



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

Centre for
Educational Development



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REFLECTIONS

Editorial

It is funny how developments in technology shape so much of our teaching and learning. Jason Miles-Campbell's article about the current JISC services that we access at Queen's puts in context our use of technologies to support pedagogies. This is evidenced within Queen's. Take, for example, Gemma Carney's thoughtful article on her module around an ageing world. She talks about how she, and a colleague, Leonie Hannan, have tackled the assumptions around older people that are ubiquitous on social media. It is that ability to critically engage and question that is one of the skills so important to develop in our students.

Indeed, technology impacts upon us all in the University. Norma Menabney and Dr Kath Stevenson focus on the support required by students who are facing one of life's many liminal moments; that move from compulsory education into the tertiary sector. It can be easy to forget that this transition is a rite of passage for many and one that has challenges. The two authors discuss the transition skills online course that is aimed at Year 13 and 14 students. One advantage is that students (and staff) can access this course at their point of need. This flexibility of access is vital at a time when students are often getting used to a more independent life, both academically as well as personally.

This approach becomes more pertinent when you take into consideration the developments around widening participation. The new Widening Participation Strategy was approved in June 2019 and focuses on what we intend to do, as a University, for those most able, but least likely, to participate in Higher Education. Initiatives such as the transition skills course can help to ensure that such students are supported once they are at Queen's. The key actions for 2019-2020 in the area of Widening Participation are included in this edition of *Reflections*.

It is also of interest in this digital age to consider how different disciplines harness the opportunities that technological infrastructures afford. Dr David Cutting discusses how he has created an approach to provide real-time feedback to a large cohort of students working on a project in EEECS. As David notes himself, this is possible through working in a discipline with clearly defined solutions that can be automatically marked. In the Faculty of AHSS, Dr Marek Martyniszyn talks about the use of OneNote with students in Law. A different approach but also created through a consideration of the specific needs of learners in a discipline area.

I think that this reflects the importance of student-facing staff as our pedagogic champions, whether it be through digital approaches or otherwise. In the middle pages of this edition we have shared information about our Teaching Awards recipients in 2018/19. The scheme is now open for 2019/20 so please consider applying.

Within the Centre for Educational Development (CED) we are keen to ensure that all this pedagogic development does not go unnoticed. Rather that it is celebrated and formalised. We are working hard to ensure that there are appropriate qualifications for all student-facing staff throughout their professional careers. We work to support not just academic staff but others such as Librarians and Technicians to formalise their work. Karen Fraser outlines some of these opportunities within. In this edition we are focusing on the Queen's Merit Award, an internal process that awards Associate Fellowship, Fellowship and Senior Fellowship of Advance HE. Watch out for further news, as we are currently accrediting six SEDA courses aimed at those leading programmes or specific areas of pedagogic development. Please also note that our QUB annual learning and teaching conference in 2020 is on the 8th April and focuses on the theme of Opportunities and Challenges of Internationalisation of Higher Education. There are several sub-themes to this conference and we will consider a range of issues from supporting international students to that thorny issue of how we might 'decolonise' the curriculum. If you would like to get involved, please contact CED at ced@qub.ac.uk.

Claire Dewhirst
Editor of *Reflections*



Insights and Discovery – two important steps in getting the most from digital

Jason Miles-Campbell, Head of Jisc Northern Ireland

Hopefully you'll have heard of Jisc, but if not, we're your not-for-profit shared service, providing you with digital solutions such as secure, resilient internet connectivity and sector deals for digital resources. We know that digital technology can transform the student experience and empower impactful research, and we're always looking to help our member institutions, like Queen's, make the most of digital opportunities.

It's all very well having modern technology tools available, but how does a university ensure that its investment in digital systems is having the right impact? What do students and staff think of their online experience using university systems? What knowledge and skills are needed to ensure Queen's is a leading digitally-enabled university?

Jisc has recently developed two tools to help answer these questions.

First, our **digital experience insights surveys** provide powerful data on how students and staff are using the technology on offer. This evidence can then be used to inform digital strategies and operational decisions about the digital environment, ensuring resources are invested effectively. The student survey is currently open for Queen's students to respond, with the value of the insights to be gained dependent on number of completions.

Second, our **building digital capability service** provides strategic guidance and a discovery tool that will let staff (and students) evaluate competence and confidence in appropriate digital skills. It allows a university to benchmark



(anonymously) the level of those skills across the institution. This is currently being used by Queen's students, and its underlying skills framework already helps inform current staff development.

Although Queen's specific data isn't yet available, you might want to think about the following UK-wide findings from across UK higher education from last year, based on 14,525 students from 19 universities, covering four important themes:

Insights and Discovery – two important steps in getting the most from digital (*continued*)

Jason Miles-Campbell, Head of Jisc Northern Ireland

Student insights theme one: the digital lives of learners

- Does your teaching practice assist the 85% of students who used digital tools to access lecture notes and recorded lectures on a weekly basis and the 72% who search for additional resources not recommended by their lecturers?
- Do you help students make effective use of personally-owned devices to support their studies with 93% owning a laptop, 86% a smartphone and 33% a tablet? And how do you avoid excluding those who don't own a device?
- What support do you give to the 19% of students who said assistive technologies are vital for their learning needs or say that they choose to use them?

Student insights theme two: digital in the institution

- The top issue for students was timely access to lecture recordings – is this

something you provide? If not, do your students understand why?

- What can be done to improve upon the fact that only 54% of students said their university protects their data privacy, and only 43% of students agreed that their university helps them to stay safe online? What further steps need to be taken to improve confidence in online privacy and safety?

Student insights theme three: digital at course level

- The fact that only 70% of students felt that digital skills are important for their chosen careers might mean students aren't appreciating the pace of change in the professional work environment for many. Strikingly, only 42% felt that their course prepares them for the digital workplace.
- Only 29% of students said they were told what digital skills they would need before their course started, with only 37% agreeing that they had regular opportunities to review and update their digital skills.

- Whilst digital collaboration in the workplace grows, 24% of students stated they never work online with others as part of their course.

Student insights theme four: student attitudes to digital

- Digital good news: when students used digital technologies as part of their course: 75% felt more independent, 76% fitted learning into life more easily, 69% understood things better, and 68% enjoyed learning more.
- In considering how learning is structured, can you take account of students preferring a mixture of individual and group work (54%), whilst accommodating those who prefer to learn on their own (43%)?
- Whilst bring-your-own-device is increasing, 43% of students would have liked there to be more computers in computer rooms. 32% would have liked more laptops and tablets to be available in class. Students were happy for mobile devices to be used in class – 48% for use at any time and 47% only for class activities.
- In terms of useful digital practices, students asked for more practice questions online (35%), course related videos (23%), references and readings (20%), interactive polls/quizzes in class (15%), and time to work online with other students (8%).

Staff digital insights – technology in teaching and learning

Of course, the **digital experience of staff** matters too. To pick some highlights from our recently released report on last year's survey (with 3,485 staff across 26 universities responding), two particular areas are clear.



First, some important messages were heard about the UK higher education digital environment:

- Teaching staff said they rely most on their teaching colleagues (33%), online videos and resources (32%) and support staff (31%).
- 15% of teaching staff said they use assistive technologies in their role but 40% of these say they are not provided with any support in their use.
- What changes to the classroom and campus will improve upon a mere 29% of teaching staff agreeing that teaching spaces were well designed for technology use?
- The number of teaching staff who said they carry out digital teaching activities on a weekly basis is low: 11% use live polling or quizzing, 24% create digital learning materials, and 20% give personalised digital feedback. However, these are activities students would like more often.

Second, the staff survey analysis showed important gaps in relation to staff development across UK HE:

- A low number of teaching staff engaged in digital development practices beyond searching online for materials: 11% discussed teaching online with peers, 13% read up on issues in digital education, and 17% developed digital teaching skills
- 62% of teaching staff would have liked digital technologies to be used more in their teaching practice, but only 13% of teaching staff said they had time and support to innovate, and only 9% agreed they received reward or recognition for developing the digital aspects of their role.
- 34% of teaching staff agreed that they had regular opportunities to develop their digital skills, and only 27% agreed they received guidance about the digital skills they were expected to have.

Building Digital Capability

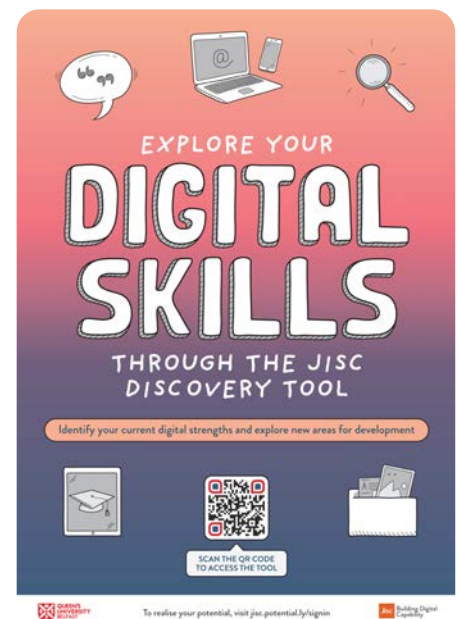
So, how do you develop the digital skills needed to make the most of the opportunities available? Queen's is developing the organisational models and tools to move towards being a digitally-capable organisation. It is making use of Jisc's role-specific digital skills frameworks, and allowing students access to the discovery tool in order to generate a personalised report suggesting next steps and links to free resources that can help them develop further, and this comes with the ability for Queen's to add its own training resources. At an institutional level, data dashboards provide decision-makers with anonymised views of discovery tool completion rates and capability ratings, allowing the resources, training and support to be tailored to need.

