have the opportunity to hone her escape room design skills:

*"Creating the escape rooms online is such a motivating experience – You are constantly learning as you go along and you are constantly finding new bits to add to make it more exciting or have the tasks flow more smoothly into one another."*

When asked if creating escape rooms might be an assignment that could work as part of the curriculum, Amy said:

*"I found the experience of making the escape rooms incredibly enjoyable – They are certainly a resource that students can make quickly and share amongst themselves. My work as an intern only just began to scratch the surface of the applications of the escape room and I would love to see them used more often across the department!"*

Educational escape rooms can be an immersive way to learn, whether through playing or creating. The educational effectiveness of escape room activities can be improved further by adding in 'debriefing' opportunities for reflective learning (Fotaris & Mastoras, 2019; Veldkamp et al, 2020). Academics may be interested in the fact that digital escape rooms can be created with simple tools like forms, presentation software or interactive

software like Twine (<https://bit.ly/disctwine>) or Xerte (<http://bit.ly/ytel-xertepage>). There is also the potential to incorporate 360 images and augmented or virtual reality approaches to enhance the immersion. Depending on the choice of tools, academics can find support through DISC (<http://bit.ly/3K827Oc>) or PDLT (<https://bit.ly/pdlt2023>). The DISC team has a presentation on creating escape rooms (<https://bit.ly/discescape>) and you can engage in Lilian and Amy's presentation on escape rooms in their Xerte slides (<http://bit.ly/joyescape>).

An escape room template is now being created (see <http://bit.ly/ytel-xertepage>) so others can potentially design their own games more easily. If you would like to discuss using escape rooms in your modules, feel free to get in touch with the authors of this article. Additionally,

Heriot Watt University is running a free Escape Rooms in Education: Showcase and celebration of practice on 9 June 2023, 7am to 8pm. To submit a proposal or attend please follow this link.

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# Using a decorative learning space: The fireside chat

Jane Neal-Smith and Mark Egan from the School for Business and Society explore how decoration can enhance learning by creating a positive atmosphere in online teaching sessions.

The idea of increasing and improving student engagement throughout lockdown and beyond provoked a range of new and seemingly innovative pedagogical approaches/initiatives ideas. Many of these were arguably 're-badged', a case of old wine in new bottles, however if they appeared new and different to students and encouraged participation, then existing content could be presented as new. That is, after all, the point of reusable learning objects (RLO) (Salas, 2020). In this article, we argue that creating a decorative learning space and in particular 'a fireside chat' video presents an innovative way of looking at podcasts and lecture

discussions. Both authors taught on a second year organisational behaviour module in the previous School of Management which contained rich and varied content drawing on themes and concepts such as contingency, rationalisation, alienation, power, control, resistance, motivation, reward, emotion management and identity and often illustrated these concepts with real world examples.

In a normal workshop session, we would discuss themes or a concept, emotional labour for example, and then apply it in the workplace giving concrete examples of how, emotional labour in this case, was re enacted<sup>2</sup>. Throughout lockdown where classes were

online, we recreated this informal discussion but as a video. This was totally unscripted other than to be guided by the topic for that week. We additionally did not edit the recordings and included the visual element of an atmospheric backdrop including a fire, elegant surroundings and limited lighting which invoked memories of fairy tales and ghost stories.

This visual backdrop to a series of podcasts, we argue, sets the scene for encouraging engagement with the content through stimulating a sense of comfort through the decorative element of the recording. We argue that instructors can utilise this technique to enhance their materials, including using a

variety of backgrounds designed to represent elements of their content. The use of soft furnishings and other such additional artefacts like plants has been shown to improve students' participation and well being (Scannell et al. 2016). We extend this idea by arguing that the decorative theme can also be used by students in their presentations and could be encouraged as an alternative option to plain pale backgrounds traditionally seen as best practice for presentations.

## Theoretical foundations – The fireside as a site of contextualised stories

Fireside chats are not a new phenomena. Most famous are the series of broadcasts by Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s. Badged as fireside chats, the series of talks aimed at creating trust with the American public have later been criticised as artificial and lacking intimacy (Lim, 2003). However, despite criticisms the "political rhetoric and persuasion" imbued within the broadcasts did create the confidence and trust in the government that they set out to achieve (Amico, 2022). The concept thus is not new, but perhaps as a pedagogical tool, they have not been given enough of the metaphorical bandwidth.

Examples of the use of fireside chats focus more on the traditional interview style of discussion (Khademhosseini, 2020), as a support mechanism for students (Lee et al., 2022) or as a presentation focusing on topical subjects such as coping with Covid-19 (Dassel et al., 2020). However, Blinne (2014) discusses how fireside chats can be:

*"...a critical pedagogical practice, which can strengthen students' compassion and contemplation by enhancing communication practices and opening discussion about students' learning ideas, dreams, reflections, questions, and fears, while changing hierarchical communication patterns between teachers and students" (p. 131).*

Image 2 – Fireside chat Decorative Learning Space 2

The process here is more focused upon the situational factors – the circle in which the participants sit. As Blinne herself points out "the ultimate goal of circling (Baldwin, 1998; Pranis, 2005; Pranis et al., 2003; Zimmerman & Cole, 2009) is to invite participation, connection, and inclusion" (2014, p. 131). Our version of the fireside chat did not include the students because of lockdown rules and we focused less on the situational factors and the connotations of the 'circle' effect. However, we do argue that the intimacy and informality of the recording, combined with the atmospheric portrayal of the fireside, helped create an interesting and worthwhile concept.

We argue that through using a decorative learning space, we can create an atmosphere which then fosters specific feelings and moods. Rather than this being the only piece of learning, we position it as an additional accessory to the weekly topic. In creating an atmosphere, we blur the edges of learning to move away from surface and deep learning to a more engaged listener who associates the feelings and moods created by an atmospheric situation

with the content of a verbal recorded lecture re-dressed as a fireside chat.

