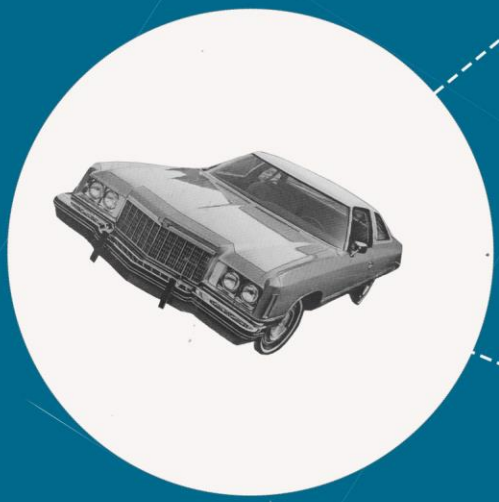
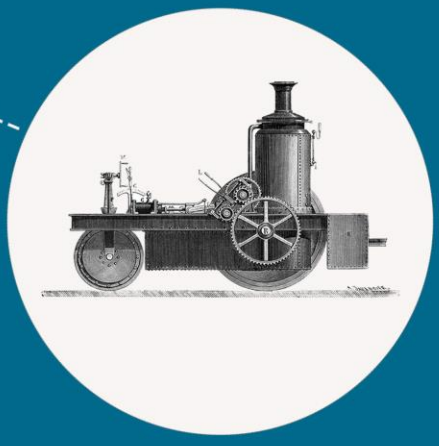
Trentham Books

Future FE Pedagogies

Editors: Vicky Duckworth, Bob Harrison,
Joel Petrie and Anshi Singh





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Acknowledgements

The journal was categorically ***not*** intended to be a *'how to improve your e-learning skills'* guide - there are professional associations, websites and online materials fulfilling this function already. Rather, we aimed to provide for time poor colleagues a series of *think pieces*: nuanced analyses of the potentialities and challenges of TEL for our practice.

We are very grateful to the sector bodies, publishers, networks and research organisations who have supported us in this aspiration: the AoC, the ETF, Huddersfield University's Education and Training Consortium, the Learning and Skills Research Network, the National Education Union, PRISM Journal, Trentham Books, and UCU.

Particular thanks to David Hughes, the CEO of the Association of Colleges (AoC) for his *Preface*; and to Vikki Liogier, National Head of EdTech and Digital Skills at the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), for her *Conclusion* to the publication. The editors also wish to extend their thanks to Sarah-Jane Crowson for her wonderful cover design.

From the outset it was our intention to promote an egalitarian approach. We are grateful to our contributors who agreed to avoid the identification of institutional affiliation, and the use of e.g. *'Dr'*, *'Professor'* etc. Instead we invited them to provide an email address and/or Twitter account to promote dialogue post publication – where indicated at the start of chapters our contributors welcome your engagement.

Finally, we are delighted to announce that the lead editor of the next edition of 'Future FE Pedagogies' will be Chloe Hynes, and that Sarah-Jane Crowson is also joining us on the editorial team. Our provisional theme for the next edition is to explore the notion of the centaur (the mythical half man, half horse): some TEL theorists argue that the potential synergy between humans and e-learning could ultimately be more powerful than both. Watch this space…

Joel Petrie, on behalf of the editors.

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Preface

David Hughes

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This set of essays on future pedagogies is timely after a year like no other in which colleges and FE providers were forced in double-quick time to move all of their learning online. That a year has exposed a range of profound issues and challenges in education which many of us have been raising for many years. In particular it has shown clearly how inequalities in society are reinforced by unequal outcomes in education, at every stage.

And like every crisis, whilst this one has caused great suffering and loss for so many, it also offers an opportunity to reflect, review and renew. This publication helps us to do that for FE, providing a resource for the conversations and debates we need have across the education system. I only hope that policy makers, politicians and education leaders embrace the debate, engage and seek change for the better.

I hated school and was bored with the teaching and learning I was offered. I also watched with sadness how my three children's thirst for knowledge, curiosity and motivation were all sapped, rather than nurtured through a schools curriculum and targets which did nothing to inspire nor tap into their motivations. Those experiences, and my own work in community development and informal adult education have always led me to focus on how education and teaching needs to tap into the motivations of learners. What is it they want to learn, and why? How does this learning help them achieve what they want to achieve? How can learning and education empower them in their lives to carry on learning, find work, thrive in a job, support their children, be active citizens?

I mention all of this because the pandemic has shown us that motivated learners, with committed teachers can learn successfully online, if the resources and facilities are adequate for everyone involved. These essays show that and help us think about how technology can enhance learning. The last year has also shown us that learning is also a profoundly social experience, and that people generally want more than just online

learning. The physical interactions during learning as well as before and after are critical for most learners.

For the very diverse learners in FE the balance and blend of online, remote, individual, group, face to face and virtual will need to be carefully planned and delivered. We also need to get the facilities right for learners, develop the skills of teachers, and invest to make FE the best it can be with its use of technology. But that will not be enough, because the pandemic has exposed how little the post-16 system really treats learners as adults and gives little agency and provides little flexibility to tap into people's motivations and wants.

Technology can be transformational in supporting learning for everyone post-16, allowing flexibility, access and engagement in ways that excite me. I hope that this publication opens up more creativity and innovation across FE to meet diverse needs in various ways, to tap into the motivations, situations, starting points and ambitions of learners. I believe technology can empower when used well and I believe it can be part of the approach to unearth and ignite the motivations of learners to maximise their talents and realise their ambitions.

Introduction: Future Pedagogies - The Context

Bob Harrison

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In his very helpful BERA paper The origins of Further Education in England and Wales (2019) Ross Goldstone, of Cardiff University tracks the roots of FE. He is careful to point out that there is "a lack of historical accounts of the further education (FE) sector in England and Wales, which is reflective of its broader historical-cultural positioning. FE sits between secondary schooling and higher education, delivering vocational, mixed and academic provision to school-leavers and adult learners". He goes on to point out that the origins of the sector derive from the self-help efforts of such organisations as The Mechanics Institutes and voluntary organisations or private individuals in the 19th century.

> "The absence of state intervention can be understood as a product of the contemporary context, in which education for the working population was met with scepticism, a cultural disposition in favour of liberal education and against 'utilitarian' education existed, and a complacent belief in liberalism regarding development prevailed"

My first head of department role was at the North Derbyshire Tertiary College in a mining community just outside Chesterfield. The original two-storey redbrick buildings at the centre of the college, which had grown to be the thriving heart of the community were built not by the state or the council but the miners' "penny levy". At the end of their pay day shift, when brought to the surface, there was a can hung on a wall. The miners opened their pay packets and dropped a penny in the can. When they had enough money they built the two school rooms so they and their families could learn to read and write.

As a vice-principal of The People's College in Nottingham I discovered the foundation stone in the boiler room which was inscribed "The People's College - Erected by Voluntary Contribution for the Education and Training of the working class forever". There were many "People's Colleges" scattered around the country as it became a movement and some of our famous universities were formed from "People's Colleges". The main point

here is that the roots of the Further and Adult Education sector do not derive from the altruism of employers or the government drive for skilled workers who contribute to the economy and wealth, but from an intrinsic desire for self-improvement from individuals, their families and their communities.

As Goldstone highlights,

> "The state first became involved in vocational education via the Technical Instruction Act 1889. Crucial to this legislative change was growing appreciation by the government of the relative development of industrial productivity in Europe. Local committees tasked with satisfying the demand for vocational education were created, whose funding came from a levy on alcohol consumption – dubbed the 'Whisky Tax' – which was used to develop technical education institutions…"

Further legislation followed in 1902 when Local Authorities were created but it was not until 1944 that the Further Education Sector was legally established. "This act defined the sector as providing (a) full-time and part-time provision for post-school aged pupils, and (b) leisure-time occupation. Broadening FE provision meant that the sector became further diversified, and a shift from part-time, evening study to full-time study in FE institutions was precipitated. It is from these reforms that the mixed economy of provision in today's sector, and its status as 'the Cinderella sector', emerged."

The Government published its eagerly anticipated White Paper in January 2021. I had been hoping to save a few words to conclude this context setting for Future Pedagogies with some inspiration. Sadly I cannot find any in this long awaited, over-hyped policy paper promising to "reform" the FE landscape. Instead we have a very disappointing, under-powered narrow employer and productivity focused mishmash of rhetoric and repeated ideas which does nothing to move us forward from when the State first intervened in Further and Vocational Education at the turn of the century. In fact it is worse than that as the narrow focus on economic productivity and skills for work fails to recognise the true roots of further education, the intrinsic human desire for community and self-improvement.

We hope by reading these articles in this journal you will be motivated to reflect on the future of our sector by reconnecting with its origins and the intrinsic human desire for self and community improvement so obviously absent from Government thinking, and that it will also strengthen your desire to take back control of Further Education and its Future Pedagogies.