It is an empowering first step for students to reflect on their digital capabilities. It is self-assessment based, using a series of reflective questions that relate to Jisc's nationally-recognised building digital capabilities framework, developed with relevant sector bodies and users.

To quote an Academic Engagement Manager at another university, the discovery tool *"has been a fantastic resource to help raise the profile of digital capabilities and dispel some of the anxieties around this. This is helping us to win hearts and minds and create an openness that will inform a considered programme of support that aligns to broader personal, team and organisational objectives."*

So, get digitally engaged! **Step one**, play your part in promoting completion of the student digital insight survey, to make sure Queen's digital strategy is informed by student digital experience perception; and **step two**, set time aside to look at Jisc's digital capability tools and materials, to make sure you and your students are ready for tomorrow's digital world.

If you want to use the Digital Discovery Tool with your students, or find out



more about the Digital Experience Insights Survey at Queen's, please email digitalinsights@qub.ac.uk. You can also visit the Digital Skills and Discovery Blog <https://blogs.qub.ac.uk/digitaldiscovery/>.

Find out more about Jisc and these services:

- Jisc at www.jisc.ac.uk
- Digital Experience Insights at digitalinsights.jisc.ac.uk
- Building Digital Capability at digitalcapability.jisc.ac.uk

And if there's anything else you'd like to know about Jisc and its offer, Noel McDaid, your Jisc account manager, is on hand: www.jisc.ac.uk/staff/noel-mcdaid

From the Large to the Small: an introduction to some of my teaching approaches for differently scaled cohorts

By Dr David Cutting, School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

I remember clearly my first four hundred plus lecture. Standing at the front of the amphitheatre that is David Kier OG/115, patting myself on the back that it had taken less than an hour to navigate that maze and find the room, the doors opened and what seemed like a never-ending wave of students poured in, and in, and in. There were so many of them some had to actually almost sit at the front. This was one extreme of my year, as the sole lecturer on such a large module, and at the other end of that scale was working one-on-one with project students from Bachelors or Masters programmes. Two very different cohort sizes clearly needing two very different approaches.

In this piece, I talk about two approaches I have taken to address these different needs, trying to maximise my effectiveness where possible to enhance the student experience.

Approach the first: automate where possible (make our soon-to-be computer overlords do it for us)

In my opinion, after about forty or fifty students the actual lecturing doesn't change much. With small groups we can do more interaction, but with larger cohorts it's all much the same at whatever scale. What does become a major challenge with large cohorts is all the "other stuff" by which I mean the administration, the marking, and, increasingly, the meaningful feedback. Clearly feedback is useful, important, essential to the learning journey, and needs to be provided in a timely and appropriate manner to "feed forward" informing future learning. I agree with all of this in theory but when faced with a sea of eager students each proffering their solutions, the simple calculation of time required times submissions equals my evenings and weekends from now to the distant future, so it can seem like a daunting prospect to deliver.

Being a STEM subject with a clearly defined solution to student work offered the possibility that submissions could be automatically marked, rather than manually marked. Let me be clear, I'm no fan of marking and especially

marking at scale, but beyond my personal preference, this approach offered other advantages such as consistency and better turnaround times. So, I set about building an automated marking system where I took a perfect project solution and analysed it for thousands of points of accuracy, weighting different aspects appropriately according to their importance. With the final submission marking sorted, I returned to the thorny issue of ongoing feedback, including that of progress towards their projects. Here, I had the unheard of "second good idea in 12 months" – I had a full marking setup for their projects, why not let the students have some access to that as useful feedback?

To get this underway, I identified a subset of the marking criteria which offered a reasonable representation of the type of things tested throughout the different aspects of the project. With these identified I implemented a web-based system, the Automated Marking Engine for You (AMEY) to which students could access and upload their in-progress projects. AMEY would assess their work-to-date against available criteria and provide a detailed report with numerical scores against many elements. The most common type of errors, such as incorrect formatting or typos, were quickly identified and highlighted along with the potential cause. Every submission was given a unique identifier that the student could use to review their report at any time, bring to a support session or just email through to ask for my feedback. With



the identifier I could see all the details of their submission and the full report. Accordingly, discussions were more productive than the all too common "I had an error", "What did it say?", "I can't remember".

Almost immediately I found that the volume of general queries was much reduced, especially the very large number of low-level easily made errors, such as naming, which were specially highlighted by AMEY. In student submissions one can see two distinct, albeit not equally sized, groups of those who started work early on their project and those who, for want of a better phrase, did not. Unsurprisingly, submissions to AMEY peaked in the days (especially the last day) before submission. An added benefit was my ability to see in real time the volume (and breadth through the cohort) of submissions to get a good feel for how students were progressing overall towards submission.

Not only was the ultimate marked performance generally good for the cohort but there was a distinct lack of the sort of simple yet costly errors normally seen when people haven't read the project brief to sufficient (or sometimes... any) depth. Student feedback was also extremely positive for both the years where AMEY was provided, with one comment proposing marriage to AMEY. I passed this on

but AMEY's cold cyborg heart wasn't interested in anything except "the inevitable demise of the meatbag race called humans".

The application of such tools is naturally very limited. Full automated marking of everything including essays and reports remains a dream and far from reality. This trial project though has offered useful insight into providing automated feedback and how support tools could effectively be used to pick up common minor errors, even if not provide substantive comments in most domains.

This approach has formed the basis of some conference and workshop publications and if anyone would like to discuss in any more detail about automated marking support please get in touch.

Approach the second: generating real-world projects can be good for all

In our School (EEECS), we spend not inconsiderable time specifying projects for students, often final year undergraduate or masters dissertations. One of the goals of these projects is to make them as real as possible, to give some taste of what it can be like to work in industry. Actual industrial projects with a "live brief" from an external partner are, therefore, highly sought after and can lead to significant benefits for both the student and the external partner. From an academic perspective, this also means the partner is setting the problem and can provide input during the project which is most welcome and can free up some time.

Ten years ago, in a fit of enthusiasm and good will, I packed my bags and headed off to Namibia with Voluntary Service Overseas. For the next few years I made a general nuisance of myself doing all sorts of bits and bobs mostly with computers. After returning to the UK and to study, I was more aware of the transformational power that technological solutions within the



international development context can have.

The current situation is that technology and communications are quite widely available in "the global south"; some emerging nations even have better communications infrastructure than the UK, thanks to no legacy of outdated copper everywhere. One aspect that can be lacking, however, is the ability to make effective use of technology as systems and software may not exist to address requirements. Compounding this can be a situation where the knowledge capital required to create such systems either isn't available or simply isn't affordable to these groups.

With this in mind, and a strong desire to grow the number of live brief projects, I created Global Coders, an initiative that aims to pair talented students here with organisations that have a need for software development. Though still early days, I've had positive project discussions with organisations ranging

from household name charities to tiny indigenous NGOs, and have successfully started proving the model with pilot scoping projects in the last academic year. Over the next few years, I aim to expand this widely, offering a range of interesting projects for real customers which, as an added bonus, may have some positive societal impact.

As of late 2019, a call for project proposals for 2020 has gone out via <https://globalcoders.org> and I am hoping to put together an exciting range of projects for students to choose from. If anyone is interested in collaborating on this (you may have a project idea you want created, know of a partner organisation, or perhaps want to explore branching the scheme beyond coding, or indeed anything else... drop me a line on d.cutting@qub.ac.uk).

Leveraging our location to deliver impactful learning experiences

By Dr Niall Majury, School of Natural and Built Environment

At Queen's, there is much to be gained from leveraging our urban location for the mutual benefit of the University and the city region. As evidence elsewhere attests to, where partnerships are forged, major institutions such as research universities can play important roles in shaping the economies of urban regions.¹ Partnerships between research-intensive universities and their host city-regions can serve as mutually beneficial catalysts for innovation and resilience, as illustrated in the partnerships being forged through the Belfast Agenda (2017) and Belfast Region City Deal (2019). Too often, however, this dynamic is framed solely in terms of our research, its impact and the qualities of the graduates we produce. What is often over-looked are the ways in which university/city-region partnerships also present opportunities to re-imagine the types of learning experiences we offer our undergraduates through forms of civic engagement.

The sorts of learning experiences I have in mind are often framed within the literature as 'authentic learning experiences'². That is, pedagogic strategies designed to connect students' learning with the world at large, helping them understand: the relevance of what they are learning; how to apply their skills and knowledge in the world of professional practice; and ways in which they can have an impact on the world around us. Bridging the gap between the learning taking place within formal institutions, and learning within wider communities of practice, can be challenging to organise and sustain. Colleagues at Queen's within vocational disciplines, such as Architecture and Planning, have long forged these types of learning experiences in partnership with local stakeholders. Successful examples within the School of Natural and Built Environment include Street Space, Public CoLab and a variety of urban design projects across the island. Within non-vocational disciplines, such as Geography, graduates pursue a wide range of professional careers and links between academic staff and local stakeholder organisations are often more diffuse. As a result,

such learning experiences are less common. To counter this, three years ago Geography at Queen's redesigned an existing module (Geography at Work) to offer all of our final year undergraduates an opportunity to combine disciplinary knowledge and independent research skills with forms of civic engagement.