The feelings created in this particular instance are those of warmth from the metaphorical associations with the fireside and intimacy from the use of the informal word 'chat'. The inferences that we make from the description 'fireside chat' invoke pleasant images or better still, pleasant memories. An account of a 'fireside chat' about issues affecting women described the event as relaxing immediately setting the scene by hinting at the mood of the session and the feelings that would be produced by it:

*"Conversing in a relaxed "fireside chat" format before a sizeable audience in the Honorable Bruce M. Selya Appellate Courtroom, RWU Law Professor Emily Sack interviewed Lester on an array of topics impacting women in the practice of law – and those training to enter the profession" (Bowen & Hansen, 2020, 5).*

## Instructions for running the exercise

Our use of a decorative learning space featured within one module and was promoted as additional



learning. However, with modules that have fully online content this could play a much larger role. Initially, a decision about which material will be recorded is needed. The decoration or emotion that will enhance the learning needs to be thought through. In the case of a fireside chat, this decorative space was an obvious match for the subject content. The module is rich and diverse and tackles complex organisational issues which mirrors the style of late night intimate conversations, so the idea of a fireside chat with its comforting, quiet and reflective nature fitted well with the content.

Creating a decorative learning space video requires minimal preparation and can be produced in advance. This type of RLO aims to enhance understanding and inspire excitement in the topic. The basic tools required are equipment to record a session, a partner to bounce ideas off and to hold the chat with and a backdrop of your choice. Colleagues with access to dramatic arts facilities may wish to record their podcasts utilising professional resources. Alternatively, space within campus buildings can be accessorised relatively easily. Much can be made of the description which invokes the moods and emotions. If students are expecting a fireside chat, then a simple backdrop with a fire, a chair and a darkened atmosphere will go a long way to accomplishing the decorative space.

Consideration should be given to accessibility and a script provided plus a description of your visuals if they are crucially important to the topic discussed. Editing can be done later if required but the honest rusticity of the recording combined with the atmospheric backdrop very often produces a unique and innovative story rather than a scripted monologue. We suggest that you:

1. Decide on content and match to a decorative learning space
2. Furnish your space and record your content with a partner
3. Upload content with a description of the decorative learning space

4. Debrief by explaining the transferability of the concept to the audience and answer questions as per normal

We are hoping that by watching and focusing on the idea of 'a fireside chat', the scene is set to invoke a sense of relaxed comfort which will encourage engagement with the content.

**Student feedback**

The module asked for student feedback as is normal but we also specifically asked what students thought about the fireside chats:

*"I loved the fireside chats – I thought it was such a creative way to engage students and found hearing different perspectives extremely useful – a great way to mix Learn and Play! I would actually always really look forward to the fireside chats, I can't remember exactly how many you did, but I always thought the two of you worked as a nice balance! I also thought it very useful the relevant topics that you discussed (I.e. COVID at the time) and related this to this module" (Student on module).*

An obvious positive is the ability and scope to be able to include topical subjects. Students also found that the conversation style made comparisons between viewpoints easier to comprehend. Another student wrote that they found "the idea super enriching" and that it was "really interesting to 'meet' our staff in a different context than the one formally offered by the university" (Student on module). This reflection shows how staff in a different environment – i.e. the fireside – was equally as interesting and portrayed a different side of them to the traditional lecturer role that students were used to seeing.

**Conclusion**

We argue that student engagement is improved through using a decorative learning space to visually enhance videos and specifically the example of how a fireside chat style was utilised to support content on an organisational behaviour module. The description of the recording – fireside chat – plus the evocative backdrop enhanced the reception of

what is in effect a piece of learning through stimulating moods and feelings of comfort, intimacy and peace. The student feedback, albeit brief, supported our theory with the positive comments. Using a decorative learning space to explore complex issues within modules is a relatively easy way to stimulate visual engagement and can be achieved with relatively little difficulty. We propose to use creativity within video recordings in other modules and supplement this face to face module with situated recorded lectures or conversations within a decorative learning space rather than a sterile professional environment.

**References**

Due to size limitations the rest of the references for this article can be found in the screen-reader accessible version of this magazine at: [www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/develop/forum/magazine](http://www.york.ac.uk/staff/teaching/develop/forum/magazine)

**Footnotes**

- 1 One author was previously employed in the airline industry.
- 2 This includes elements such as smiling, dress codes and managing passenger expectations. See Hochschild (1983) & Tyler & Abbott (1998) for the supporting discussion.



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# Using Play and Games in Teaching: a way to expand learning objectives?

Card and board games are often used to try to engage students in learning by making it fun; however perhaps they can also offer a way to take learning further! This article outlines the process followed by Laura Mitchell, from the School for Business and Society, in the design of games to complement specific learning objectives in teaching business ethics.

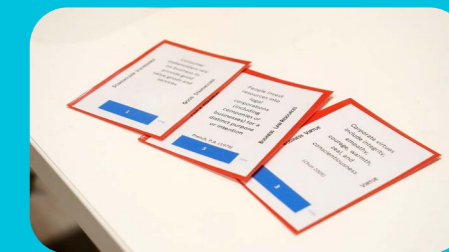


Figure 2: Students playing the Bad Logic card game

**Designing Games for Business Ethics**

I currently lead a large undergraduate first year module on Business Ethics which also aims to develop student's skills in university scholarship practices. Existing studies on the teaching of business ethics have challenged the notion that conventional cognitive-focused teaching modes

on the subject such as theoretical lectures, or case analysis, often do not support the development of ethical practice among graduates (Huo and Kristjánsson, 2018). Consequently, I was looking for a way to develop activities focused on complementary non-cognitive learning objectives.