Rethinking the improvement of teaching and learning in a virtual environment through unseen observation

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Introduction

With institutions having to make a rapid transition to online delivery, Covid-19 has left an indelible mark on the educational landscape. Understandably, some are concerned about how the quality of teaching and learning is being assured, along with supporting teachers to adapt and thrive in this new environment. How can this be done remotely?

'Unseen observation' is an innovative method that is increasingly being embraced by a growing number of colleges and schools, with practitioners acknowledging its positive impact on attitudes to observation and reporting significant improvements in their critical reflection on their professional practice, subsequently feeding into improvements in their teaching and their students' learning.

What is unseen observation?

The term 'unseen observation' might seem like a contradiction given that it is a model of observation that does not actually involve observing a taught lesson. It is a teacher-centred model of observation where the fundamental work takes place in the pre and post-session conversations that form the foundation of the unseen observation cycle (see **Figure 1** below). The teacher's recounting and reflection on the taught lesson is what provides the stimulus for the professional dialogue between them and their coach/peer, as well as a pre-session meeting (Stage 2) between the two in which the proposed session plan is discussed. Originally designed for face-to-face interactions, one of the many advantages of unseen observation is its flexibility, which makes it perfect for adapting to virtual learning environments. **Figure 1** below provides an overview of the 7 stages of the virtual unseen observation cycle.

What are the principles and purposes of unseen observation?

Unseen observation shifts the traditional emphasis of observation from a product-focused event to a process-driven practice that prioritises deep, meaningful thinking about teaching and learning through collegial conversations and collective reflection. This takes place through detailed conversations about the teacher's planning, their delivery and analysis of its effectiveness. By removing the 'performance' element traditionally associated with classroom observation, unseen observation allows us to reconceptualise how we think about observation as an educational tool to support teacher improvement. It also puts the control and accountability of the process back into the hands of practitioners, as it is built on the premise that they are the best people to decide their own professional needs and those of their students.

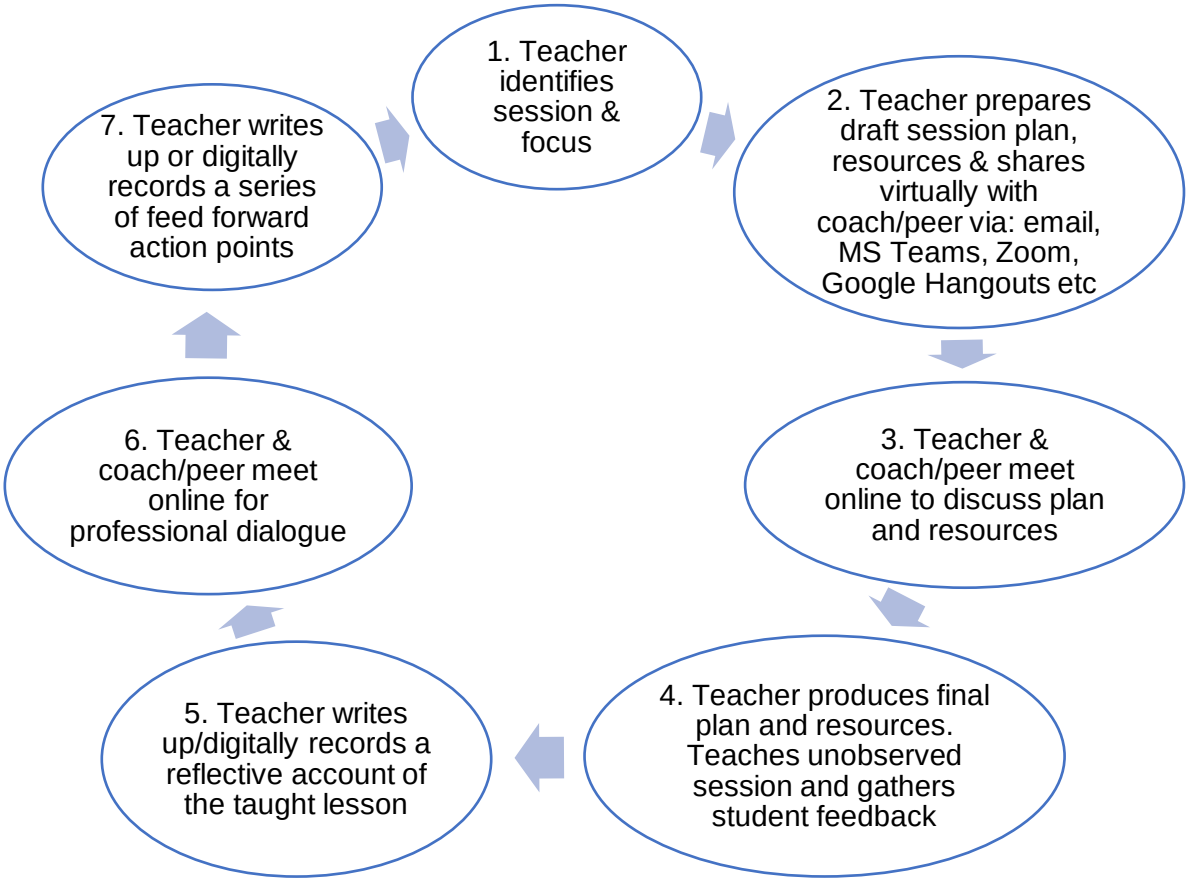

Figure 1 – An overview of the 7 stages of the virtual unseen observation cycle

How does unseen observation work in practice?

Stages 1-4: The teacher identifies a session and particular area of practice they wish to focus on. They prepare their session plan and resources, sharing them virtually with their

peer/coach before arranging an online meeting. The pair discuss the rationale for the selected teaching techniques and tasks, along with the anticipated impact on the students. The Stage 3 conversation also explores the teaching and learning philosophies underpinning the teacher's reasoning and considers any improvements before the teacher finalises their session plan. The teacher then delivers the unobserved session, including opportunities for students to provide feedback/evaluation of their learning experience (e.g. online questions on a chat forum), which can be used to inform the teacher's subsequent reflections.

Stage 5-7: The teacher writes up and/or digitally records a reflective account of the session. The teacher and peer/coach meet online for a post-session conversation to discuss the effectiveness of the session and the anticipated outcomes. The two interrogate any assumptions upon which the plan was based and examine possible sources of evidence. Following the discussion, the teacher then writes up/digitally records a series of feed forward action points to work on.

What are some of the benefits of virtual unseen observation?

1. **Depth and rigour** – the depth involved in the planning, reflection, discussion and analysis of the session means that unseen observation can be a more rigorous process than conventional models of observation. It provides a platform for institutions to formally embed the importance of reflection into its improvement systems, recognising the value of in-depth thinking about teaching and learning.
2. **Removing the Hawthorne effect** – teachers are able to behave more naturally and authentically without the presence of an observer during the session.
3. **Creativity and risk-taking** – as the surveillance and performance elements of traditional observations are no longer present, it encourages teachers to be more creative and take more risks in their teaching without the fear of being judged.
4. **Recalibration of locus of control** – the shift in the locus of control from the 'observer' to the 'observed' creates a more equitable working relationship, reducing some of the counterproductive effects of traditional observations. Placing the teacher's thinking and decision making at the centre of the process also allows them to explore and discuss wider aspects of their beliefs about teaching and learning in greater depth instead of focusing on an isolated session.
5. **Teacher autonomy and ownership** – as individual teachers are empowered to decide the focus of their unseen observation, this provides them with increased autonomy to

take ownership of their practice, along with the freedom to reflect more meaningfully and deeply on what they do and its impact on their students.

6. **Flexibility** – unseen observation can be adapted to working with staff individually or in small groups, from an individualised area of focus to a collective theme of interest/relevance to multiple members of a team. As it does not require face-to-face meetings between staff, it also lends itself well to being used remotely via online platforms.

Take-away thought

Research on professional learning has repeatedly reinforced how meaningful and sustainable improvements in teaching and learning are built on trust, honest introspection and personal responsibility. These key factors all underpin the ethos and practice of unseen observation. At a time when education has become ever more dependent on the trust, honesty and responsibility of teachers, unseen observation is an innovation that encourages institutions to embrace this as the new normal in helping to assure the quality and ongoing improvement of teaching and learning.

Free, easy and fit for purpose TEL: lessons learned the hard way by a non IT whizz

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In 20 + years teaching English, History and Education in FE, a lot of colleagues assumed I was an 'IT whizz' because of the TEL stuff I implemented. As a consequence, I was often embarrassed when unable to answer their technical questions. Why did they see me this way and how did I end up running short courses built around the idea of "eTeaching" and eventually doing most of my teaching online? I think it was because I was always willing to have a fiddle with different pieces of software, unencumbered by a sense of lacking in my own ability. A truly beneficial self-awareness deficit! Make no mistake, I have self-efficacy and confidence issues in all sorts of areas but for some reason I was unfazed by the not infrequent bumps and mishaps along the way with my TEL efforts. I connected new technologies to my teaching and saw the whole thing as a glorious experiment. In doing that I learnt some incredibly valuable lessons and, if there's one thing I have been able to do these last 10 years or so, it's to have shared what works, what doesn't and why with colleagues so they don't have to spend all that time fiddling around themselves.