To deliver this module we forged partnerships with Belfast City Council, Belfast Hills Partnership, the Forward South Partnership and the Royal Geographical Society (our accrediting body). Our partners identified pressing issues and priorities that they would appreciate help with understanding, which in turn were pitched to our incoming final year cohort of students. Issues have ranged across elements of Human and Physical Geography, such as emergency planning and flood modelling, city centre retail revitalisation, wildfires and carbon sequestration, mapping urban regeneration and critiquing the connectivity of the city's (green) pathways. These projects feed into wider organisational priorities and provide an opportunity for the stakeholders to pilot ideas and generate an evidence

base for ongoing discussions about their direction of travel and new initiatives.

Places on projects are awarded competitively through a letter of application, tailored CV and, if necessary, an interview. Students work within student-led teams, mentored jointly by an academic and a representative from one of our civic partners. Together they work up an initial project brief into a fully fledged research project, grounded in scholarly literature, devising a methodological framework, securing ethical approval, agreeing a timeline and identifying clear milestones, such as presentations to stakeholder organisations, draft materials to circulate and final outputs. The structure of assessment has been configured to recognise both individual and team effort, however team work plays a key role in undertaking the project. It has enabled us to scale up the module, increasing the module's enrolment despite fixed constraints on the time of our mentors. At the same time, it has provided a valuable source of peer support and peer learning, and strengthened the development of key transferrable skills.

Common anxieties that students have expressed on enrolling in the module include the prospect ('daunting') of working with an external organisation ('employer'), being worried about failure ('doing it wrong') and concerns about how to handle team work ('people not pulling their weight' or 'letting my teammates down'). However, through a range of workshops and attentive mentoring, we have structured the learning experience to help our students learn how to manage the complexity of these types of projects, navigate uncertainties, and handle the challenges of effectively communicating ideas to a variety of different types of audiences.

1 For further details, including an analysis of Queen's and its place within the region, see Meric Gertler's Eaton Lecture (2017) on 'Universities and Urban Regions: A Partnership for Prosperity' at <https://www.qub.ac.uk/Business/Partnership-development/The2017EatonLecture/>

2 Herrington A & Herrington J (eds) (2006) *Authentic Learning Environments in Higher Education*, London: Information Science Publishing; Stein S, Isaacs G & Andrews T (2004) Incorporating authentic learning experiences within a university course, *Studies in Higher Education* 29(2): 239-258; Martinez Serrano M, O'Brien M, Roberts K & Whyte D (2017) Critical pedagogy and assessment in higher education: the ideal of 'authenticity' in learning, *Active Learning in Higher Education* 19(1): 9-21.



Functioning as teams of consultants, students put their learning to work, gaining an opportunity to develop practical understandings of working in professional environments, while contributing to initiatives that seek to make a positive difference to the city. Once they have successfully negotiated the uncertainties, contingencies and new types of challenges that are part and parcel of these types of projects ‘in the wild’, students have highlighted a range of gains. These can be best characterised as: cognitive (‘putting

learning into practice’); utilitarian (‘using my own initiative’, ‘learning what is needed to work in a team’, ‘better organisational skills’); and affective (‘confidence’, ‘achieving a professional standard of work’, ‘working on something that will benefit others’).

Integrating forms of civic engagement within the types of learning experiences we deliver at Queen’s has much to commend itself, both for our students, the institution and society. Leveraging our urban location in how we re-imagine elements of our

undergraduate education can mutually benefit both the University and the city. At the same time, these sorts of learning experiences can support the development of our students’ craft as graduates with disciplinary expertise (in this case Geography), their identity as professionals in the making, their practical understanding of professional environments, and their ambitions to play a role in addressing some of the challenges wider society faces, locally and globally – that is, tackling Geography in the wild.



Dr Stephanie Wyse (Professional & Policy Manager, RGS) joined two Chartered Geographers, Lynn Arthurs (WSP Global) and Tom Graham (Mott MacDonald), to explore ‘Geography in Professional Life’ with undergraduates enrolled in Geography at Work as they prepare to embark on their projects.

Liberalising the Curriculum to Learn about Old Age

By Gemma Carney, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work

In this article, I reflect on how Leonie Hannan and I use popular culture and historical sources to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about social policies for older people in our liberal arts module Questions for an Ageing World.

Students are bombarded with information. Information does not equal knowledge and as a lecturer of social policy, I am constantly fighting reductionist and uncivil representations of poverty, disability, old age, gender and other forms of inequality on social and mainstream media. After my first semester of teaching gerontology to undergraduates, I realised that I needed more than statistics about older people's resilience to help students question entrenched age bias in our society. With evangelical zeal, I launched my own counter-cultural anti-stereotype campaign. From the moment they enter our building in College Park, I bombard social policy students with evidence that forces them to question taken-for-granted assumptions. At first they find this really, really annoying. 'Why can't I quote the Nolan Show?' they say. 'What's wrong with what I read in the paper?' asks another first year. By the time they have reached Spring semester of Year 2, those same students are pointing out biased media stories and discriminatory language to me.

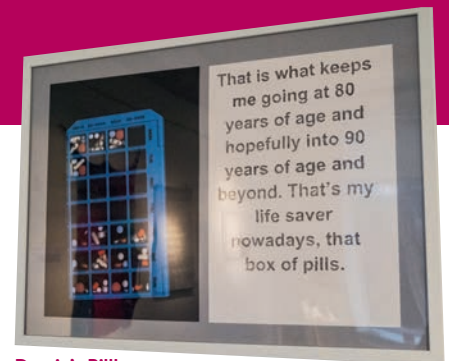
Over the years, the strategy of using popular culture against itself has led to the practice of employing a wider range of sources. For example, comedy panel shows provide an endless supply of ageist soundbites. There is nothing like hearing Jimmy Carr using the word 'coffin dodger' to an audience of awkwardly laughing clone-comedians to convince students that stereotypes are problematic. I use a neuroscience podcast from the BBC to teach students that changes to the ageing human brain are not necessarily the result of straightforward decline. Some scientists argue that delayed name recall is the result of having acquired a lifetime of names to remember, rather than loss of the memory, per se. When I want to help students understand what is at stake if we privatise the NHS, I pull out the big guns. Photographs

from Mass Observation archives show students how people lived before we had well-established social policies like the welfare state.

Going the whole hog... liberalising old age

This past year I have been incredibly lucky to have my colleague and friend Leonie Hannan – a historian of the Eighteenth Century with practical and eclectic knowledge of material culture – co-convene a new version of the ageing module through the liberal arts pathway. The fun we have had. We have had students discussing 18th and 19th century art, questioning the omnipresence of black cats beside older women as stereotypes of their time. The cats brought a whole new level to students' discussions of the intersection of ageism and sexism as stubborn forms of discrimination. **Drawing our own research on ageing and material culture**, we used objects to explore the meaning of living a long life. Guest lectures from colleagues across the Faculty have left students hooked. Sian Barber opened students' eyes with her analysis of toxic masculinity in portrayals of older men in geri-action movies. Jane Lugea taught students how to analyse Franzen's *The Corrections* to get inside the mind of a character with Parkinson's Disease. By the end of the semester, students were fluent critics of stereotypes of old age. One of those young people, Freddie Finlay, entered his essay, '*Demography is not destiny*,' in the Global Undergraduate Awards and was highly commended. Those hours spent looking at art history, visiting the museum, reading about history and critiquing popular culture enriched his and other students' understanding of human ageing.

Over the course of five years, my teaching has become more focused on communicating the big picture



Dessie's Pillbox



Carmel's Bike



Yarn Bomb Artwork

about demographic ageing to students; showing them that ageing is a process that is both societal and individual. The 'problems' we see for social policy makers are experienced at a deeply personal level. Ageing is a process that needs to be understood as universal – it is part of being human. In social policy terms, this means that collectivist approaches that recognise people's contributions and needs throughout the life course are most likely to work. With today's politics occupying a stance of divisive short-termism, collectivist responses have fallen out of favour. But, by critically analysing ageism in the past and present day, and then presenting students with scientific counter-evidence, we are equipping them with the language and knowledge to challenge discrimination for the rest of their lives.

How best to treat me: improving medical students' communication skills with people with a learning disability

By Mairead Corrigan, Diane Wilson, Lousantha Azad, John Doran, Tom Bourke, School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences

Introduction

On the 14 October 2019, Mencap NI launched their Briefing Paper 'Treat me well: Equal access to healthcare for people with a learning disability', to highlight how people with a learning disability can experience many health inequalities and have difficulties accessing good quality healthcare, potentially leading to delayed diagnosis, treatment and poorer outcomes. As part of their **Treat me well** campaign, Mencap has been working in partnership with the Centre for Medical Education on a project to enhance communication between medical students and people with a learning disability. Communication difficulties may mean that it takes some time to identify that someone is unwell, leading to delays in people with a learning disability accessing healthcare (Webb 2019). Some people with a learning disability may have difficulties understanding information and expressing feelings of pain or discomfort due to reading, speech or communication problems. Healthcare professionals have to be able to adapt their communication style to the individual and to employ alternative communication techniques and tools (Shakespeare et al 2009).

Objectives

The project, 'How Best to Treat Me', was facilitated by the Centre for Medical Education's 2019 Summer Studentship Project, which funded a medical student, Lousantha Azad, to work alongside CME staff and Mencap to develop a workshop for second year medical students on communicating with people with a mild / moderate learning disability. In their Outcomes for Graduates (2018), the General Medical Council requires that medical students be able to...