The learning objectives for the module included:

1. Identify the central claims, arguments, problems and solutions found in contemporary ethical business discussions.
2. Develop abilities to interpret, synthesise and criticise ethical positions and debates from academic literature.
3. Present and critically assess arguments in a clear and rigorous way.

Outcome	Action	Game Design
Identify	Observe, select, discover, choose	Provide randomised data or resources as informative components to observe and select from
Consider, compare	Juxtapose, appoint, pair	Include categorical features or tags to allow a 'match' or 'mismatch'
Organise	Move, order, assess	Provide components that can be moved or sequenced
Practice	Advance, feedback, repeat	Establish turns or another rationale for a 'loop' of play actions. Ensure a feedback reward mechanism such as a judge character/role or 'points'
Respond, evaluate	Plan, Simulate, Strategise, compete, Metagame	Allow for planning, reflection and debrief opportunity. Could focus on competition or collaboration with peers, a model exemplar or target, or against a 'master'

Table 1: Aligning learning outcomes to game design principles

Some of these objectives may be met with a game-like activity if simplified or supported by appropriate resources. Identification, for example, relies upon students reviewing topical literature for key information. Yet in the early stages of their undergraduate degree, many students are still learning how to identify and access relevant source materials. Simplifying literature from cases or text-books into cue-cards can be used as discussion prompts and randomised in a game-like way.

Although students at this stage in their studies lack full awareness of the knowledge content, they do already display ethical awareness and competencies in ethical judgement, such that they can meaningfully identify, discuss and engage with conflicting positions or examples of (un)ethical corporate behaviour. However, the practice of identifying ethical problems, as a *display* of moral judgement, is fraught with challenges for students often worried about finding the 'correct' or socially acceptable answer. It provokes performance anxiety not only about providing an answer to the tutor, but also a feeling of discomfort about the possibility of conflict over dearly held values among new peers.

Social discomfort can be a driver in some games, and play that inverts or destabilises social expectations (especially around status or performance) is common throughout a range of historical play practices (Huizinga, 1949)<sup>1</sup>. Games can democratise players through turn-taking, and elevate players through assigned roles or randomisation and other limits on player actions. Using games could reduce student's performance anxiety by undermining their responsibility for a 'correct' answer or preparation, while also playing with that discomfort to mobilise affective or interpersonal learning. On an interpersonal level, games can also allow players to compete and challenge each other in a way with limited or no serious consequences, and build student's confidence in communication.

Reflecting on these challenges led to design of the following potential module learning outcomes utilising educational game(s);

- Identify the components of argument
- Identify relevant ethical concerns in business ethics discussions
- Consider different components of ethical theories

- Organise different argument components in a logical manner
- Compare different points of view on what constitutes unethical or ethical behaviour in business
- Practice argument structure
- Respond to different priorities and attitudes to ethical decision making in business
- Evaluate and critique argument structure

Each of these outcomes corresponds to a different challenge that may be addressed by a simple action. These challenges dictate the elements of game design to be employed (see table 1).

These characteristics determined the design of two distinct educational games, '*Bad Logic*' using physical cards and '*Cards Against Business Ethics*' (CABE) using a popular card game platform with customised digital components<sup>2</sup>. Card decks offer the specific feature of randomness, and the common use of separate player turns and multiple rounds in card games is a well known characteristic for many players. Matching and sequencing practices are also common features in games, with the additional benefit that card games offer a portable format convenient for teaching. Deciding on the feedback and reward system was the most challenging part of the game design, and an element which will continue to be revised as I use these games in different teaching environments (Figure 1).

*Cards Against Business Ethics* (CABE) uses inversion of a traditional learning consolidation practice; fill-in-the-blank. In the popular game on which this is based, excitement is provoked through use of taboo subjects; players must choose a response to a question card from a selection of answer cards, all written to incorporate taboo or 'poor taste' content based on controversial truths or stereotypes. The inversion of requesting students give 'correct' answers to simple business ethics questions such as 'Managers have ethical obligations to \_\_\_\_?' with answers drawn from common case studies of ethical failures such as the

Deepwater Horizon oil spill provides the same provocation as studying these case studies, without the same reading time commitment. In addition, this game relies upon a player's judgement of the 'best' (usually least correct) answer, which is a role circulated among players. This encourages debate about the topics as well as affective responses to the answers.

*Bad Logic* uses sequencing of a range of statements to create a logical argument on the responsibilities of business. A more detailed game than CABE, this game provides students with a deck of 'premise' and 'conclusion' cards to play in sequence to obtain a high score. Similarly to CABE, the use of a card deck ensures randomness. Students are dealt premise cards that may align with different ethical theories taught in the classroom, marked with key words to help them match up suitable arguments. These arguments can then be challenged using 'bad logic' cards, which result in deductions to players' points. This game requires facilitation by a tutor to ensure students recognise the role of the game as a learning aid. However, students are given more scope to interact with the deck of cards as a learning tool, for example to identify different 'families' of theory or follow up the reading suggestions associated with a card (Figure 2).

**Observations so far: does it work?**

The card game design is scalable with large groups of students. We managed to distribute sufficient decks of cards for use across 17 seminar groups. Digitised resources were available to students in advance. Nonetheless, learning to play and play itself are time-consuming. Our seminars are two hours long, allowing time for students to become familiar with game rules and play several rounds with some time for discussion. Attendance and performance among the cohort were improved on the previous year, but it is perhaps too early to make much of this association.