I do use the big institutional tools like the VLE but this can be quite grudging, especially where there are ways of doing things that are so much easier by accessing educational and 'productivity' apps online. I will use the VLE as a launch point or portal to more engaging activities online as I try to avoid the seemingly inevitable 'scroll of death' in the VLE interface. Of course, we need to be alert to data security, GDPR and technical frailties but, by and large, resources that sit in the cloud and are used for teaching (not data collection) can offer incredible opportunities for heightening engagement, changing the dynamic and supporting learning, assessment and feedback. Above all, I have come to realise that I work most effectively with technology when it fulfils all three of the following criteria:

1. Can I use it or at least try it for free?

2. Is it easy to use?

3. Does it do the job I want it to do?

The reason my use of VLEs has been grudging is because they often fail on two of the three criteria.

Before I can apply criteria, I need to have something to apply them to. Previously I would try anything and everything but realised over time that a. time was finite (!) and b. I needed to identify my own and my students' needs. Too often I had been dazzled by fancy effects to consider what was being enhanced, added to or made easier in my teaching, the resources or the student experience. I moved (eventually) from a *tech-led* to a *tech-enhanced* perspective. As this shift in mindset became more visceral, I became object-oriented and would seek technologies that were free, 'freemium' or advertising funded to experiment with and were usually designed to perform one main function. Recommendations from communities of colleagues at work or on social media helped narrow the field and I often found that even the freemium tools gave me what I needed without me having to purchase anything.

Ease of use is undoubtedly relative, but my benchmark question is usually: 'Is this easier to learn than the first time I used *PowerPoint*?' I find the best tools are those that require the following skills:

1. An ability to search online and within tools for existing content to curate (no point re-creating the wheel).
2. An ability to type things into on-screen boxes.
3. An ability to copy a URL and paste it somewhere else.

This means that the best tools for the non IT whizz will have:

1. Ease of access (perhaps offering a *Google* sign in, giving me only one additional password to remember).
2. Easy to identify quick start and save functions.
3. Visible and easy to access sharing and editing options.
4. Ability to create or find something I could use with my students within 15 minutes of first logging in.

Fitness for purpose may be evident at the initial 'fiddling around' stage but is more likely ascertained at the trial/ implementation stage. If I have invested no money and only a little

time, it is a lot easier to be honest with myself about whether the effort has been worth it. I wince as I recall hours spent using a fussy tool to create supposedly re-usable ‘learning objects’ only to realise I had a collection of dull presentations with the odd question here and there. I always ask myself: ‘Is this doing something better, in a novel or engaging way and does it make life easier for me and/ or my students?’ Tools that also offer opportunities for students to become creators or co-creators as well as interactors are often even more valuable. It is worth becoming familiar with some of the core principles of access, navigation, accessibility and universal design but, in many ways, these are an essential part of the journey if approaching it through the lens of the three criteria I have defined.

In summing up this perspective, I’d say it is in large part attitudinal. An absence of tech self-efficacy is more common amongst teachers and students than you might imagine. My advice is always not to let assumptions taint thinking. I am not an IT whizz but I am fortunate that I have been able to tap into a belief that exploration and experimentation trumps disengagement, doubt and worry. If you are reluctant, try to confront your trepidation. Listen to the teacher voice inside you that counsels students to value the learning potential of mistakes. Accept that things will not always go the way you want. Don’t be dazzled by shiny, high-end (but often pedagogically questionable) e-learning content and try to target the unattainable. Rough round the edges but personalised, active and engaging works. Above all, there are free to access, relatively easy to use tools out there that will do what you want and need.

Research from the front: A Developing Digital Project

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Background

The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) is the expert body for professional development and standards in Further Education (FE) and Training in England.

Through their work, the ETF supports teachers and leaders across the Further Education and Training sector to help them achieve their professional development goals for the benefit of learners and employers across England. Since its inception, the ETF has supported a range of activity to improve teaching, from small scale projects involving single departments or individuals to region-wide activity promoting change and sharing of effective practice. This work focuses on empowering practitioners to focus on effective practice that is most helpful for their own challenges. The wide range of activity that they deliver is brought together under the banner of Outstanding Teaching Learning and Assessment (OTLA).

In September 2020, the seventh phase of OTLA projects funded by the Education and Training Foundation was launched, with the collaborative research project between two general FE colleges' GCSE English Language students and lecturers one of 36 projects exploring approaches for teaching English and Maths in the post-16 sector.

Objectives

The intention was to investigate how two practitioners in separate settings could work together to develop students' confidence in transferable skills and in the demands of the subject.

The overall objective was to produce collaborative, inter-college evidence-based research.

The research was centred around this question: how can we engage GCSE English students using digital technology for learning?

We aimed to:

- encourage post-16 learners to work collaboratively and online with others they may never meet and where they are separated by distance.
- seek to address current challenges in teaching, learning and assessment during online and face to face lessons via the deployment of digital or web-based resources.
- engage with, and positively develop, the student's view of the subject itself, exam questions, and with new ways of learning.
- enhance attainment, retention and progression for such learners.

Approach

We have been delivering co-teaching, learning and assessment methods across multiple digital platforms, such as delivering live and recorded webinars.

We have been collecting results in the form of questionnaires and surveys, aiming for around 100 student responses across both colleges. Although questionnaires and surveys run the risk of being 'data-rich, but information poor', the forms used have allowed for both multiple choice skills development and open questions. The completion rate has been high as students find them accessible and relevant. We have also responded to individual students after completion of the surveys to discuss their learning needs and ways to progress. In the near-future we hope to conduct in-depth face to face interviews with learners on site, aiming for 10 responses (5 from each college). Teaching notes and survey methods will similarly reflect 'learner voice'.

An example of the type of surveys we have used can be seen in Figure 1 on the next page, and a live link is accessible here.

1. How do you currently access online learning for GCSE English? (select all that apply)

PC or laptop	42
Tablet	4
Phone	33
Ipad	2
Other device(s)	1

2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how do you now feel about studying online?

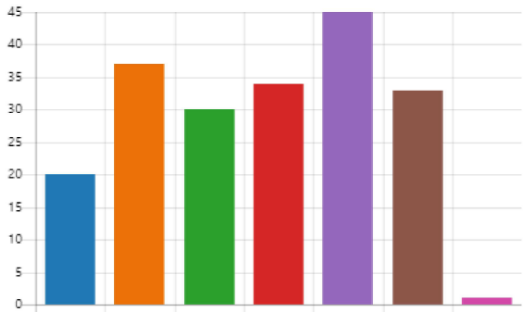
1: Still not confident, haven't d...	8
2	5
3	21
4	20
5: Very confident, it's helping ...	9

3. On a scale of 1 to 5, how do you feel at this point about GCSE English?

1: Still not very confident or in...	2
2	6
3	20
4	25
5: Quite confident and want t...	10

4. What do you now feel you need to improve in the subject? (select all that apply)

I still need to practise reading ...	20
I still need to develop my crea...	37
I still need help with how to a...	30
I still want to develop more co...	34
I still need to develop more d...	45
I'd like to improve my spelling...	33
Other (please add details in q...	1



5. Which methods do you feel have helped you improve in the subject? (select all that apply)

Shorter lessons with follow up...	17
Accessing online classes	16
Face to face sessions	36
Face to face sessions with acc...	11
Assignments set on Teams	18
Accessing recorded sessions a...	8
The mix of face to face and on...	13
Being able to message my tea...	22
None of these: I'd prefer long...	3
None mentioned above (pleas...	1

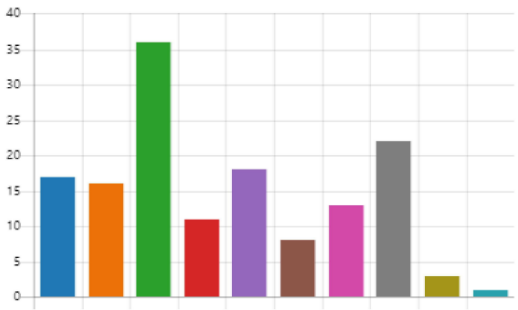


Figure 1: GCSE English November 2020 survey summary

Evidence was collected continuously via real-time review of student's engagement in the webinar sessions, in class via the practitioner's reflections, participants' survey completion, face-to-face interviews with learners, anonymised completed tasks and subsequent feedback and results of assessments. The practitioners met online on a regular basis to collaboratively reflect on how our teaching and learning practice was developing in the current context. Central to this aspect is the teachers sharing and reflecting on practice in terms of online versus face-to-face delivery, and how we responded to what worked well/not so well. Feedback from students was used to inform how the practitioners design and deliver subsequent sessions, facilitating students' insight and impact on their own learning and how we incorporate this information and thus influence lesson planning.