10 b. communicate by spoken, written and electronic methods (including in medical records) clearly, sensitively and effectively with patients, their relatives, carers or other advocates, and colleagues from medical and other professions. This includes, communicating with people with learning disabilities.

The workshop aims to promote awareness of the challenges of living with and caring for someone with a learning difficulty, as well as equip medical students with more effective communication strategies when caring for patients living with a learning disability.

Methods

To fulfil the workshop aims, video narratives of the healthcare experiences of people with a learning disability and carers were recorded. The videos have been edited to highlight the key themes of what it means to have a learning disability, the role of carers and how to communicate with people with a learning disability. The videos reflect the challenges of caring for an adult with a learning disability and a child with complex physical and learning disabilities and the lived experiences of adults with a mild / moderate learning disability.



QUB staff and volunteers involved in creating the videos for the workshop.

The workshop will be delivered in partnership with Mencap, so that individuals with a learning disability can interact with the students. The students will experience first-hand what it is like to communicate with someone with a learning disability and they will be able to reflect on how they might adapt their communication style. Students will be introduced to basic tools that can facilitate communication such as Makaton. (Makaton is a language programme that uses signs and symbols to provide a means of communication to individuals who cannot communicate efficiently by speaking).

They will also hear about 'hospital passports', which provide hospital healthcare staff with important details about the patient's medical history, how they prefer to communicate and other support.

The workshop will last for 1.5 hours and it will be delivered in September 2020 and then evaluated.

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Launch of MENCAP's Briefing Paper 'Treat me well: Equal access to healthcare for people with a learning disability'.

Mind the Gap: Unpacking Tacit Knowledge in Higher Education

By Norma Menabney
(Subject Librarian)
and Dr Kath Stevenson
(Special Collections)

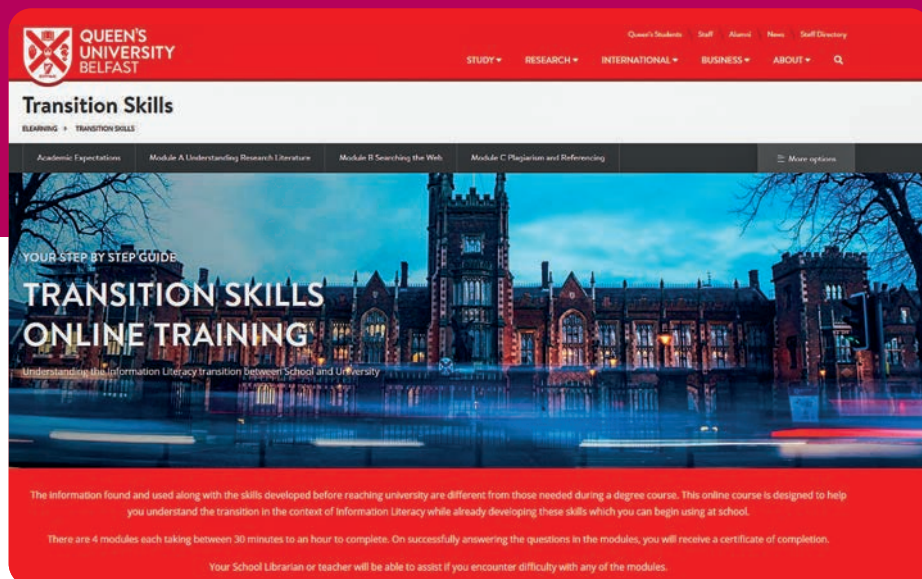
How often have we or our colleagues bemoaned the lack of university readiness of new students? But how often do we expect them to absorb by osmosis the soft skills for learning in HE that we were probably taught ourselves?

In an age of league-table pressure and a packed A-Level curricula, post-primary teachers no longer have the capacity to provide the sort of preparation for independent learning that they once might have, yet our expectations of incoming undergraduates remain unchanged.

Whilst a self-selecting cohort of self-aware and highly motivated students avail of the support offered by a range of services across the University, the Library at Queen's, with a footfall of over 1.5 million per annum is ideally placed to help those students who, to paraphrase Donald Rumsfeld, don't yet recognise their "unknown unknowns".

In order to address this skills gap, the Library has developed a Transition Skills online training programme to assist students making the transition from school to higher education. This initiative originates from a series of discussions about the challenges met by new students in adjusting to a different way of learning within a higher education environment. The Library, in consultation with academic staff, held a forum with Principals, Vice Principals, school librarians and careers teachers which resulted in a series of workshops for pupils and teachers.

Further refinement of the key themes identified in these workshops led to the development of a new online training programme, in collaboration with colleagues in the Information Services Teaching and Learning Team, which was soft-launched at the start of this semester and is hosted on the QUB website: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/elearning/transition-skills>



Aimed at Year 13 and 14 pupils, the content of the training programme is of immediate relevance to those embarking on higher education but the skills acquired are transferable and will be of value to those choosing to enter the working environment too. There are 5 components to the training course. The introductory module Academic Expectations makes explicit the expectations for independent learning in tertiary education. This is followed by 4 further modules: Understanding Research Literature, Searching the Web, Plagiarism and Referencing, and Social Media and Email Etiquette. Each of the self-standing and self-paced modules takes about 30 minutes to an hour to complete and incorporates a short quiz in which students can test their understanding.

The course is free, is fully accessible on all devices and does not require a login. On successful completion, participants can access a certificate documenting their participation.

Developed by the Library's subject librarians, the course draws upon themes covered in the Library induction programmes offered to all students at the start of their degree courses and on the librarians' experience of the academically-related challenges most commonly encountered by new students.

Following further engagement with key stakeholders across the University, including Canvas staff, Learning Development Tutors and Education Developers within EPS and AHSS, a customisable version of

the Transition Skills programme has also been made available in Canvas for QUB staff. The content can be found by searching for Transition Skills in the Commons section of Canvas. From there academic staff can select components, adapt and embed examples for their module(s) making them subject specific. Subject librarians are positioned to work with academic staff to assist with the amendments where required.

A pilot study has been established with Dr Dan Corbett from EPS and with the assistance of EPS Subject Librarian, Irene Bittles, in which the various components have been embedded in a number of modules. A planned follow-up research study will make available relevant datasets evaluating the efficacy of the course in improving students' performance on their degree programmes.

Both the web and Canvas versions of the programme are being monitored for usage and feedback. To date the response has been positive and endorsed by a wide range of stakeholders both internal to QUB and external, including the Northern Ireland Education Authority.

The Transition Skills training programme has also been promoted to students registered with the Widening Participation programme, who are a key target demographic for this innovative new resource.

Comments and feedback on the training programme are welcomed and should be sent to Norma Menabney, n.menabney@qub.ac.uk

How might we ensure that Higher Education is fit for the future (2040)?

By Patricia Durkin and Ruairi McGrillen, Careers, Employability and Skills



That's the question we'll be asking 25 students to address as part of this year's Queen's Global Leadership Programme.

This is the fifth year that Careers, Employability and Skills have run the Global Leadership Programme. Every year we choose a different theme around which students develop solution ideas. Recent themes have included “*The Future of Work: the impact of intelligent automation*” and “*How might Smart cities solve 21st Century problems?*”

We chose this year's theme to align with the preliminary work being undertaken to inform the University's thinking on future Education priorities. At the end of the programme, the students will present their ideas to a panel of University staff and their ideas will feed in to the development of these priorities for the University.

The programme

To participate in the programme, students complete a competitive application and recruitment process, including a CV, cover letter and video interview. The programme is open to students of any degree discipline and level (from 1st year undergraduate through to PhD). In their feedback, students speak of how beneficial it has been for them to work with students they would otherwise never have met.

The selected students are given training in Design Thinking as a methodology to address the challenges presented by

the theme. They undertake research interviews and are facilitated through the process of drawing-out insights from these interviews, identifying potential areas for development and ideating solutions. They work in self-directed teams on their projects, undertaking their own research and developing their solution ideas.

A key feature (and major selling point) of the programme is the in-built international experience. In previous years we have taken the students to Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, New York, Washington DC and Toronto. This year we'll be taking the group to San Francisco.

The international trip lasts at least 7 days and involves a structured programme of visits to companies, organisations and networking events, combined with some free time to develop cultural awareness. We work closely with the Development and Alumni Relations Office to identify contacts in these locations and ensure the students have the opportunity to meet with Queen's alumni. We also liaise with British, Irish and NI representatives overseas e.g. NI Bureau, NI Connections and local organisations whose work aligns with that year's theme. The students use these opportunities to discuss the theme with these professionals and hone their solution ideas.

Outcomes

Student evaluations demonstrate how they feel they have benefited from the programme. Quotes from last year's participants include:

- I genuinely think it was life-changing, it's widened my perspective of the wider, global community and bettered my understanding of how the world works.
- This programme has left me with a passion to develop my skills even further... It has given me motivation to focus and become successful.
- As an introvert, this programme has really helped me to come out of my shell as it is something completely out of my comfort zone. I realise that successful people are interested in my opinions also.
- Being surrounded by such intelligent, capable students really inspired me and had a much bigger impact than I ever thought it would. I really looked up to some of them and it is their attitude towards what they do, and indeed their passion for the subjects which has inspired me to be more confident in my professional self.

Some students who participated in previous years, are taking forward, and beginning to put into practice, the ideas that they developed during the programme.

The University has benefited from the programme too. Through bringing a group of proactive and engaged students to these international locations, we've been able to strengthen ties with Queen's alumni and build new relationships with professionals across a range of industries and international locations.