Tutors on the module found facilitating the games challenging, and felt they needed more time to explore the game rules and

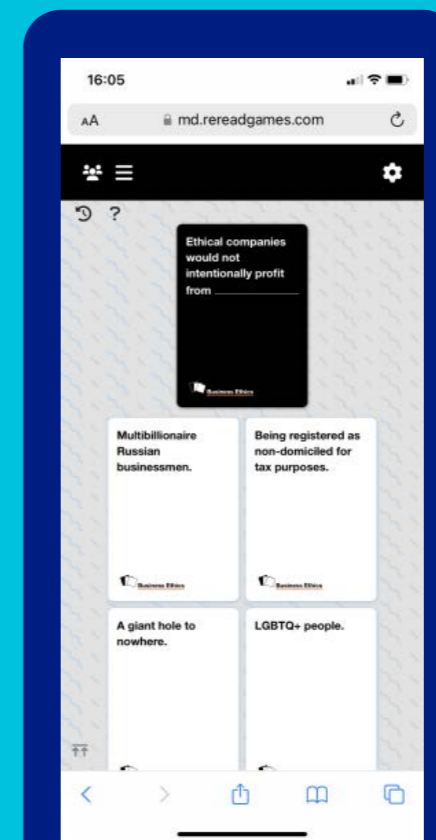


Figure 1: An image of the Cards Against Business Ethics interface

the relationships between game practice and learning outcomes. However, some tutors noted different groups of students would explore the cards, rather than engage in the competition for points. This engagement nonetheless appeared to support students in sequencing, comparing and assessing different ethical statements. The difficulty for some students and tutors may relate to the social expectations accompanying the classroom environment; both need support to feel permitted and free from the pressure of a defined class 'outcome'.

Both games have received positive feedback from students at York and playtesters at other universities. Some students commented that the *Bad Logic* game offered a more 'lighthearted atmosphere' than the topic might otherwise offer, and it did encourage discussion and debate about how to organise arguments. Some students said they found the activity 'sociable' and enjoyed the activity but were not excited by it, and also felt that

it could help their learning. The Cards Against Business Ethics game was routinely popular when it was possible to access, but beset by technical difficulties due to the need for reliable internet connectivity.

In summary, the design of these games may offer students a way to enhance their learning beyond the cognitive objectives of the module to include more 'lighthearted' and affective engagements with the knowledge content, and facilitate interpersonal skill development. Further iterations of these games will be used to try and capture such developments in the future through simplification of some of the guidance on player judgement and scoring, and provision of instructional videos for tutors. This includes clearer language in the instructional booklet, integration of 'advanced' and 'basic' versions of the game, simplification of the point-scoring method, more focus on player interactions over strategy and instructional videos for both staff and students.

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**Footnotes**

1 Contemporary views on this argument draw upon work heavily influenced by Bakhtinian concepts of carnival, and can be explored in more detail in Testa (2020).  
 2 The platform is Massive Decks which models the popular game is *Cards Against Humanity*, available for modification as a consequence of creative commons attribution non-commercial licensing.



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# Student experiences in higher education: the dichotomy in institutional and student perspectives

**Samarthia Thankappan and Tamsyn Kiss explore some of the conflicts between student and staff priorities in the Department of Environment and Geography and consider how these may drive low student attendance at taught sessions.**

## Student experience in HE

With two million students enrolling to study in UK universities in the academic year 2021/22 (Bolton, 2023), HE institutions are facing the challenge of enhancing students' experience, supporting engagement and measuring satisfaction within an increasingly competitive, student-driven sector.

The tension between the degree as a product vs. the degree as a learning experience is not unfamiliar: for many students, intellectual curiosity accompanies the need for a degree for future career ambitions. Many tutors have accepted this dichotomy, recognising that their priorities of subject specific knowledge conflict with student

priorities of grades, achievement, and their transition into adulthood.

The term 'university experience' therefore can be comprehended by HE institutions and students very differently. Traditionally in HE, student experience is recognised as how students perceive interactions within an institution. This typically consists of factors such as academic and intellectual development; community activities and networking; and welfare and support services.

How universities provide these services to students is crucial because students value each component differently. As students are not one homogeneous group, differing expectations can lead to complexities and varied

interpretations of the student experience (Ramsden, 2008) due to demographic factors (Mancuso, Parkinson and Pettigrew, 2010), individual personality, aspirations (Mancuso, Parkinson and Pettigrew, 2010), and abilities (Kuh, Gonyea and Williams, 2005).

There is considerable debate in academic circles about the benefits of classroom attendance. It is widely believed that classroom attendance leads to better performance, albeit in varying degrees (Marburger, 2006; Stanca, 2006). However, in recent years, the debate has deviated from the relationship between attendance and academic performance to areas that include an institutional perspective concerned

with retention, student experience, and institutional performance.

Given the importance of student experiences and attendance for both HE institutions and students, and a dearth of studies from the student perspective, there is a need for research focusing on student perceptions. Our study reported here aims to explore how students conceive their experiences within the HE context, and whether their understanding of student experiences align with those of their institution.

## Methodology

Students in the University of York's Department of Environment and Geography were invited to complete an online survey of factors impacting attendance at taught sessions. A total of 43 responses (38% first year undergraduate, 19% second year undergraduate, 31% 3rd year undergraduate, 12% above 3rd year) were received from across the undergraduate year groups.

Six focus groups addressing students' views on what constituted a good student experience were also conducted with students from across the undergraduate year groups. A total of 68 students participated in focus groups of 10 – 12 students, lasting 35 minutes. Questions explored aspects of assessment, attendance in taught sessions, feedback and what students generally consider engaging learning experiences.

Findings from the survey and focus group discussion revealed two broad themes of learning and community experiences, with a number of emerging sub-categories.

## Learning experiences

**Approaches to lecture materials:** 72% of survey respondents were confident that they could catch up missed sessions in their own time, using slides (91%) and recorded lectures (93%). It was interesting to note that some students (42%) were confident in making a decision on which sessions to attend and which could be missed.