Expected Results

We hoped to understand from the participants -students and practitioners- more about how post-16 learners (including adults) can be encouraged to help themselves learn, progress and achieve in the subject via digital tools. Additionally, we wished to engage with, and positively develop: digital teaching, learning and assessment practice (TLA); the student's view of the subject itself and with formal assessment tasks; build on and enhance student's self-confidence and transferable skills relevant to the modern workplace…Currently, we are half-way through completion of the project. Results will also be gauged by how students engage with the adapted TLA and the project in general; student work/feedback exchanges as well as in their confidence in approaching exam-style questions and assessment objectives; their enjoyment of the subject; and in formative in-class assessments, mock exams; and ultimately in summative assessments.

Further research

We would like to invite practitioners in the GCSE English Language re-sit domain across the FE landscape to participate in further research, informed by the outcomes and objectives from the current OTLA project will be published in summer 2021.

The authors would like to thanks the following for their support: Sue Southwood and Claire Collins Consultancy; Omur Derelikoylu and Waltham Forest College; and Alex Hill and Shipley College.

Pedagogy at the centre - getting the blend right

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The closure of college campuses to most students during much of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to a rapid shift towards on-line and technology-enhanced learning. The speed of this transition has been impressive and shows the adaptability and flexibility of the FE sector, while also highlighting the risk of deepening existing inequalities, whether in access to devices, prior knowledge and skills, signposting of resources or access to professional support.

The use of e-learning has been steadily growing in colleges, with some brilliant innovative practice. But the sudden switch to a much higher proportion of online teaching is more than the acceleration of a trend. It prompts some fundamental questions about pedagogy and the planning and organisation of learning.

As we consider the return to more campus delivery, we need to ask: what is it that we value most about working in a shared physical space? Which aspects of our learning community can and can't be replicated on-line? How do we ensure that we make the best use of the time we have in different types of settings, synchronously and asynchronously?

On-line pedagogy cannot simply be a screen-based form of classroom pedagogy. Learning is a social process which relies on a range of different interactions between teachers and students, not all of which can be fully replicated in a virtual setting. Are there good online substitutes for browsing in the library and discussing what to read, having a motivational chat with a tutor between classes or working in an informal study circle with a couple of friends?

We need to understand which aspects of learning are best suited to face to face and social settings and ensure we do not lose them. For example: open ended discussion, browsing together, the joint exploration and development of ideas. This will help us make better judgements about when and how to blend these with on-line experiences, this will depend

on course content and student needs. Teachers and students will need to be expert in ‘blending’; skilled at judging when and how to shift the balance.

Young people are sometimes described as ‘digital natives’ because they have grown up using digital devices and navigating social media. However, they still need to develop research, evaluation and connective skills and their on-line fluency together with other literacies: social, political, cultural and psychological.

Producing on-line learning programmes requires good subject knowledge and expertise in pacing learning, avoiding cognitive overload and balancing challenge with security. But we also need to know our students and what makes them tick. Whether in person or on-line, we need to motivate and engage our students as they navigate their leaning obstacle course; facing life’s challenges, seeing, or not seeing, the point of what they are doing, drifting in and out, exploring the boundaries of their knowledge, testing their understanding, trying things out, applying their skills, struggling and eventually ‘getting it’. Much of this cannot be programmed or planned for, and our methods must take this into account.

Understanding the technology is important but realising the full educational potential of virtual learning is primarily a question of pedagogy. As we consider the future of learning, teaching needs to take centre stage.

Ways of Engaging: some approaches to developing learning skills

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Ways of Engaging is a project designed to support disaffected young people. It was initially rooted in research and was the inaugural project of the reformed East Anglia LSRN (Learning and Skills Research Network). The project supported by partners the Co-operative College, NEU (the National Education Union) through both its post-16 *Researchmeet* project and Norfolk District, Norfolk County Council's Roar project (where some of the resources and activities were trialled), Norwich Trades Council, the Socialist Educational Association (SEA) and latterly the University and College Union (UCU) and the University of East Anglia (UEA).

The research drew on experience as a teacher and manager in FE and alternative provision in the last 10 years in a wide-range of contexts as well as previous research and development of case studies around NEET cohorts. It was concerned with re-engagement, learning and developing skills of employability and enterprise. There are three main curriculum components to the approach to engagement and re-engagement. These are leadership, employability and volunteering. Personalised and assignment-based, the approach is learner focused and built on a foundation of agreed and realistic targets that fully takes account of individual learner needs. The engagement project equips learners with personal, learning and thinking and employability skills.

In the time of the pandemic, however, events overtook participants and it quickly morphed into a more practical pedagogy linked to the emergency curriculum for practitioners to use in a variety of ways of engaging with the young people in their care, sometimes planned; sometimes as a means of managing in a crisis; sometimes collaborative, but always as a direct and personalised response to individual learner needs. While not directly born out of the Covid19 crisis, some learning activities have been shaped and altered and, in some cases, driven on-line. Here are some examples:

1. Introductory skills session – what will you need to succeed? Team-work; target setting and skills for learning; problem solving; language and communication (employability skills);

2. Describe yourself – using a method of your choice (written description, picture, film or artefact), try to explain who you are. You should think about your background, ambitions and words which describe you. Record your evidence;

3. Objects that represent your life or planned career – bring in three objects which represent who you are. Discuss with a partner or in a group what they represent and why you have brought them;

4. Research a topic that interests you – use the internet, library, newspaper or another route to find out information about a subject of your choice. Present the information in an interesting or original way;

5. Think about team-work and leadership skills and communicate to a group what it takes to be a good leader. Use examples of famous leaders and, as a group, discuss what made them good or bad. How do you compare?;

6. On your own, or as a group, draw a mind map on the subject of respect, showing what it means and giving examples of when it is and is not shown. Compare your examples with others.

Some findings

Even when learners have chosen a course of study, it is sometimes a challenge for teachers to keep them interested and motivated. This is where personal knowledge of individual learners comes in to play. 'Knowing which buttons to press' for each individual can provide the ignition to motivate and inspire any learner. 'Which button' will differ from learner to learner as the very uniqueness of each individual will form the basis for their personal determination and motivation. Learners crave realism. If we can gain their interest by making learning real, by linking it to the outside world, we can inspire and increase motivation.

Customised and flexible learning, including aspects of distance learning, is a means to achieving this. The whole notion of 'personalised learning' recognises that teachers focusing their attention on individual learners further progresses their learning and mirrors in the real world, such as the move away from narrow vocational models. Within the post-14 sector the debate has centred on how best to move from a world where the individual responds to the system and its structures to one where the systems and structures themselves are designed to respond flexibly to individuals' needs.

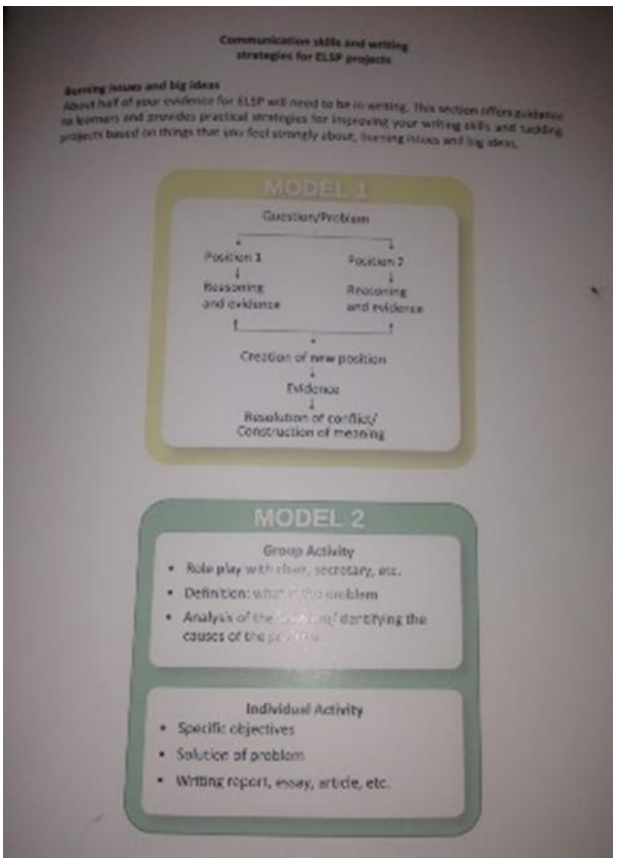
Some recommendations

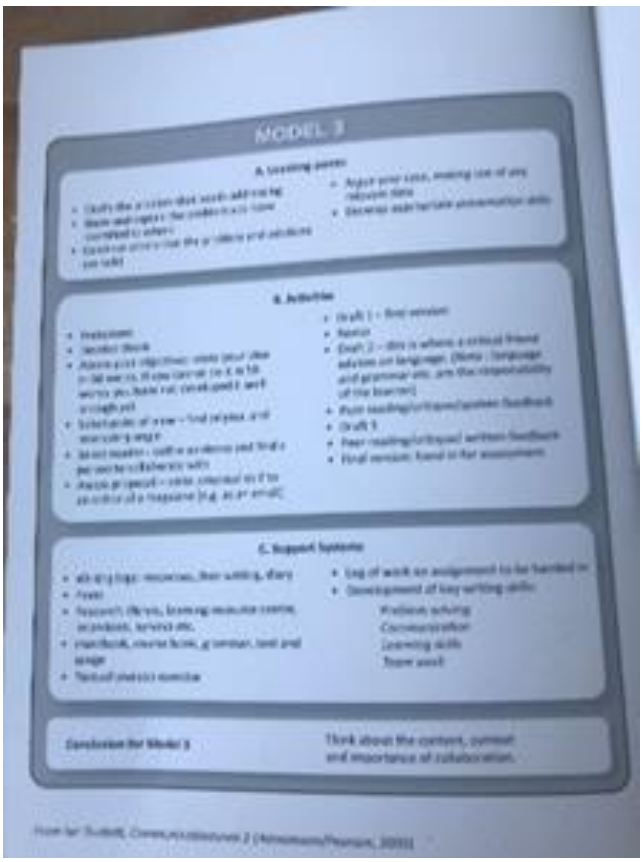
In terms of recommendations, this approach frees learners and teachers from a range of the usual constraints: learners can take control of their own learning and teachers no longer really need to consider time allowances or constraints and can consider:

- length of time allowed;
- independent learning;
- distance learning;
- resource-based learning;
- mastery learning.

Teachers can and should ask themselves:

- How can learning and teaching move a learner from where they are now to where the learner has the potential to be?
- How can session-planning accommodate learners' different, preferred approaches?





The Proverbs of TEL

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This document is designed to stimulate a provocation around the subject of technologies in teaching and learning, drawing in pedagogical, sociological, and philosophical implications. Like learning and education itself, it has no clear beginning or ending and is purposefully disconnected in order that meaning be constructed in a non-linear disorganised derangement of normal convention. It is presented as a set of aphorisms and maxims, which may be rejected or agreed with ultimately and ideally stimulate discourse. It is indisputably clear that technology improves the learning experience and no argument for or against that is being made. It is also abundantly understood "….that technology is not just a neutral delivery vehicle" and that there are numerous structures and contradictions involved in these new *normals*.

FE should potentially have been well placed to cope with current circumstances, given the pervasive influence of the FELTAG report that sought to prepare the workforce and colleges for a digital future.

Disruption is the mother of innovation. There are some in education who misunderstand or have scorned the use of technology, but if the teacher persists in creativity, the teacher becomes inventive.

Rejecting technology's role in the learning experience is like swimming with an arm tied behind your back. Denying its function is to pretend the arm is not even there.

The Gutenberg Press influenced our systems of writing, moulded our very use of language, our ways of seeing and sense of meaning about the world &etc. Our perceptions, reading and understanding of life were radically and irreversibly encoded by a machine, which showed how the medium was at least the equal of the message.

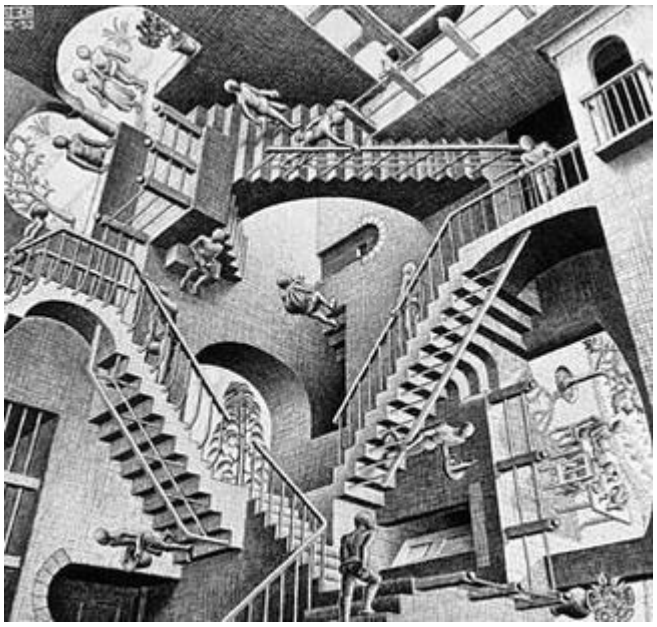
Technology has the potential to shape our practice, but also to confront what education is and can be.

If nothing else technologies force us to re-evaluate the classroom as an environment and the relationships within it.

The online social world develops communication, participation and identity, but these networks should not be tickets for a world that continues to be oppressive. A refusal to converge and interact is often a gesture of beautiful resistance.

The modern world has rapidly become a set of systems that are often fluid, insecure, confused and perplexing to navigate. Technologies may help young people to make meaning of it all and it is the responsibility of educators to utilise these tools.

It's probable that the disruption of this present moment will continue in a semi-permanent state; the superabundance of information can saturate without process: studying is not a consumer activity and requires actions. Technology provides agency by enabling students to act upon the wider world. FE providers must make this and wider social interaction as a bedrock of online learning.



Tune in, turn on and switch off is the maxim of social media. Any modern teaching and learning conversation needs to interrogate the online ontology of passive consumption.

The 'walled garden' VLEs that FE institutions invest in bear no reflection of life in the real world and are a futile exercise yard of administration. Teachers use them, because institutions pay for them; institutions pay for them, because data is digital gold; shrewd students inherently distrust the mechanics of them that have caged us in a Panopticon of self-surveillance.

The VLE is not an environment conducive to spirited learning and more like a series of infinite corridors and doors. To each domain, there is a gatekeeper and an eye.

The new environments and landscapes deserve an entirely new language and imagination for teaching and learning and the relationships at play.

But where we consider what is added and augmented by technology, we also must consider what is lost, as related by Mary Newbold in a Tweet from the pandemic: "Let us

not so much as contemplate this next level of alienation. Learning is a shared, social experience that involves the whole corporeal sensorium. We are more than minds; this is what makes us distinct from the technologies that have become an extension of ourselves."

While distance learning *can* be done, we should never underestimate the importance of physical environments for students – and more importantly we must not allow politicians to traduce what we have with further funding cuts, closures or by selling land and assets under the justification of distance learning. We can have both.

While technology can improve access and peer learning, it must not become a sterile mass without personalisation.

It is not in the realm of paranoia to imagine that conniving politicians (who do not understand teaching and learning or the peripheral participants of FE's student body) would replace all FE's teachers with scripts, batches of resources and automated 'click and go' DIY training. Consider the last online training you did. Was it worthy, was it soulful, did it nourish your creativity, did you connect with others and learn incidental matters of existential significance along the way, or was it used to cut corners?

If some parts of a subject are not replicable in a technologically dynamic and humanely participatory form, then it is the curricula itself that needs change.

Technologies can *de-territorialise* the curriculum and learning terrain from many of its present constraints and there is no one there, currently, using such tools of conviviality to ensure teachers are complicit to standardisation or students are emasculated. Teachers have an opportunity to teach with autonomy if they are given the confidence, but it requires a big push in training to teach online *well*.

It is no surprise to see unimaginative educators use the pandemic crisis to endorse rote memorisation through technology at the cost of a social online experience. It is much easier to do repetition than socialism, play or creativity.

The first task is ambience and then imagination. Just as the classroom, students don't come online for repetition but diversion, the ludic and the unexpected.

How is it possible for technology to simulate the real world when the real world itself is artificial, flawed or contains inherent social inequalities that technologies must not use their users to reproduce?

Inherent paradoxes govern online behaviours:

Autonomy, but governance

A window to a world of diversity, but reflexive impotence

Visibility, but surveillance

Empowerment, but subservience

Individualism, yet conformity.

‘The cut worm forgives the plough’, but a student who walks into the world unprepared and unequipped to challenge and change it will never forgive his teachers. FE must rise to the new challenges presented it.

Digital Practitioners creating "artfully-crafted, student-centred, learning experiences"

Nigel Ecclesfield and Fred Garnett

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Our book called *Digital Learning Architectures of Participation* was published by IGI Global in July 2020, and we have 20 years' experience each working in FE colleges and adult and community education and 10 years working at the national level with Jisc and Becta and other bodies on various FE related technology and learning/teaching projects. This involved working with Government, consultants, researchers, and commissioning projects. Thus, we have a great deal of relevant experience concerning what a future FE Pedagogy might look like. Fred leads World Heutagogy Day on 23rd September every year promoting creative Pedagogies of learning and Nigel was an inspector with ALI before it was absorbed by Ofsted and he continues to contribute to a range of different activities and to monitor research on post-compulsory education. We are both continually reviewing learning, pedagogies and technology use and working with national and international projects and practitioners.

The title of our book has three elements to it.

1. Digital refers to our Digital Practitioner project looking at "technology in action" in FE colleges
2. Learning refers to our overall concern with "Modelling learning" or learning theory
3. Architectures of Participation developed from the E-Maturity Framework for Further Education project that ran for 18 months, trying to define the e-mature or "e-learning ready" provider in post-compulsory education.