We're excited to see what ideas the students come up with for this year's programme. If you are interested in hearing more about this programme, please get in touch with Patricia Durkin (p.durkin@qub.ac.uk) and Ruairi McGrillen (r.mcgrillen@qub.ac.uk).

Queen's Teaching Awards: recognising excellent practice

The Queen's Teaching Awards Scheme recognises and rewards the development of learning and teaching practices and learning support practices that have led to particularly effective/worthwhile learning.

In 2019, nine Teaching Awards were presented to colleagues across the University. This year's Award winners include three in the Student-nominated category, two Sustained Excellence applicants, three Rising Stars and one Learning Support Team.

The **QUB Teaching Awards Scheme for 2020** is now open. Further information is available on the Centre for Educational Development Website at www.qub.ac.uk/ced, including Notes for Guidance, application templates and examples of previous applications. Queries should be directed to Liz McDowell on e.mcdowell@qub.ac.uk or extension 2879.

Congratulations to all of our 2019 Teaching Award recipients.

Sustained Excellence Category



Dr Niall Majury, School of the Natural and Built Environment

This Teaching Award is presented to Dr Niall Majury in the School of Natural and Built Environment. Dr Majury employs a range of innovative methods to engage students and structures the learning experience to reflect real-world practice, promoting equality

of opportunity for different types of learners. He prepares his students for opportunities beyond higher education through Work-Integrated Learning which strengthens the identity of Geographers as professionals and provides valuable experience of the workplace. His approaches have led to improved student engagement, feedback and attainment.



Chris Corrigan, School of Arts, English and Languages

This Teaching Award is presented to Chris Corrigan for the provision of an interactive and collaborative teaching and assessment approach to sound engineering. This interdisciplinary approach, involving Music students and

industry professionals, provides his students with experience of the real-world workflow of the music industry. He has

developed a range of resources for the formative assessment of important skills which has led to enhanced student learning and achievement. His approach provides his students with a range of skills which prepares them effectively for employment.

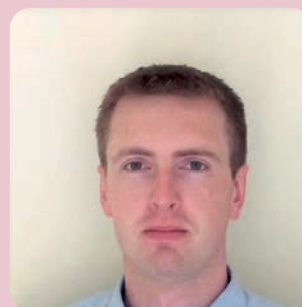
Student-nominated Category



Dr Stephen Kelly, School of Arts, English and Languages

This Teaching Award in the Student-nominated category is presented to Dr Stephen Kelly, an inspirational literary historian in the School of Arts, English and Languages. Dr Kelly is delivering a range of innovative and creative teaching and assessment methods that equip

his students with the skills to succeed both inside and outwith the workplace. Dr Kelly is responsive to student feedback and proactive in engaging students in curriculum review. In their nominating statement his students noted, *"His teaching style is incredibly engaging and creative, truly demonstrating his passion for the subject...However, it is how he connects with students that truly makes him a fantastic lecturer."*



Dr Richard Gault, School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

This Teaching Award in the Student-nominated category is presented to Dr Richard Gault. Dr Gault is providing an inspiring learning experience in which students are encouraged to be partners in their learning, an

approach which increases their confidence and understanding. He has scaffolded his teaching framework to provide an effective learning experience for a diverse range of students in which they are taught how to learn and apply their learning to real-world problems. In their nominating statement his students noted, *"This module has a reputation among students as one of the most difficult you will face....However,...Richard's passion for this subject has turned that reputation round completely."*



Dr Gemma Carney, School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work

This Teaching Award in the Student-nominated category is presented to Dr Gemma Carney, an enthusiastic and student-centred teacher of social policy and gerontology. Dr Carney uses a diverse range of inclusive

teaching methods and resources to critically engage her students with complex elements of their learning. Her use of innovations from her team-based inter-disciplinary research in the classroom provides a dynamic learning experience. In their nominating statement her students noted, “*Dr Carney is not only an excellent teacher who motivates students, she is a wonderful role model who continues to research and write and go beyond the teacher’s role to get her students to learn.*”

Rising Stars Category



Dr David Cutting, School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

This Teaching Award is presented to Dr David Cutting for the provision of an inclusive and engaging learning experience that supports and challenges students, as appropriate. His use of automated assessment

enables the provision of immediate formative feedback and his development of an innovative, anonymous communication tool enhances the learning experience in and out of class. The new Global Coders Initiative will provide students with a rich learning experience with an international dimension.



Dr Victoria Durrer, School of Arts, English and Languages

This Teaching Award is presented to Dr Victoria Durrer, a lecturer in Arts Management and Cultural Policy in the School of Arts, English and Languages. Dr Durrer is an enthusiastic and supportive teacher, providing innovative learning approaches and an engaging learning

experience through partnership with industry, and important opportunities for students to showcase their research to industry professionals.



Dr Gareth Tribello, School of Maths and Physics

This Teaching Award is presented to Dr Gareth Tribello for the provision of a creative learning approach that develops confident, critical thinkers prepared for the world outside higher education. His interactive teaching approach is

supported by online video resources and his differentiated assessment and project work supports and develops students of all abilities.

Excellence in Learning Support by a Team

Ruairi McGrillen and Patricia Durkin, Careers, Employability and Skills

This Teaching Award is presented to Ruairi McGrillen and Patricia Durkin for their support of the delivery of the Queen’s Global Leadership Programme. This programme supports students to become leaders and change makers in society through an active learning experience incorporating an international element. The programme involves multi-disciplinary project work with an external trainer and participation in events with alumni, business representatives and local entrepreneurs. This programme develops students’ communication and collaboration skills, global awareness and confidence.



Using OneNote to Facilitate Students' Engagement



Dr Marek Martyniszyn, School of Law

In 2018/19, the School of Law started offering a new exciting research-led module 'Comparative Competition Law: the Case of the EU as the Leading Model'. This is an optional postgraduate course, taught in semester II. It critically examines the current regulatory framework governing competition among firms internationally, identifying and analysing the existing limitations and challenges in that regard. It uses the EU model as the key comparative benchmark. The module's development is possible thanks to an award under the Erasmus+ Jean Monnet Module scheme. The module has been designed and is taught by Dr Marek Martyniszyn.

The module is very interactive, availing of a variety of tools and methods to facilitate learning and promote innovation in teaching. One aspect of such innovation is the adoption of the OneNote Classroom to foster students' engagement in and outside the classroom. This piece reflects on that experience, with a view to share knowhow and to encourage expanding teaching toolboxes.

What is OneNote and how does it work?

OneNote is a free Microsoft program for information gathering and collaboration. One can think of it as a digital notebook, which is extremely versatile. It allows gathering and organising of notes (also handwritten—if using a tablet), tables, photos, videos, etc. It also enables sharing of such materials, in real time, as well as for two-way communication—with users being able to add materials and comment on shared resources—essentially serving as an ever available interactive whiteboard. It can be used on a majority of devices and platforms (inclusive of Android, Mac and Windows), making it very flexible and inclusive. For the educational context, Microsoft developed the OneNote Classroom. This is essentially an add-on to the standard OneNote which allows an educator to create a notebook for a class, offering various additional functionalities.

To use OneNote Classroom an institution needs to have an appropriate subscription and students must have an Office 365 organizational account. Both are in place at Queen's, making the tool available to all staff for adoption.

It is noteworthy that students need not install OneNote at all—they can use it online, accessing it via Office 365. However, if they wish to keep the Classroom's content locally on their device in order to be able to use it offline—installation of OneNote is sufficient (be it on a laptop, smartphone or some other digital device). They do not need the extension.

The OneNote class notebook, per default, is organised into different parts. First, there is the content library. That's a notebook in which the content can only be shaped by an educator. Second, there is the collaboration space. That's a space which is open to all—students and an educator—to share, comment and collaborate. Third, there are the student notebooks. That is a space allocated to individual students which is accessible to them and the educator (the educator can access every student notebook, while students can only see their own space). Finally, there is also teacher's space. That is where one can develop resources for subsequent use, which can be moved into other parts of the notebook with just a few clicks, retaining all their functionality and formatting. Parts can then be divided in 'sections' and then 'pages', as one wishes. What is important—beyond that default organisation into separate parts with different access rights, OneNote does not force on users any particular layout or structure. There are no constraints of, for example, an A4 page. All can be arranged as one thinks appropriate, boosting creativity and making it very much fit-for-purpose.

Exploring its potential

The OneNote Classroom was adopted as an online learning platform for this module with a view to facilitate inside

and outside classroom engagement with and among students. On the skills side, its adoption was aimed at further developing students' digital literacy and to allow students to familiarise themselves with another digital environment of the sort they are likely to work with in their professional futures.

In the first run of the project all default parts of the classroom were trialed. After appropriate advance notice via email, during the first class students were provided with assistance on how to access the OneNote Classroom. The anticipated uses of the platform and its different parts were explained and discussed.

The content library became the space for sharing key module materials. The principal added value was its flexible nature. For example, readings were not only listed, but also directly provided—making it easy for students to access them. If a student installed OneNote then, upon initial synchronization, she would have all these resources with her for offline use during the semester, with any amendments being typically synchronised automatically in the background. Class slides were disseminated that way as well—both as files (in PowerPoint format) and as their printouts—to allow for direct content access—without the need to download and open another file). Interestingly, OneNote generates slides 'printouts' automatically—hence, no additional time needs to be invested to make them incorporated into the classroom. The content library was also used to provide additional learning materials and to link to key relevant resources in the Queen's library. Again, the digital space allowed links to all such materials directly, making it easier to engage with linked resources.