One survey responder stated:

*"Very low incentive to attend lectures, as they are recorded and can be viewed at 2x speed from home (saving time and physical/mental energy)."*

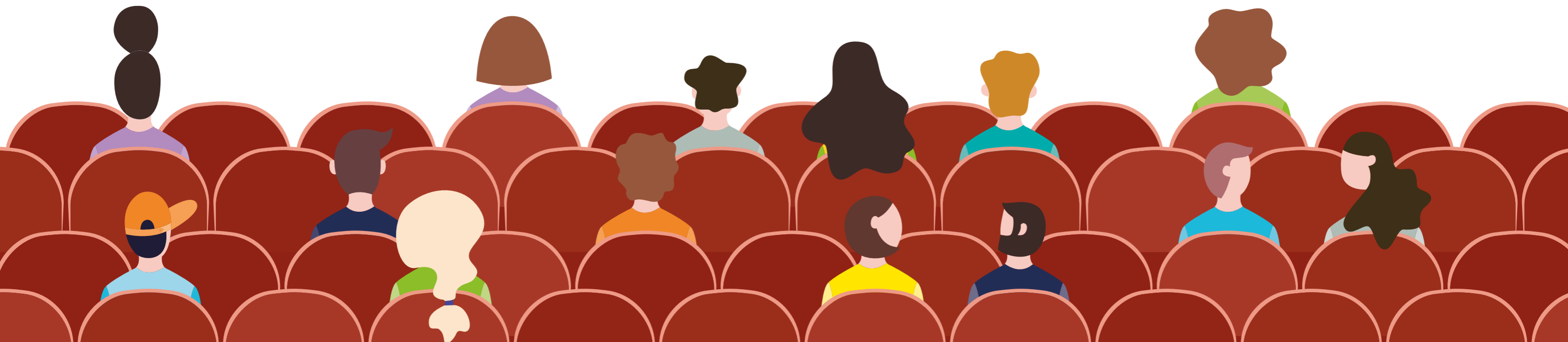
However, another response indicated recognition of additional learning from peers in taught sessions:

*"... In general attendance hasn't affected my grades too much,... but of course the extra small details from seminars or talking to peers I know is something I would miss knowledge wise."*

**Lack of Consistency:** Lack of consistency in advice, feedback, and response time to student queries via

email, featured in the focus group discussions. Student responses highlighted the variability in the use of technology by tutors. A lack of tutor's 'enthusiasm and passion' for the subject was highlighted as an impediment to their learning experience and their inability to better understand the module content. Students indicated that the level of engagement (identified by students as enthusiasm exhibited by the teaching staff and the creative methods used to deliver the session) and demonstrated by the tutor raises student aspirations for engagement and attendance at taught sessions.

**Co-creation of learning:** Students felt that their interests in the learning process could be discussed more widely with them. Examples suggested during the focus groups included co-creation of practices and assessment development. It was evident that the integrative nature of the partnership between academics and students in the co-creation process would aid students in the development of soft skills like enhancing their confidence and help them move from consumers to co-creators in the learning community. An approach that Healey, Flint and Harrington (2014) claim to enhance student engagement by offering the potential for a more authentic engagement with the nature of learning itself and the possibility for genuinely transformative learning experiences for all involved.



**Timing of taught sessions:** 72% of the survey respondents indicated that they were more likely to miss sessions timetabled for early mornings (9.00 am), but only 23% of respondents indicated the same for sessions last thing in the afternoon. The responses from the focus group discussions on students' high likelihood to miss early morning sessions were in line with the survey results; they felt their taught sessions should be timetabled between 10 am and 4 pm for meaningful engagement with taught sessions as is highlighted in the quote below.

*"We are not ready for the day before 10 am and we have a social life after 5 pm, we have to get changed and go."*

**Assessments and feedback:** Survey respondents provided conflicting accounts of their approaches to

assessments and taught session attendance. 40% disagreed and 35% agreed with the statement that they generally miss taught sessions in order to complete assessments. However, 81% indicated that they would prioritise an upcoming assessment over a timetabled taught session. Students seem to resort to a strategic approach:

*"Despite phases of missing attendance, I'm always then prioritising the coursework and what materials will be most relevant to the question".*

The focus group discussions unveiled that students preferred their assessments to be set in such a way that it prepares them for better career prospects. Coursework rather than exams was more valued by students as coursework enabled them to 'explore and engage' with wider literature in an 'in depth' manner. Exams were considered

as promoting 'surface learning' as opposed to deep learning. Timely and positive feedback on areas to improve were valued by students.

**Community experiences**

**Celebrate student achievements:** Students valued a 'sense of community' and were of the view that their involvement in community engagement and contributions to the student community needs more recognition, and their achievements rewarded.

**Opportunities to engage with tutors:** Students valued an approachable, empathetic tutor who is willing to understand their sensitivities. To this end, students emphasised opening up more opportunities to engage with their tutors. Students viewed a positive and engaging relationship with tutors as key to facilitating an excellent learning process.

**Balancing social events and lectures:** Survey respondents do not miss taught sessions because of extracurricular commitments (84%) or prioritise those commitments over taught sessions (72%). However, the focus group discussions highlighted how taught sessions timetabled to finish at 6pm conflicted with social events scheduled to start from 7pm.

**Summary and conclusion**

The findings suggest that both HE institutions and students need explicit articulation of expectations and clear understanding of what university experiences entail. The conflict, manifesting as low attendance at taught sessions, may be driven in part by how the term 'university experience' is understood by both parties. This can lead to a disjointed institution-tutor-student relationship, leaving both students and tutors frustrated and disengaged. HE institutions can play a key role by providing clear guidelines on what is required in terms of expectations of both parties as early as possible in the student journey.

The findings also raise key questions in the dichotomy of the responses from students on attendance in taught sessions. It was evident from the survey that a significant percentage of students preferred a F2F (face to face) taught session (only 2 respondents preferred online only sessions): why then are they not attending sessions? Are there more deeply embedded issues that need unpacking? or are there other contributing factors? Both the survey and the focus group results did not reveal any issues like wellbeing or work life balance.