We have a blog to support the book called Learn Teach 21 as we see learning as a co-creation process between learner and teacher. When Fred taught in a London FE college he developed a technique he called "brokering" as he believed everyone in FE wants to learn, but perhaps not in the structured and exam-oriented way it is presented to them in formal education. Brokering means identifying a pathway between students' interests and motivations and the formal assessment requirements of a course. He "front-loaded" the delivery of any course to help develop learning skills which enabled students to produce individually designed work to meet the course requirements.

Nigel has a background in counselling, student services, teaching, inspection and teacher education, dating from 1985 in Cambridge, London, Liverpool and Devon and through his experiences in staff development and inspection, sees FE as the adaptive layer in education, taking up Government policies to deal with issues arising in both the compulsory sector and higher education and in these processes, potentially becoming responsive to and leading Government policy, changing learner needs/interests and employer needs.

What we discovered in the revelatory Digital Practitioner Research was that FE lecturers were using personal technologies such as smart phones and apps and were collaboratively developing fresh learning paths. The curiosity of the individual Digital Practitioner was producing new modes of learning using everyday technology devices. Geoff Rebbeck produced a 7-level framing of these new skills that could be used to re-invent the staff development of FE staff, moving away from computer skills training to developing the craft professionalism of teachers.

In developing these ideas into a book, we looked at the work of others and a wide range of issues concerning learning in all sectors and contexts. One key idea particularly stood out for us, Daniel Kahneman in his book Thinking Fast and Slow identifies that we have two modes of thinking. Fast thinking is immediately responsive and gives answers quickly almost without thinking. Slow thinking considers questions more reflectively and is concerned with both framing the answer and providing an answer. Fred's front-loaded "brokering" technique is concerned with first taking his learners through a slow-thinking reflective phase before enabling them to get productive and complete their courses using fast thinking

If we want to develop a Future FE Pedagogy perhaps it could be built around combining these elements, with Digital Practitioners who are creating "artfully-crafted, student-centred, learning experiences" that are designed to stimulate both slow thinking "how do we frame the problem?" and fast thinking "how do we solve the problem" so co-creating learning with their students, helping to build provision that is more closely responsive to context and helping to frame policy, when top-down policy over the last ten years such as college mergers, have failed to make any impact on provision. In developing new pedagogies. For example, Popov D and Cattoretti G (2019) "*The impact of college mergers in Further Education"*, Department for Education, London, states,

"We find no strong statistical evidence of college mergers leading to an improvement or deterioration of college performance on average. That is, we find that on average the effect of merging is statistically indistinguishable from zero. This finding is robust to the

different model specifications we have explored and applies to all financial and nonfinancial outcomes we have examined." (p 42)

We need to be aware of the affordances of digital technologies and their potential contribution to learning and teaching, especially in post-compulsory education. Our book was written to set out our theoretical models e.g. "The Emergent Learning Model", developed from our research and experience (Part 1), while illustrating these ideas (Part 2) through examples of projects and practice drawn from the UK and other parts of the world and then by pointing to ideas and resources, which we will add to in the Learn Teach 21 and Architecture of Participation Blogs as a growing resource for the future.

In January the DfE produced a White Paper "Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth", which sets out the Government's direction for the further education and skills sector, which intends, over the period between now and 2030 to reinforce employer control and influence over sector providers and the post-compulsory curriculum outside universities, while creating higher level vocational qualifications, reforming teacher education and extending the reach of "online" and "remote" learning, ostensibly drawing on the experience of colleges during the Covid pandemic.

We believe that the White Paper raises many questions we have already addressed in the book and that the book is pertinent to the discussions initiated by the White Paper. To pick up the debate we are producing a comprehensive review of the White Paper in our blog Architecture of Participation and both engaging with and encouraging discussion on the White Paper as the policy and its implementation are carried forward.

Moving a class online

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When moving a course online, it may be helpful to think look at the process from a number of viewpoints; one of these is channels of communication. As in the classroom, the tutor needs to communicate with students and vice-versa, and students need to communicate with each other. One approach to instructional design is considering how each of these is managed.

Whichever is the Virtual Learning Environment, a tutor communicating organisation or content, or adding input to ongoing activity, has similar options: announcements, moderation of discussion, mini video progress reviews, basic text-based content. All have cultural and efficiency tradeoffs that make them more or less appropriate to different purposes. Providing formal feedback on student work is a part of any course, but could that feedback take a different format to counter a communication imbalance elsewhere?

How will students communicate with each other? Options once again include discussion forums, as well as problem-based learning or case study discussion in groups, or more formally organised peer review. Maybe a student or students can lead or partner in delivering live sessions or webinars. It may be important to compensate for students' diminished ability to compare their progress with the rest of the class; we can set up anonymous polling of questions in real-time sessions to allow them to compare their understanding with peers. If self-marking Tests are set up in the VLE, post-deadline feedback on the range of marks across the class as a whole might be beneficial.

Finally, how will students communicate or raise concerns with the tutor? Often the default is email, but bear in mind that the culture of email is to invite and expect a response.

Where this is not appropriate or efficient, web-based feedback needs to be enabled and encouraged from the outset; it is harder to change direction mid-course.

Another useful and easily understood frame of reference for the process of moving materials online is the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Framework developed in the 1990s. The aim of UDL is to acknowledge diverse learning styles, and it often comes up in discussion around accessibility and inclusivity. The principles of the UDL are broadly threefold. Firstly, represent learning content in different ways: this might be as simple as an illustrative image to support a block of text. Secondly, allow students to demonstrate knowledge in different ways: a student with dyslexia might prefer to create a video rather than write an essay for example. Thirdly, offer different options to engage with learning content: apply it, test it more formally, explain it to others, and so on.

The top-level design of an online course will reflect its components, but organisation and clear instructions are always paramount; a situation where a student cannot find a resource or misunderstands an instruction is more perilous where informal face-to-face discussion is not possible. To minimise that risk, being concise is crucial; less is often more, and tutors need to review content actively looking for potential confusion or ambiguity. A meaningful and consistent structure, and a logical breakdown of content into a clearly labelled hierarchy of manageable and delineated resources, also ensures students feel like they're making progress, and are able to easily pick up where they left off.

The Reality of FE TEL Post-Covid-19: Thoughts from the bike by an FE Teacher Educator

Jamie Heywood

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What will Covid-19 mean for TEL in our beloved FE sector? Well the truth is, no one really knows. This is a completely unprecedented, extraordinary, and unparalleled situation. As an FE teacher educator, I am particularly curious on what digital pedagogy will look like when our Colleges reopen, our staff rooms are full, and our students are back in the F2F classroom (however long that may be). Digital pedagogy can be defined as the approach and method of digital elements to change ways of delivering teaching and learning. It is more than just the use of digital technologies and rather a more encompassing approach in how teaching practice is shaped, influenced and approached using digital elements.

One personal benefit that has come from the lockdown is the chance to get out on my road bike more and this is often the time I reflect and consider what TEL will look like. Strangely, cycling and using TEL actually have some similarities: the inexperienced need some support at first, the more you do it, the better (and faster) you get, and both help keep the world green. Please forgive me for using a couple of cycling analogies here!

Personal Bests

Many educators have been thrust into an unknown reality, and after the initial pandemonium, have become dependent on TEL. Like riding without stabilisers for the first time, this can be daunting at first (and can result in a few falls) but as ever, the resilient FE workforce, can adapt and thrive. The SAMR model provides a four stage TEL framework from Substitution (TEL acting as a direct substitute, with no functional change) to Redefinition (TEL allowing for the creation of new tasks, previously inconceivable) (Figure 1). Where many practitioners pre-Covid may have defaulted to the substitution stage, I like to believe we have seen examples of redefining learning as a result from having to change gear, trying something new and becoming more confident.

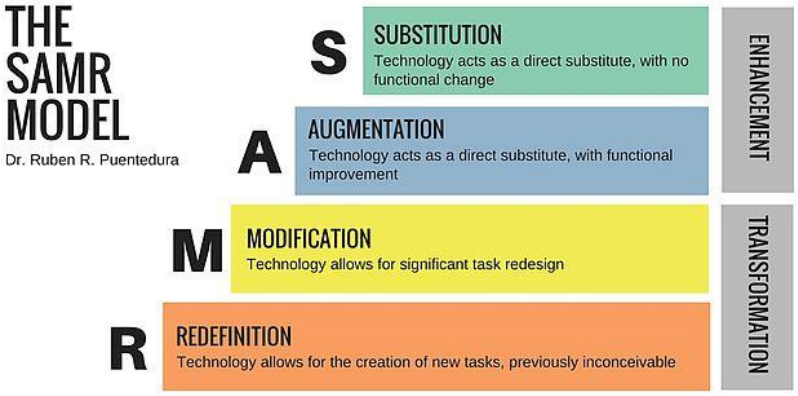

Figure 1: The SAMR Model

In cycling, riding with others is easier as you can share the workload, cover further distance, and learn from others and it is no different when in education. Promoting group cohesion and opportunities for collaboration is something we emphasise in our teacher training courses but most teachers struggle to generate the same dynamic on their VLEs. Moving from blended learning to interactive blended learning is a long-needed change, where practitioners create a bustling VLE with opportunities for connectivity, not just a content repository. I have experienced teachers harnessing this in innovative ways, for example using discussion boards to enable reflection and creating online platforms for group work and believe this pedagogical change has been accelerated.