Unlike ordinary files depositories, such as our old Queen's Online, OneNote offers a richer environment, which facilitates not only the sharing of files but also allow users to embed them. Hence, inserted visuals can be seen, spreadsheets can be worked on, and video clips can be watched directly—all without the need to have them

downloaded in advance of accessing. This was a terrific experience and in many ways—liberating. Moreover, OneNote allows you to take and insert clippings, that is, it allows you to easily cut and paste selected elements of the screen – greatly facilitating content sharing. Content can be dragged and dropped into OneNote, hence, no special skills are needed on the adopter’s end. The entire interface is very intuitive and user friendly. The possibility of using a stylus on a tablet allows for effortless inclusion of handwriting, annotating and even drawing (should one possess such supreme artistic skills!).

When it comes to the collaboration space – it was originally intended to serve a two-fold purpose in the module. Thus, it was meant to be a space allowing for in and out of classroom interactions and also a space for the sharing of additional materials of various types, to complement students’ primary learning resources and to build on the particular in-class dynamics and students’ interests.

When it comes to the first intended use—OneNote nicely allowed for interactions, albeit not without some glitches. For example, an initial use for an in-class brainstorming revealed that although OneNote enables real time multi-user access—the synchronization among many connected devices was taking time, adversely affecting a good dynamic in class. Plus, partly because of delays, students often ended up accidentally placing comments one over another. In subsequent exercises, students were split into groups, with contributions being provided via four or five devices. That approach addressed the issue, while still allowing for robust interactive in-class work.

Another aspect of OneNote, which is probably shared by all such platforms, is that one needs to take into account that the more data is being shared, the more time its synchronization will take before they become available on other connected devices. In the majority of cases, these few extra minutes will not present an issue. However, this

was discovered in the context of an earlier prepared group exercise, initially saved in the OneNote teacher’s space, which included a number of large pdf files which students were to work on. It transpired that synchronisation took a few minutes, making the class wait unnecessarily. To address it, in subsequent classes any such additional content was released to students just before the class with students being asked to access their OneNote. The synchronisation did its work in the background, allowing access to the newly shared content seamlessly at the appropriate moment during the session.

What is very valuable, any results of in-class or out-of-class exercises (appropriately amended—if needs be) can remain available in the Classroom for students’ own future reference and use, effectively becoming a student-generated learning aid. OneNote makes it simply effortless to capture and preserve the results of any group exercises.

The anticipated use of the collaboration space for dissemination of learning resources did not work too well. There were multiple instances of posted content being accidentally removed by students or its formatting being adversely affected, especially when being accessed on a tablet or a smartphone. After a few such cases, dissemination of additional materials was moved from the collaboration space to the content library. The downside of it is that the content library provides for only one-way communication. As explained earlier, students cannot make any contribution in that part of the notebook. They cannot, for example, comment. That is rather disappointing. Hopefully, in the future, the software’s developers will allow for ‘freezing’ of some of the posted content, while unlocking the reminder. Currently that is not possible, with a strict distinction being made between the content library and the collaboration space. However, the interactivity of the collaboration space itself is wonderful and, after some initial encouragement, during

the semester there were numerous instances of students themselves sharing additional useful resources (which were being subsequently moved to the content library for the above mentioned reasons), creating an engaged learning community outside the classroom.

When it comes to student notebooks the usage of that space was marginal. The received feedback from students suggests they preferred sticking to their pre-existing notetaking routines. It would not be surprising if students were discouraged from using it by the very idea of having their notes accessible to the educator as well. However, a nice aspect of student notebooks is the possibility of using it to disseminate the same task to all students, with just a few clicks, and allowing an educator to subsequently provide feedback on students’ contributions individually—again, in a very flexible manner.

Conclusions

Overall, OneNote Classroom has proved a very interactive digital space with versatility and ease of access and students’ reception of it has been very positive. The received informal and formal feedback is encouraging, with students expressly referring to the benefits of using OneNote as a platform for facilitating learning throughout the semester, both in and outside the classroom. Colleagues looking to embrace a new tool with a view to foster interaction should be encouraged to consider its adoption.

I would like to express special thanks to Richard Summerville, the Computer Officer in the School of Law, for his ongoing support in the process of adopting OneNote for this module, and for championing IT literacy more broadly.

Launch of the new Canvas VLE at Queen's



By Aaron Crozier, on behalf of the Canvas Pedagogy Support Team

The new Canvas Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) was launched in September 2019 across Queen's University. The Canvas VLE will offer a wide range of pedagogical tools that will enable the delivery of content in a more contextual and engaging manner, fostering student interaction and facilitating an up-to-date approach to the delivery of digital learning materials.

At 16th October 2019, a total of 1,207,807 logins have been recorded with 1,435 modules now live in Canvas, and 16,773 individual students logged in. The implementation of Canvas will continue into Semester 2 of AY2019/20 with a further 824 modules in development for spring and summer semesters.

Since May 2018, staff have been able to avail of training on the use of Canvas. The VLE Pedagogy Support Team has employed a wide range of training delivery methods and a flexible approach in order to facilitate engagement with as many staff members as possible. In addition to traditional workshops and drop-in sessions, staff have been able to avail of lunchtime webinars and online classes streamed through virtual classrooms. To date, of the 1,594 staff eligible for training, 1,307 (82%) have attended at least one training activity. More

than half of those staff participated in 2 or more training activities, resulting in a total of 2,496 attendances across all activities.

Training over the coming months will support those academics who are developing modules for Semester 2 delivery. In addition, training on the best pedagogical use of the innovative tools on offer within Canvas will be available for those already delivering modules. This approach will aid those academics that wish to build on the success of the initial launch in September and expand their delivery on Canvas. If you are interested in finding out how Canvas could enhance your teaching, please see the [Canvas@Queens](https://go.qub.ac.uk/CanvasLatest) blog for all of the latest information and training dates: <https://go.qub.ac.uk/CanvasLatest>



Creativity with Canvas

By Drs Sharon Parkinson and Eva Sweeney
School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Science

It is unlikely as an educator that you have escaped the rollout of our new Virtual Learning Environment... Canvas. It may have seemed daunting at first, but you have made it through the first term, and might be ready to explore some of the new possibilities Canvas can support. As early adopters, we have tried a few bells and whistles in the past year and would like to share our experience.

Here are a few possible additions that can elevate your Canvas page from a simple lecture repository to an interactive, digital classroom:

1. Using E-Resources to promote student engagement

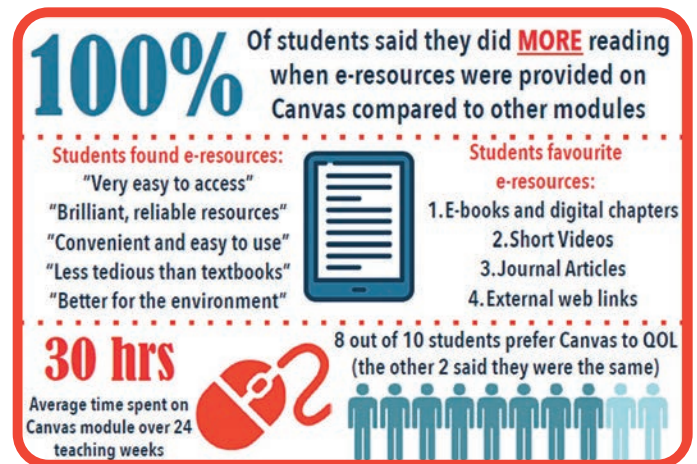
One of the best upgrades we can recommend is incorporating the use of e-books and e-resources. Queen's already has an e-library of over 20,000 texts, which can be accessed on or off campus. E-resources can be utilised by many students simultaneously - this is particularly advantageous for flipped classroom approaches as students have easy access to pre-readings prior to class.

To find resources, search the library catalogue, narrow your results to 'e-books' and copy the permalink to your Canvas page. If the library does not have a suitable e-book, your subject librarian can digitise 1 chapter/10% of a textbook and provide a Canvas link to the digital copy - all completely in line with copyright! E-resources are also not limited to texts, we also have apps such as virtual anatomy apps, UpToDate, Oxford music online, economic and social data service and more!



2. Make Links Intuitive and Visual

Canvas pages can become walls of text without a little effort on our part. To turn an image or icon into a link, select it, press "Ctrl"+"K", and paste the url in the window that appears. You can also select the image and click on an in-Canvas link from the right sidebar (e.g. to link to another page, discussion or assignment). If you are looking for icons to use, 186 on-brand icons are available from the brand toolkit on the Queen's website.



*Survey and statistical data from class of n=15 from April 2018-19.

3. Emojis: How to liven up your Canvas page and make your module more accessible

Incorporation of emojis in your teaching might make some academics shudder. However, one of the first pieces of student feedback last year was that "Canvas is quite bland and colourless". In particular, the modules page, which is generally the most frequented page in your Canvas site is rather aesthetically limited. This is the perfect place to employ a bit of tasteful emoji speak. Not only does it add a bit of fun to your Canvas site, it also improves navigation, as emojis are easily identified in a list. You don't have to learn to code to insert them either, just use an emoji search engine (yes, these exist), like emojiopedia or emoji finder and copy/paste into your page for use.