Responses from students on how they prioritise assessments in relation to taught sessions reveals a lack of strategic and long term planning skills, which needs addressing if they have to be prepared and trained to undertake new responsibilities at their workplaces in future. Employability skills can be defined with the CareerEDGE model, where skills are defined as falling into Experience, Degree subject knowledge, Generic Skills, and Emotional intelligence (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007). In Environment

**"The conflict, manifesting as low attendance at taught sessions, may be driven in part by how the term 'university experience' is understood by both parties"**

and Geography, the Experience and Degree subject knowledge are explicitly integrated into the curriculum, and it is assumed that students are implicitly developing their generic skills and emotional intelligence; if we as educators wish our students to consider how timeliness and attendance is a good habitat to develop for the workplace, perhaps more explicit discussion of the generic skills and emotional intelligence aspects of employability needs to occur.

Within the context of York, whether the move towards semesterisation may address the assessment vs attendance issue remains to be seen, given the introduction of the common assessment periods at the end of each semester. With reduced numbers of summative assessments taking place during the lecturing period, it may be that student attendance increases at in person taught sessions.

Student attendance at taught sessions is often treated as a shorthand measure of engagement, when engagement and attendance are two different aspects. As educators in the UK Higher Education context, we must consciously consider that we are one of many competing priorities in a students' university experience, and the issue of attendance can only be resolved by managing and adjusting expectations for all parties within the institution-tutor-student relationship.

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# Educational partnerships for the public good through collaborative approaches to sustainability education

To enable the UK educational vision on climate change and sustainability there is a need for stronger collaborative partnerships between schools, Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and Higher Education that promotes innovative approaches to the education of tomorrow's teachers. Adrian Gonzalez and Georgia Ramsay discuss how our ongoing scholarship project provides an exciting example of what this can look like.



## Sustainability in educational contexts

Whilst schools have been focusing on recovering from the impact of closures as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, the climate crisis continues to deepen, and there is still a growing need for global society to reach consensus on an ambitious agenda that can match the scale of this emergency (United Nations Environment Programme,

UNEP, 2022) whilst also respecting planetary boundaries (Steffen, Richardson, Rockstrom et al. 2013). One crucial response lies in the concept of sustainability. A call to arms is evident in which different organisations have sought to operationalise this concept through sustainability strategies that govern and communicate the transition towards a more sustainable future. In the UK education sector, a recent

policy paper from the Department for Education (hereafter DfE) has set an ambitious vision of the UK becoming “the world leading education sector in sustainability and climate change by 2030” (Department for Education, 2022a). Increasingly, educational institutions are beginning to openly recognise the importance of embedding sustainability as a core principle for their operations e.g. the University of York Strategy 2020-

2030, and have provided further guidance and strategy documents on how this can be achieved (e.g. National Governance Association, 2022; William Patten Primary School, 2020).

External facing sustainability initiatives that forge societal collaborations are also central to any organisational success in this area. Crucially, the DfE has recognised the need for the teaching profession to identify opportunities to work with higher education to further develop best practice in teacher training and the teaching of sustainability within university course providers (Department for Education, 2022a). The policy paper stresses how crucial the inclusion of climate change and sustainability knowledge is for all science teachers continuing professional development (hereafter CPD) so that all young people receive accurate factual understandings of these issues (ibid.). However, the authors strongly feel that climate change and sustainability knowledge isn't only the intellectual or pedagogical ‘territory’ of science teachers but should instead be viewed as foundational knowledge for all teacher training. This in turn will ensure that future generations are adequately equipped to holistically understand, critically engage and reflect on climate change and sustainability, and recognise and take action that imbue sustainable citizenship (Saúde et al. 2020).

The authors were keen on addressing this interlinked issue by creatively thinking about how their respective knowledge and professional occupations could be used to generate an innovative response. Consequently, we developed a scholarly inquiry, the aim of which was to focus on empowering trainee geography teachers to have the knowledge, understanding and confidence to design, lead and deliver a sustainability curriculum enhancement experience in a local secondary school.

The project was designed to achieve a range of local and national priorities and in so doing produce a number of benefits. Locally, it sought to:

- Strengthen partnerships between schools, ITT and Higher Education. In so doing, it was able to help realise the University of York's ambition of becoming a “university for the public good” (University of York, 2020).
- Create an ambitious and forward thinking ITT curriculum which recognises the scale of the global challenges and our need for a transformative sustainability response.
- Aspire to make the UoY Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Geography trainees stand out by increasing their employability prospects. Latest DfE figures indicate that only 65% of ITT trainees on a Higher Education Institution route were in employment after completion of their course (Department for Education, 2022b).

Nationally, it sought to:

- Help realise the DfEs vision for preparing “all young people for a world impacted by climate change through learning and practical experience” (Department for Education, 2022a).
- Reinforce a message of hope and action surrounding the sustainability agenda and its impact on the climate crisis, thereby helping to challenge the despair and hopelessness which young people experience when engaging and reflecting on the environmental situation (Vandaele and Stålhammar, 2022).

## Practical Application in a School Setting

The project had an ambition for the geography trainees to deliver their ideas in a ‘real’ school setting, rather than as a scenario based learning experience. This builds on what Kinder (2017, p-330) acknowledges as an important element of ‘becoming, and developing as a geography teacher’ in that we wanted to create an opportunity for the trainees to proactively collaborate to experience this CPD, whilst building their professional network as a group of geography teachers. In interviews, several of the trainees confirmed the collaborative benefits of the project both for their subject knowledge and CPD training process (RP2, RP4). RP5 went on to reflect that ‘I actually really enjoyed coming together as a team and collaborating on something that we all took pride in and we all played a part in the organisation and the planning [of].’<sup>1</sup>

Drawing on the University of York's links with our partnership schools, we were welcomed by a local secondary school, who enabled us to have access to all of Year 7 (approx 330 students) for a day in the summer term.