Flat Tyres

Unfortunately, these are inevitable along the journey. Some teachers have seemed less reluctant to embrace change and have regressed back to didactic teaching through tyring (sorry) lecture-style remote delivery. It seems peculiar to me that some teachers would never dream of delivering a full two-hour lecture in a F2F classroom, as it would not be reasonable to expect a learner's attention span to last that long, but in contrast, are content with adopting this approach for online delivery.

Being in a sector which experiences change in policy perpetually, the FE workforce have become accustomed to adapting. Another concern is that some teachers will regress exactly to before and will not be willing to go through further change. They may not have embraced TEL and will go back to riding with stabilisers.

There are also potential potholes relating to security and infrastructure which may struggle to cope with the increased demand.

Finish Line

We will finish with a final important comparison. A saying in cycling is “no matter how slow you go, you are still lapping everybody on the sofa”. We know that TEL is crucial for preparing students for 21st century work and has a myriad of benefits. I applaud those teachers, making positive change, trying new approaches, being innovative, and going out of their comfort zone, however small it is at first. We will see whether the sector builds upon these foundations or if College’s put the brakes on TEL. Ultimately, we hope that post Covid-19 brings us more personal bests than flat tyres.

This piece was written in July 2020.

An open letter to the Secretary of State for Education: preparing FES teachers and trainers to 'teach well' in a digital world

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Abbreviations/explanation of key terms

CPD Continuous Professional Development

CTE Continuing teacher education, e.g. master's and doctoral level study

FE Further education (similar to MBOs in the Netherlands)

FEITE Further education-based teacher education

FELTAG Further Education Learning and Technology Action Group. (This sector group was set up in January 2013 by Matthew Hancock, who was then Minister of State for Skills and Enterprise in BIS, to make practical recommendations aimed at ensuring the effective use of digital technology in learning, teaching and assessment in Further Education and Skills).

FES Further Education and Skills sector. (This includes FE colleges, adult and community learning; work-based learning; sixth-form colleges; public services training; and offender learning providers).

NC National Curriculum

TEL Technology Enabled / Enhanced Learning

TLA Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Trainees The English equivalent of student teachers

Trainers These are instructors and tutors, generally teaching vocational subjects, and they are normally paid less than teachers/lecturers

YHAFE Yorkshire and Humberside Association for Further Education (an organisation that supported subject specialism prior to Incorporation in 1993).

Dear Secretary of State,

The FES's emergency stop and sharp turn into 'online' teaching, what a colleague calls the 'online turn', in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, raises important questions about the

extent to which teacher education providers have adequately prepared previous and current trainees for this significant change in pedagogy. I want to set out what constitutes effective FEITE in a digital world, and how your government can realise and exceed FELTAG's ambitions for FEITE.

Three initial points:

1. How we educate trainees to teach both reflects social values and contains a political message about FES teaching as a profession.
2. Research suggests school teachers take between 8-23 years to reach peak effectiveness, though their trajectory depends on the quality of CPD and their engagement with it after completing their ITE. FES's teachers and trainers probably take longer because of dual professionalism and insufficient subject specialist pedagogy and inconsistent mentoring within FEITE. This is not FES's fault. It's a result of the sector's complexity and the in-built, structural inequality towards it which means it is treated less favourably, in terms of funding, than the schools' and university sectors.
3. What we learn from living in COVID-19 time and how we respond to it will determine the quality of education for FES's future students and their teachers' and trainers' ITE.

Teachers' know-how for a digital world

Teachers and trainers need six types of knowledge to 'teach well' in a digital world. Here, I'm using 'teach well' to denote a morally-informed teacher who sees teaching as a virtuous profession that moves beyond the performative, technical and standardised model favoured by some. As such, they need to know:

1. Their students (who they are, what motivates them and how they learn in a digital world).
2. Their subject (its curriculum, its 'big ideas' and threshold concepts).
3. How to teach their subject.
4. How technology works
5. How to 'go on'. Bob Harrison observes that effective 'online' teaching requires teachers to know-how to communicate, collaborate, create, co-construct, join and participate in professional learning networks and contextualise this into their practice.
6. The virtues underpinning teaching 'well'.

Learning to teach: an initiation into the practice of teaching: its 'sayings, doings, and relatings'.

Stephen Kemmis' team of Australian researchers argue that teaching as a practice consists of teachers' ideas, audible in their 'sayings', their activities, visible in their 'doings', and how they work with their students, visible and audible in their 'relatings'. As a teacher educator, I am interested in how we enable trainees to develop their personal pedagogies of 'sayings, doings, and relatings' that enable them to 'teach well'.

Unlike schools-based ITE, most of FEITE is not subject specific and so its mentors, all of whom, unlike those in schools, are volunteers, have a crucial role in modelling to trainees how to teach their subject whilst simultaneously demonstrating the professional behaviours associated with that subject. It is the explicit modelling of practice by teacher educators and by mentors that show trainees the 'sayings, doings, and relatings' of their subject, enabling them to act as role models to their own students.

Three factors stifling FEITE

We are living in 'impatient times'. This creates and stores up problems for governments, FES's leaders, its teacher educators and for their trainees. These include:

1. Excessive scrutiny of new teachers and trainers by managers and by Ofsted. This creates a highly pressurised, toxic climate that contributes to teacher burnout.
2. Compared with other countries, England's FEITE curriculum is overly prescribed, congested, and slow to adapt. It tries to cover everything a teacher needs to know for a career in teaching. For example, developing trainees' capacity as researchers within their FEITE is an idea too far, in my opinion. And it is unclear how many trainees have demonstrated their ability to teach 'online' within their FEITE.
3. The CPD of teacher educators and mentors has been largely neglected since 2010 by government, FES's professional associations and employers. It has been estimated that there are over 200 'subjects' taught in large, general FE colleges cf. schools 14 NC subjects . FEITE can only be as good as the teacher educators teaching it and the mentors supporting subject specialist pedagogy.

A vision for FEITE in COVID-19 time

Nine things I have learned from COVID-19 and what it means for FEITE:

- There must be real recognition of the value of FES's teachers and trainers. This requires well-resourced and appropriately paced ITE, CTE and CPD that sustains

their enthusiasm for their practice so they stay in the profession and reach peak practice.

- The complexity of FE and its widening participation agenda means TLA is likely to be a blend of face to face and online learning. FEITE's teacher educators and mentors need to effortlessly and confidently model this to trainees.
- Sustainability and digital pedagogy need to be woven into the FEITE curriculum.
- FES's trainees, teacher educators and mentors need access to their own high quality learning technologies, which are supported by reliable IT systems and domestic broadband.
- Subject specialist pedagogy must be the beating heart of teacher development. We need to re-establish subject-based associations like YHAFE.
- With appropriate resourcing, and collaboration with the gaming industry, virtual/augmented reality could be used to teach trainees how to 'teach well'. For example, they could learn how to manage classroom behaviour through a series of escalating and changing simulations.
- A research-rich FE would inform teacher educators', mentors' and their trainees' TEL-based pedagogy.
- Trainees need to be research and digitally literate, i.e. they should be able to critically evaluate the research on TLA and synthesise this with what they know about the affordances of 'online' teaching, different platforms and software, and privacy issues to inform their TEL pedagogy.
- We need to be patient, taking a long-term view of teacher and trainer development.

The challenge for FEITE's stakeholders is to change it for the better. Systemic and cultural change takes time and a measure of patience. Nonetheless, the time to start that process is now.

Yours, David

Conclusion

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I have very few photographs from my childhood. Although my parents owned a camera, they only took photos to record special occasions and a roll of film could last a year before being developed. Teaching was delivered in a very didactical manner to the class, with little differentiation and interaction. Outside of the classroom, access to information was limited to physical publications and media such as radio, television, and cinema.

Advances in technologies have transformed the world we live in; moments are constantly being captured and instantly shared with anyone we choose, anywhere in the world.

We are connected.

We also have at our fingertips answers to questions no printed encyclopaedia would have been able to respond to with such breadth and immediacy. Information is overwhelmingly abundant and exponentially growing.

I recently played with "*Reface*"[1], an app that allows the user to swap faces digitally to "*be*" someone else, using photos or videos. Similar apps exist for voices so that false dialogue can be created. Fake "*news*" is becoming easy to produce and accessible to everyone. Recognising fake from true data is going to become increasingly challenging.