Emoji Skill Levels:		
Amateur	Intermediate	Professional
📄 Start Here!	👋 Welcome to the Module	🦷 Week 1 - Thoracic Osteology
📄 Module Overview	📄 3 Steps to set up Canvas	🏠 Week 2 - Thoracic Wall
📄 Timetable	📄 🖋 Learning Outcomes	❤ Week 3 - Heart
📄 Learning Objectives	📄 📅 Timetable	👤 Week 4 - Lungs
📄 Assignments	📄 💡 Assessment Information	🏠 Week 5 - Mediastinum
📄 Resources	📄 👍🗨 Feedback	👤 Week 6 - Guest Lecture
📄 Module Feedback	📄 📄 Module Policies and Support	📄 Week 7 - Assessment - Report

4. Embeddable Content: Increase the functionality of your Canvas pages

You may already know you can embed YouTube and Twitter content into your pages, but there are a multitude of other apps you can incorporate. To do this, simply copy the embed

code from the webapp/webpage (usually found under “share” or “<>”), click on the “Insert/edit media” tool in the rich text editor and paste into the embed tab. Here are a small selection of examples:

PhET: *interactive simulations for physics, chemistry and maths.*

Padlet: (*collaborative noticeboard*): Students contribute text, images, links etc for all to see. I use Padlet to share mnemonics among students, this is embedded on multiple courses, reaching several thousand students so the bank of mnemonics grows exponentially!

89% of students thought the shared study aid was useful for their learning

SketchFab.com: a repository of virtual 3D images I have used these to share anatomical models but there are thousands of models including CERN boson detectors, sunken ships, archeological sites, puffer fish, the list goes on!

“The 3D images and videos on canvas were useful.”
– 2nd year Human Biology Student, 2018

Eclipse Crossword: *Create and embed your own crosswords.*

iframe-generator.com *Embed most secure (https) web pages into Canvas so students may interact with the page without navigating away from Canvas. Simply add the url to iframe-generator.com, copy the resulting embed code and paste that into Canvas via the insert/edit media tool.*



5. A Quick & Easy Feedback Box

Student feedback is vital to improve any module but often you don’t hear about issues until the end of module review. Use an embedded Google Form as an informal, year-round, anonymous feedback box. An email notifies you of new responses and you can view these in Google Sheets or export them as an excel file.

I have used Forms to track group scores in weekly formative quizzes, I can graph the input data in Google Sheets, “publish” it and re-embed the live graph back into Canvas so the groups can see the live results.

“Love all of canvas! Cannot recommend it enough” – 2nd year Human Biology Student, 2018

For further details please contact:

s.parkinson@qub.ac.uk or e.sweeney@qub.ac.uk

Textbook Chapter: [Upper Limb Anatomy, Moore & Dalley Clinically Oriented Anatomy, et](#)

Supporting National and Transnational Learning Circles around Engaged Research

By Eileen Martin and Dr Emma McKenna, The Science Shop, Queen's University Belfast

The QUB Science Shop has recently led the development of a successful Erasmus + strategic partnership proposal examining Curriculum Innovation through Research with Communities: Learning circles of Educators and Technology. Known as CIRCLET, this project has been awarded €420,000 over the next three years to support academic staff to embed community engaged research and learning in their modules.

The project will build on the skills and experiences of five University partners, including research-intensive universities in Belgium and Hungary, a newly established Technical University in Ireland and an established Open University in Spain. All partners already work with local community organisations to develop research topics and then provide a brokerage service to academics and students across disciplines to support them to do this research in the curriculum, mainly via Science Shops (See: www.livingknowledge.org). This approach has a triple benefit of enhancing student learning, adding a resource



to stretched community organisations and improving the reputation of university students in the wider community.

Building on the core activity of supporting the redesign of courses, the project will produce a series of resources for academic staff in the digital era and will offer QUB staff an opportunity to participate in national and transnational learning circles and in an online CPD module.

Maria Lee, Head of Educational and Skills Development at Queen's said,

The CIRCLET project will give staff at Queen's a structured opportunity to think about how to redesign a module so that students can work on research of value to community organisations. The work students do can make a positive impact on society, help them understand how they can take action at local level and make a small scale contribution to the sustainable development goals. The fact that CIRCLET builds collaboration internationally also offers valuable opportunities to share good practices across higher education institutions in different countries and contexts.

The call for participants will be launched at the CED conference on 8th April 2020. If you would like to get involved in the project in the meantime, please contact: Emma McKenna or Eileen Martin, at The Science Shop science.shop@qub.ac.uk



Widening Participation and Creating Opportunities

We have an exciting year ahead with the implementation of the first phase of Queen's new Widening Participation Strategy approved in June 2019. The strategy outlines our commitment to the principle that those who are the most able but least likely to participate in Higher Education, should have equal opportunity to do so.

Whilst Queen's maintains a good record in welcoming students from underrepresented groups, there remain challenges to be addressed to reach those currently least represented in our student body. Currently around 34% of our first-degree entrants are from lower socio-economic groups but as the Vice Chancellor has stated "we want to do more".

We also need to ensure individual students who are successful in coming to Queen's are supported once they arrive, and throughout their time here, so they engage fully in the student experience, reach their academic potential and secure the job or course of their choice post-graduation.

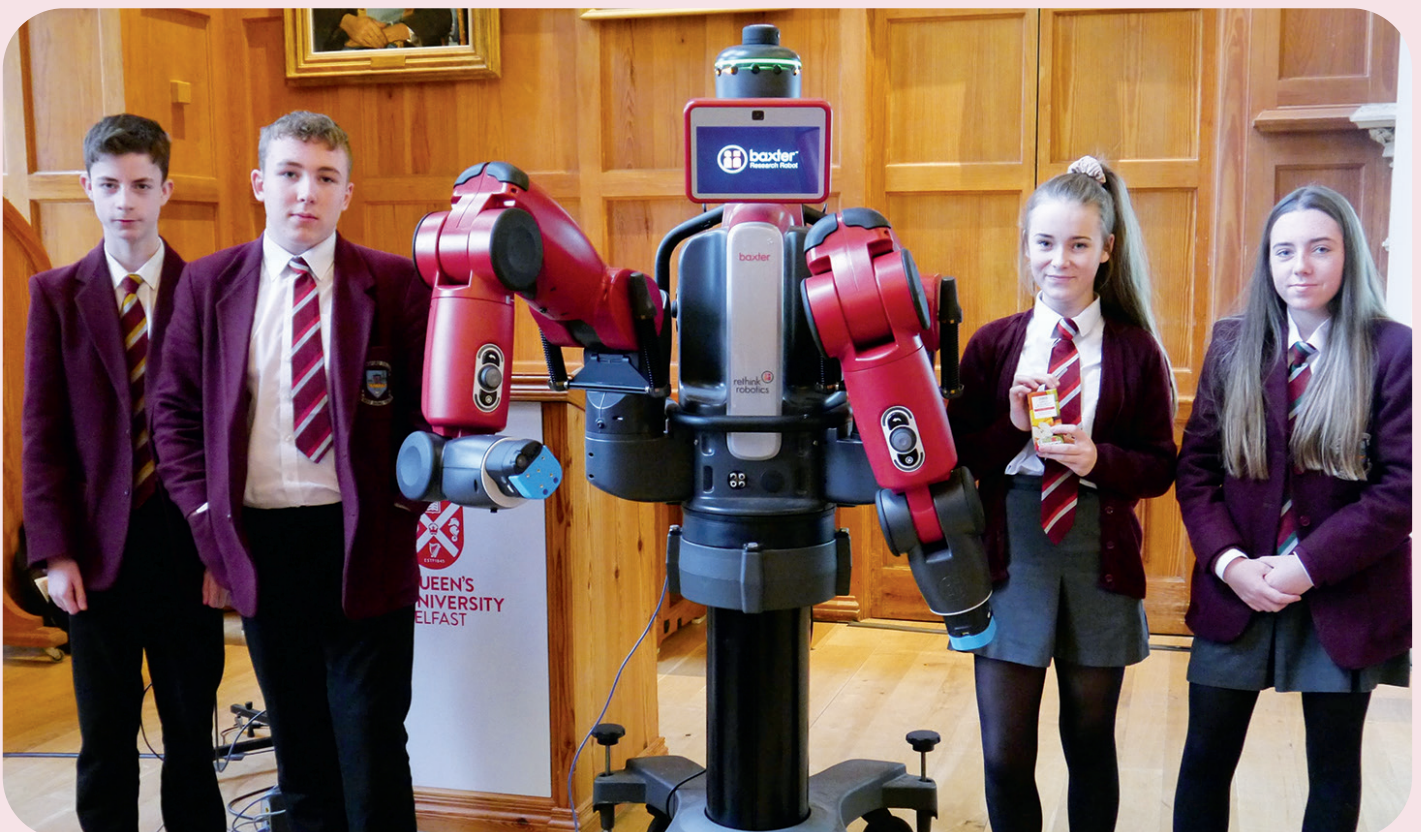
In order to do this, we have established three key priorities, each with key actions to help us achieve them. These ambitions have been agreed through discussions across the University and with key external stakeholders. We will achieve these ambitions through placing widening participation at the core of our new Institutional Strategy, building strong collaborative partnerships and taking an evidence-based approach to practice. We will be guided by experts within the field of education and widening participation to ensure maximum and long term impact. Our colleagues in the Development and Alumni Relations Office are committed to raising funds to support our ambitions and, together as a University,

we will gradually change the landscape of opportunity to ensure Queen's is a place of learning and discovery for all.