## Outline of the Sustainability Enrichment Day

After an initial launch assembly to outline the importance of sustainability and the structure of the day ahead, each of the Year 7 students participated in a rotation of three workshops, which were

Am reg	Sustainability day launch assembly
P1	Workshop 1 – Planet: Environmental sustainability workshop
P2	Workshop 2 – People: Social sustainability workshop
P3	Workshop 3 – Purpose: Economic sustainability workshop
P4	Students work in groups to create green economy business ideas
Lunch	Green economy business ideas judged by local business sustainability link
P5	Students reflect on their learning from the day and winners announced in final assembly

Table 1. Outline of the Curriculum Enrichment Day



delivered by the trainee geography teachers from the University of York. These workshops had been carefully co-created by four trainees, who worked collaboratively to design a workshop that was not only engaging for students, but that also caused them to think about how small personal actions can bring about positive changes. The three workshops were based around the 'three Ps' of planet, people and purpose, with the trainees choosing language they felt would have meaning with the students at school.

- The planet workshop focused on environmental sustainability through the students' calculation of their eco-footprint.
- The people workshop focused on social sustainability, exploring how large brands treat their workers and other stakeholders.
- The purpose workshop focussed on economic sustainability and

how to balance profit with doing something 'good' through a game designed by the trainees where businesses could gain 'purpose' points for building their business in an economically sustainable way.

Following the students' engagement with their carousel of workshops, they worked in small groups of 3-4 to create a Green Economy Business idea (see Fig 2). Each group had just an hour to outline their business plan, giving careful consideration to how their business would avoid environmental damage and support the people linked to the company (workers and customers) as well as outlining how some of the profit created could be reinvested to create a business with purpose. The trainee teachers each selected the best business ideas from each form group to be put forward to a panel of judges (sustainability leads

from local businesses selected by the authors), who carefully reflected on the range of green business ideas that had been generated. These highly varied ideas included:

- A business that rewarded customers with wildflower seeds to increase environmental diversity in small urban spaces.
- Jewellery items created from community beach clean ups.
- The winning idea which focused on the concept of beeswax wraps and scaling this idea up as a reusable packing idea for items that are posted.

The day culminated in students' reflections on their learning from the day and pledges for future change, finishing with a celebration of the green economy business ideas and the awarding of sustainably themed prizes in a final showcase assembly.

**Where Next?**

After the success of the workshop event, the local secondary school has asked that we continue to work with them to deliver a similar curriculum enrichment day in summer 2023. This year, the plan is for the trainees to carry out reversed CPD by running a twilight session to upskill and work alongside geography staff within the local school, so that this can be a day that launches the concept of sustainability, with the existing geography teachers then building on this day further throughout their wider curriculum. One of the early career teachers (ECTs) who was involved in this project last year has also invited us to run a similar day in their school in London, demonstrating that they have clearly seen the value in this approach to working in partnership with HEIs, and the importance of embedding sustainability education into their curriculum.

**Reflections**

This project has had several benefits. For the trainees, the opportunity to deliver this day in a local school created a great sense of pride among the geography PGCE trainees, whilst showcasing the positive collaboration between the University of York, our partnership



Figure 3 – The trainees and authors smiling after a successful day

schools and the local business community. Most importantly, the trainees have entered their ECT years with sustainability education firmly at the forefront of their teaching priorities, where they will continue to positively influence curriculum design and young people's experiences for many years to come.

For the University of York, there have been two distinct but interconnected benefits. Firstly, the project has ensured that the University of York's ITT curriculum training is ambitious and forward thinking through its sustainability education that recognises the scale of the global challenges we face and the need for a transformative response. This, in turn, has placed trainees in a strong position for further employment, as demonstrated by the fact that 100% of the cohort on the geography PGCE secured a job as a teacher of geography by the end of the summer term. Secondly, the collaboration has provided a tangible mechanism by which the University of York can realise its "public good" ambition through enhanced engagement with educational institutions and the wider community.

**Funding**

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**Footnotes**

- 1 The interviews were semi-structured and received ethical approval from the Department of Environment and Geography, University of York in May 2022.

Our Green Economy Business Idea		
Team name:	Team members:	Class:
<b>What is your green economy business idea?</b> What will your business make? (e.g. transport, clothing, food, housing, entertainment, cosmetics)		
<b>Planet</b> - How will your business make sure it does not damage the environment ?		
<b>People</b> - How will your business help the people it works with (customers, workers, local communities?)		
<b>Purpose</b> - How will some of the money your business makes, be used as an inspiring 'force for good'?		
Our Green Economy Business Idea		
Team name:	Team members:	Class:
<b>What is your green economy business idea?</b> You can use this space to draw your idea if you want to		

Figure 1. An outline of the students' green economy business template



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# The New Learning and Teaching Fund

**Nick Glover, of the Inclusive Learning Team, reflects on the importance of creating and resourcing spaces for students and staff to collaborate on learning and teaching projects.**

The Learning and Teaching Fund is a new scheme for 2022-23, bringing together the following previous funding streams: the Strategic Learning and Teaching Fund, Rapid Response Fund and the Access and Participation Initiative Fund. The application process ended at the start of January (2023) and it has been hugely positive to see the volume and breadth of ideas for innovations to learning, teaching and assessment.