The recent Covid-19 crisis removed us from our comfortable learning context and forced us to explore new teaching and learning approaches facilitated by digital. 2020, while being challenging, was a learning and collaborative year. We all discovered new ways to interact virtually, whether with people or content. We learned by doing, trying things out. Some worked, some did not, but what mattered was that we kept an open mind, we tried new things, we learned from our mistakes[2] and shared what we did well. Our mindset shifted to that of explorers and collaborators.

With it came the realisation that "*technologies provide powerful ways of supporting knowledge sequencing, layering and scaffolding including 'spaced learning'*"[3]. We discovered a new vocabulary for these new teaching approaches, such as "hybrid teaching" and "synchronous/asynchronous learning". The more asynchronous learning can be "delivered with activities accompanied with clear instructions and structured in a logical manner"[4], "the more time is freed up for synchronous interventions to focus on developing higher level skills & mentoring individual understanding, performance and

[1] **App Store.** 2021. *Reface: face swap videos*. [online] Available at: https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/reface-face-swap-videos/id1488782587 [Accessed 6 April 2021].
[2] **Compton, M.,** 2021. Free, easy and fit for purpose TEL; lessons learned the hard way by a non-IT whizz.
[3] **Liogier, V.,** 2021. Does EdTech have a role in Ofsted's new framework?. [online] TES. Available at: https://www.tes.com/news/does-edtech-have-role-ofsteds-new-framework [Accessed 6 April 2021].
[4] **Cheseldine**, 2021. Moving a Course Online.

progress".[5] Flipped learning makes the best of the digital world for knowledge acquisition and tutor-based classes for adding experience and application.[6] The approach gives learners the chance to choose the time, pace and place to interact with the activity content and collaborate with peers, while the wide range of digital accessible functionalities, such as close captions, immersive text, translator, etc., support their individual just in time needs.

There is no doubt that the Internet facilitates a *"shift from thinking about teaching as providing information to thinking of learning and creating learning environments. This in turn creates a relationship shift between teachers and learners as the teacher, while remaining the subject expert, is no longer the sole information holder and promotes an evolution toward inquiry-based learning and toward the development of a learner-centred environment."*[7] "*We see learning as a co-creation process between learner and teacher*."[8]

However, "*the cultivation of learning is not only 'a cognitive activity'*" explains Illeris (2010) it is also "*an emotional and social activity*"[9] and while communication, collaboration and teamwork can be enhanced online; effective learning engagement requires teachers and their learners to build a sense of community. To be fair this is far more difficult to achieve remotely. MOOCs fail to retain 94% of the registered (non-paying) learners for this very reason[10]. The physical classroom and education provider settings remain critical in fostering the learners' sense of belonging. Aristotle (350 B.C.E) would agree: "*Man is by nature a social animal*" and J. Dewey (1916) defines education as a "*social process*"[11].

"*Educators, pedagogues and practitioners need to be gardeners rather than carpenters*." explains Alison Gopnik (2017)[12], our role is not only to make knowledge and skills stick but most importantly to nurture the development of independent thinkers and support them in making sense of the world. "*With digital devices now constantly in our hands, our extended-self could become permanent*"[13]

The 4th industrial revolution will displace skills. Machine learning or artificial intelligence (AI) is already pervading our daily lives and soon activities in every walk of life will be

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[5] **Enhance Digital Teaching Platform.** 2021. Asynchronous teaching and learning. [online] Available at: https://enhance.etfoundation.co.uk/modules/2151/asynchronous-teaching- and-learning [Accessed 6 April 2021].

[6] **Enhance Digital Teaching Platform**. 2021. The Flipped Classroom. [online] Available at: https://enhance.etfoundation.co.uk/modules/1003/the-flipped-classroom [Accessed 6 April 2021].

[7] *"I was thinking about the textbook – I guess in the beginning, I thought the textbook was all I needed to teach them. But, I've come to find out or realize that it's not all that I need. And, I don't want to shoot myself in the foot, but if the year was longer, I could do a lot more with them in terms of making them do research. Finding out information about different things. As opposed to just trying to give them this surface things that you get out of the textbook."* [online] Available at: **Orrill, C.,** 2000. Building Learner-Centered Classrooms: A Professional Development Framework for Supporting Critical Thinking. [online] Available at: https://goo.gl/5V12P5 [Accessed 6 April 2021].

[8] **Ecclesfield, N. and Garnett, F.,** 2021. *Learn Teach 21*. [online] Learn Teach 21. Available at: https://learnteach21.wordpress.com [Accessed 6 April 2021].

[9] **Illeris, K**., 2010. Contemporary theories of learning. International Journal of Lifelong Education, pp.396-406.

[10] **Insidehighered.com**. 2021. Study offers data to show MOOCs didn't achieve their goals | Inside Higher Ed. [online] Available at: https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/01/16/study-offers-data-show-moocs-didnt-achieve-their-goals [Accessed 6 April 2021].

[11] **Dewey, J.,** 1916. Democracy and Education. An introduction to the philosophy of education (1966 edn.). New York: Free Press.

[12] **Gopnik, A.,** 2017. The Gardener and the Carpenter. St Martins Pr.

[13] **Lawton, G.,** 2020. Your Extended Self. New Scientist, p.42.

replaced by AI or by robots created for specialised tasks. Balfour Beatty (2017) is predicting human-free construction sites by 2050[14] while Daniel Susskind (2020) forecasts our inexorable evolution, to "*A World Without Work*"[15].

Change is our constant while upskilling and reskilling our journey ahead.[16] *"The object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth"* J. Dewey (1916).

If this is the case, why would we return to redundant pedagogic approaches that are not harnessing the powers of the tools that are now at our disposal? Habit, comfort, modelling are our constant enemies. We tend to teach the way we were taught and the way we have taught in the past, assuming learners will be engaged in the way we once were. The old techniques may work for knowledge and skills to stick enough to pass an examination, but does it prepare our learners to live, work and study in a digital world?[17] "*If nothing else technologies force us to re-evaluate the classroom as an environment and the relationships within it*."[18]

In a recent session, D. Russell (2021) asked ETF colleagues where teachers and trainers get their fundamental beliefs about education. While we discussed several sources, such as the intrinsic (values, motivations, etc…) and extrinsic (social, beliefs, etc…), we agreed that initial teacher training (ITE), CPD and peer support were the most valuable.

Are the systems in place to really support us in redefining our pedagogic approaches? D. Powell (2021) claims the CPD of FE teacher educators and mentors has been largely neglected because of lack of funding and adds that "*FE ITE can only be as good as the teacher educators teaching it and the mentors supporting subject specialist pedagogy*". It is unclear whether most FE teachers' core knowledge, understanding and skills in "digital" are up to date, but all of us should be proactive with our personal development. M. O'Leary (2020) proposes "*a teacher-centred model of observation where the fundamental work takes place in the pre and post-session conversations that form the foundation of the 'unseen observation' cycle*", an approach that is owned by practitioners through critical reflection and peer support. After all, "*the true roots of further education, lie with the intrinsic human desire for community and self-improvement*." B. Harrison (2021) It is time to build our professional learning networks (PLNs). I am looking forward to reading the findings from M. Gordon's and J. Calvert's OTLA research project (2021) as well as the reflections from fellow educators on EdTechSwap[19] and other FE communities.[20]

Teaching is becoming a process of learning. *"Understanding the technology is important but realising the full educational potential of virtual learning is primarily a question of*

[14] **Balfour Beatty plc.,** 2021. Balfour Beatty predicts a human free construction site with the launch of its latest paper "Innovation 2050: A Digital Future for the Infrastructure industry". [online] Available at: https://www.balfourbeatty.com/news/balfour-beatty-predicts-a-human-free-construction-site-with-the-launch-of-its-latest-paper-innovation-2050-a-digital-future-for-the-infrastructure-industry/ [Accessed 6 April 2021]. (2017)

[15] **Susskind, D.,** 2021. A World Without Work. [online] Penguin.co.uk. Available at: https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/306/306864/a-world-without-work/9780141986807.html [Accessed 6 April 2021].

[16] **Duckett, I**., 2021, Ways of Engaging: some approaches to developing learning skills.

[17] **Wheywood, J**., 2021, The Reality of FE TEL Post-Covid-19: Thoughts from the bike by an FE Teacher Educator.

[18] **Scott, H.,** 2021, The Proverbs of TEL.

[19] **Enhance Digital Teaching Platform**. 2021. Awarded Practice. [online] Available at: https://enhance.etfoundation.co.uk/awardedpractice/ [Accessed 6 April 2021].

[20] **#joyFE #AmplifyFE #ukfechat #LoveFE**

pedagogy. As we consider the future of learning, teaching needs to take centre stage." E. Fairplay (2021)

For the FE sector to make the most of the many teaching and learning opportunities offered by the digital world, it is vital to put in place the investment and resources to sustain blended learning pedagogic approaches, so that every learner, teacher, and teacher trainer have the skills, tools, and connectivity they need to become 21st century lifelong learning digital citizens.

So, let's not go back to 'normal', let's connect – the future of FE pedagogy is blended!