For 2019-2020, key actions planned include:

Deliver Fair and Flexible Access

- Review our Admissions policy to widen the range of qualifications that can be considered, ensure clear and expanded articulation routes which enable entry from FE Colleges, and introduce contextualised admissions to take account of a range of indicators of disadvantage.
- Expand the Pathways Opportunity Programme to 250 places in 2020 offering an extended range of Pathways in Health and Life Sciences and Engineering and Physical Sciences.
- Work with Further Education Colleges, and in particular Belfast Metropolitan, to develop and





promote a broader and more flexible range of progression routes to Higher Education, with a focus on growth areas.

Supporting Educational Attainment in partnership with key stakeholders

- Explore further opportunities to build on the Community Focussed Model of delivery that is already underway in the Shankill.
- Undertake a rapid research review to identify effective attainment raising interventions to inform a range of pilot programmes with target schools and groups.
- Deliver the *Reading Together* programme, alongside a new pilot programme of support for young people in care, with Hazelwood Integrated College.

Supporting Student Success

- Identify academic support required for specific student groups to ensure successful transition and academic achievement.

- Enhance Graduate prospects by working with a range of role models and support providers such as peers, alumni and employers to provide appropriate expertise. This will also include a bespoke support package by building on the successful Lloyds Scholars Scheme.

Governance

To support this work,

- A Widening Participation Strategy Project Implementation Group is being established, chaired by Professor David Jones, and will meet for the first time on the 11th December 2019.



- An Advisory Group will be formed to strengthen our collaboration with key internal and external stakeholders to ensure outcomes are addressing the key challenges identified.
- Hold our first Regional Forum in April 2020 to share practice and identify opportunities to work together.

In summary....

Achieving equality of educational opportunity is not easy; it is not just a matter of waiving fees or offering scholarships and many of the problems reside early in the education system. However, with our Strategy, we can, and will, play our part in ensuring all students who want to access higher education, not only can access it, but will thrive in it.

If you would like to find out more or if you currently working on a project that you think is relevant to our ambitions please email: wpu@qub.ac.uk

Routes for Professional Development through CED and the Queen's Merit Award

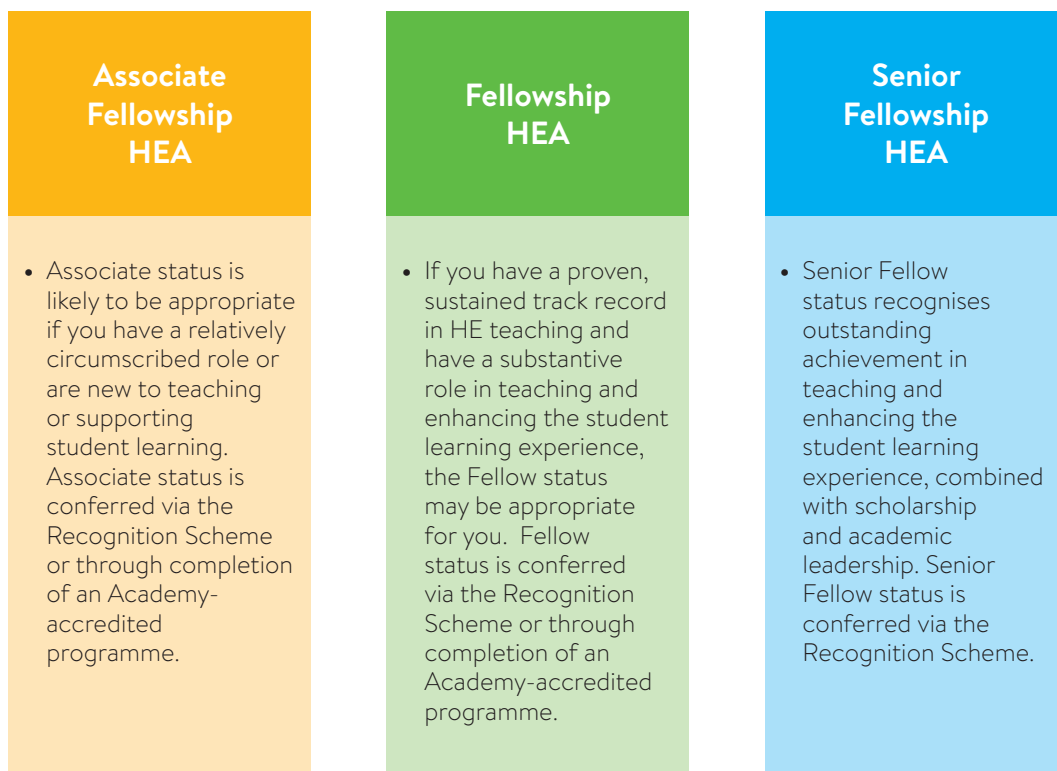
By Karen Fraser, Centre for Educational Development

Advance HE manages the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) which recognises teaching quality to improve the student experience and forms the basis for its professional recognition schemes. The HEA Fellowship Scheme is part of Advance HE and works with higher education providers and organisations to improve the professional experience of HE teachers through fellowships, accreditation, awards and professional development provision.

The Queen's Merit Award is a Professional Recognition Scheme which enables individuals in Queen's to gain HEA fellowship status. This scheme is open to all staff who have a role in teaching and/or supporting learning in Higher Education and provides national recognition of commitment to professionalism in teaching and supporting learning.

The image below outlines the various levels of Fellowship and provides some information on which route might suit you best – for more information try out the Advance HE decision tool to find out which category is best for you;

<https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/form/fellowship-decision-tool>



If you would like to apply for any of the HEA Fellowships via the Queen's Merit Award scheme, please go to;

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/CentreforEducationalDevelopment/CoursesEventsProfessionalRecognition/HEA/>

For more information please contact Karen Fraser at qma@qub.ac.uk

Advance HE – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the Curriculum Project

By Tracy Galvin, Centre for Educational Development

In the context of increasing learner variability, and to ensure student equality in access, experience and outcomes, EDI has become a high priority across UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In Queen’s, our student population is continuously shifting.

We are now moving toward increasing numbers of under-represented groups, mature students, students with caring responsibilities, students with disabilities and mental health, and, in particular, international students. Moreover, there has been a significant rise in students disclosing individual needs with the Disability Office (including mental health) in recent years. International students alone are currently at 2600, with a target of just under 4000 by 2021. A diverse student cohort brings numerous advantages to the University but, unless there is institution-wide joined-up thinking it can also bring challenges and pressures for students, for academic staff, student support services, professional services, and the wider University community. One-way to counteract these challenges is to refocus how we approach inclusive learning, teaching and assessment through a Communities of Practice (CoP) approach and EDI in the Curriculum agenda.

Queen’s has partnered with Advance HE and 9 other UK institutions to gain first-hand knowledge of how others have implemented and embedded change in relation to EDI in the Curriculum; this is the second time the project has taken place UK-wide. The project aims to develop a clearer picture of what embedding EDI in the curriculum may look like. Through discussions with key stakeholders across Queen’s, the intention is to understand the readiness to drive the EDI agenda and implement institutional change (if needed). The project considers how pedagogies and practices within the curriculum might advance equity of opportunity, enhance a sense of belonging and promote the University as inclusive to support the widening participation agenda.

To complement EDI, two interest groups, which were set up organically, have now been formalised to report

directly into the Supporting Student Attainment Action Group (SSAAG), chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Students. The Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC) Group was established in May 2019. One of the most utilised definitions of IoC is the ‘incorporation of international, intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the content of the curriculum as well as learning outcomes, assessment tasks, teaching methods and support services of a programme of study’ (Leask 2015, p.9). IoC is one of the strands in the Education Strategy 2016-2021 that is identified as a key factor to promote inclusivity at Queen’s, and is included in our Corporate Plan 2016-2021. The second Group, which focuses on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), was established in June 2019 and looks to enhance Queen’s profile in the promotion of inclusive pedagogic excellence, staff/student partnerships, and student outcomes in terms of

retention, employability, progression and engagement. UDL is promoted as a philosophy, education framework, and a set of principles for designing and delivering flexible approaches to teaching and learning that address student diversity within the classroom context (Capp 2017). A critical attribute of UDL is that it ‘provides scope to unify planning among differing strands of the student experience including student services, library services, information services, estates, information technologies and the wider academy’. (Bracken 2019). UDL is central to the Education Strategy 2016-2021 where in 4.1 it states that ‘by 2020-21 we will offer a high quality, dynamic and inclusive education portfolio, reflecting values of equality and diversity’. Both Groups, supported by senior management, have an institution-wide membership that includes academic staff, a number of professional services, the Students’ Union, the Graduate School, Information Services, and the Centre for Educational Development.

If you would like further information, please contact me on t.galvin@qub.ac.uk.



QUB ANNUAL LEARNING AND TEACHING CONFERENCE 2020

Opportunities and Challenges of Internationalisation in Higher Education

8 April 2020

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QUEEN'S
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CENTRE FOR
EDUCATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



Queen's Merit Award New Programmes

(externally accredited by SEDA)

The Centre for Educational Development (CED) is developing a number of new professional development programmes. These blended learning programmes will be delivered by educational developers from CED.

The programmes include:

- Leading Programmes
- Developing Leadership in Educational Practice
- Supporting Learning in a Digital Age
- Leading and Embedding Technology-Enhanced Learning

Programmes vary in length from 11-19 weeks and all feature a form of assessment that must be passed in order to complete the programme and achieve the relevant award.

Details will be advertised as the programmes become available for enrolment during 2020. Details will be available on iTrent in due course.



For more information please contact CED at
qma@qub.ac.uk