The Fund is being administered by the Inclusive Learning Team, and brings together the funding from the 'Access and Participation Plan (APP) Initiative Fund' with additional funding to support wider enhancement projects. Within this context, the eligibility criteria emphasised the following key priorities, which are linked to the University's strategy to become a university for public good:

- The involvement of students in the design and delivery of projects
- Addressing gaps in continuation, awarding and progression
- Decolonising and diversifying the curriculum
- Inclusive learning, teaching and assessment
- Enhancements in assessment and feedback
- Employability and skills development
- Transitions into and through university
- Interdisciplinarity
- Environmental sustainability

#### Why these criteria?

A fundamental condition of the funding was that projects recruit at least one (paid) student partner to work in collaboration with staff members. This condition reflects the

University's strategic prioritisation of student-staff partnerships and the intention to support further co-creation of learning, teaching and assessment.

In creating and resourcing spaces for co-creation the Fund highlights that bringing student and staff perspectives together enables a much richer understanding of how we teach, how students learn, and how we conceptualise and enact educational development (Cook-Sather, Krishna Prasad et al., 2019). Moreover, in the context of the Access and Participation Plan, the University is committed to developing opportunities for students to be full partners (e.g. co-agreeing targets and co-creating new initiatives), as well as providing spaces for consultation and student voice. We wanted the Fund to reinforce the particular importance of involving students as partners in work to address gaps for less represented students, decolonise and diversify the curriculum and inclusive learning and teaching. Pedagogical partnerships shine a light on the power relations and norms that shape higher education and therefore have the unique potential to "create the space necessary to address, with students, how issues of equity and inclusion affect their classrooms and disciplines" (Perez, 2016, p.4).

The funding criteria also reflect the five teaching and learning priorities highlighted in the Modularisation and Semesterisation process: employability, inclusive learning, teaching and assessment, interdisciplinarity, and environmental sustainability. So as we move



through the implementation phase across the University, the Learning and Teaching Fund provides further opportunities for colleagues to develop modules, programmes and embed the University's strategic principles within curricula and teaching approaches.

#### Submissions and funded projects

To support the submission process, the Inclusive Learning Advisers met with twenty potential applicants to advise on a range of project proposals. In the end, forty three applications were received from academics across a wide range of departments: 14 from Social Sciences, 21 from Sciences and 8 from Arts and Humanities departments. These included a number of innovative projects employing students as partners in diverse ways – e.g. as curriculum co-designers, co-teachers, co-researchers (e.g. investigating student perceptions of curriculum) or pedagogical consultants. The diversity and strength of submissions indicate an increasingly wide institutional interest in and

understanding of the value of collaboration and co-construction with students on learning, teaching and assessment.

In total, seventeen projects have been funded, covering a range of themes such as decolonising the curriculum, problem-based learning, inclusive assessment and feedback, enhancing learning and teaching approaches for international students, and students as co-designers of curriculum.

The funded projects will be required to disseminate their learning and practise with colleagues across the University, which could include articles in future editions of Forum Magazine". The Inclusive Learning Team will also collate information on the ongoing projects, which you will be able to see on the Learning and Teaching Fund webpage. Finally, thank you to all those colleagues who engaged with the new Learning and Teaching Fund! Keep an eye out for future funding calls and do get in touch if you have any questions: [inclusive-learning@york.ac.uk](mailto:inclusive-learning@york.ac.uk).

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**Nicholas Glover** works in the Inclusive Learning Team as an Inclusive Learning Adviser. He has a background in

critical approaches to student engagement and student voice. He is interested in the co-creation of learning, teaching and assessment in HE, particularly the ways in which student-staff partnerships can foster and embed inclusive practices within the classroom and throughout universities. He is currently working on a number of educational enhancement projects, including the University's new Learning & Teaching Fund, which is supporting students and staff to work collaboratively to innovate aspects of learning, teaching and assessment. [nicholas.glover@york.ac.uk](mailto:nicholas.glover@york.ac.uk)

In total, **seventeen projects** have been funded, covering a range of themes such as decolonising the curriculum, problem-based learning, inclusive assessment and feedback, enhancing learning and teaching approaches for international students, and students as co-designers of curriculum.

# Support, development and recognition for LEARNING AND TEACHING

## CONFERENCE



### Learning and Teaching Conference 2023

The Learning and Teaching Forum warmly invites you to this year's Learning & Teaching Conference, with the theme 'Supporting the Student Journey through Learning and Teaching'. The conference will take place on Thursday 22 June and will be held in the Spring Lane Building with some elements also running online via Zoom. To find out more visit our Learning & Teaching Conference 2023 Webpage.

Please visit our conference registration form to register for free by Thursday 15 June 2023. There is no fee to attend the conference, we just ask that you bring your enthusiasm for students, learning and teaching along with you.

### Learning and Teaching Forum Mailing List Sign-up

If you would like to receive communications from the Learning and Teaching Forum, please complete this linked form. Our mailing list will keep you informed about all our workshops, our annual Conference, and any other Learning and Teaching Forum news.

If you have any questions, please contact the Learning and Teaching Forum Committee via [learning-and-teaching-forum@york.ac.uk](mailto:learning-and-teaching-forum@york.ac.uk).

### Blended Learning Design and Delivery

The 'Blended Learning Design and Delivery' 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.

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'.

Alternatively, once you have successfully logged into the VLE, you can click on the following direct link to the site: [Blended learning design and delivery](#)

All staff should automatically have been provided with access to the site and there is also a [GTA Access to the "Blended Learning Design and Delivery" VLE Site request form](#) if needed

### 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, Mentimeter for live polling, Padlet for collaborative activities, and Blackboard Collaborate for running online synchronous sessions. For more information, please [click here](#) to see the [PDLT webpage](#).

**WRITING FOR FORUM MAGAZINE:** We are always interested in submissions. If you are interested in contributing an article for the next or a subsequent issue of Forum magazine, please contact the Sub-editor, Lucy Turner-Voakes ([lucy.turner-voakes@york.ac.uk](mailto:lucy.turner-voakes@york.ac.uk)), or the Editor Alexander Reid ([alex.reid@york.ac.uk](mailto:alex.reid@york.ac.uk)).

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