Reflections on the 'educational pivot'

Professor Julie McLeod
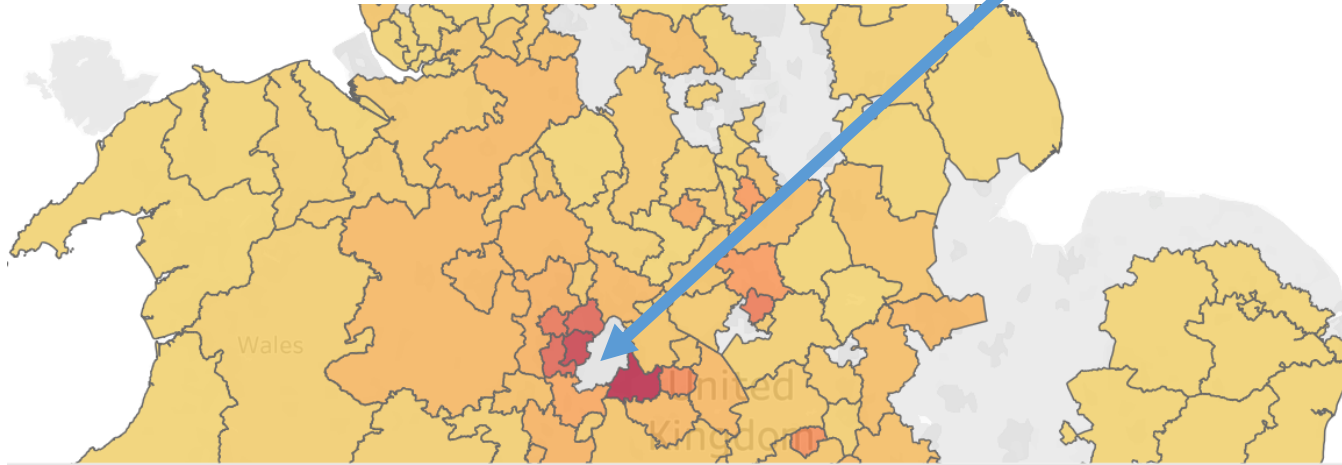Pro Vice Chancellor for Learning & Teaching
Birmingham City University

NERUPI conference (September 2020)

Know your students

- ✓ High level of local and commuting students
- ✓ 70% in own or family homes
- ✓ High BAME student body

Birmingham

Strong social learning communities

Impact of lockdown - through BCU student lens

			Weighted Average		
Label					
Sample Size			203		
Rank	Category	Issue	Percentage mentioning issue	Ranks climbed since survey w/c 11/05/20	
1	Studying and Learning from Home	Lack of quiet study space	43%	0	
2	Studying and Learning from Home	Access to printing	38%	0	
3	Studying and Learning from Home	Lack of study space	31%	1	
4	Studying and Learning from Home	WIFI speed	30%	-1	
5	Studying and Learning from Home	WIFI connection	30%	1	
6	University Response - Coronavirus	Lack of information about grades/classification	25%	-1	
7	University Response - Coronavirus	Lack of general communication from staff about new arrangements for learning and teaching	24%	0	
8	Learning and Teaching Online	Lack of interactive lectures	23%	5	
9	Learning and Teaching Online	Lack of feedback (general)	22%	5	
10	Learning and Teaching Online	Lack of learning resources online	18%	-2	

10	Learning and Teaching Online	Lack of learning resources online	18%	-2
11	Learning and Teaching Online	Inadequate online lecture content	18%	4
12	Studying and Learning from Home	My home computer is inadequate for my study needs	18%	7
13	University Response - Coronavirus	Lack of information about claiming extenuating circumstances	18%	-1
14	Studying and Learning from Home	Difficulty accessing library support	17%	3
15	Safety and Wellbeing	Availability of mental health support	17%	-4
16	Studying and Learning from Home	eBook availability	16%	5
17	Advice and Information	Time taken to reply to emails	16%	-7
18	Learning and Teaching Online	Lecture disruption (technology)	16%	0
19	Learning and Teaching Online	Moodle content	15%	15
20	Learning and Teaching Online	Lack of feedback on formative work	15%	25

Birmingham City University SU heat map survey (May-June)

Student engagement: the digitally-enabled curriculum

Challenges

- Students are faced with a lack of spatial non-verbal cues

- There are restrictions in reading body language

- A fear of technology, problems with connectivity, and limitations on learner's IT ability can limit participation.

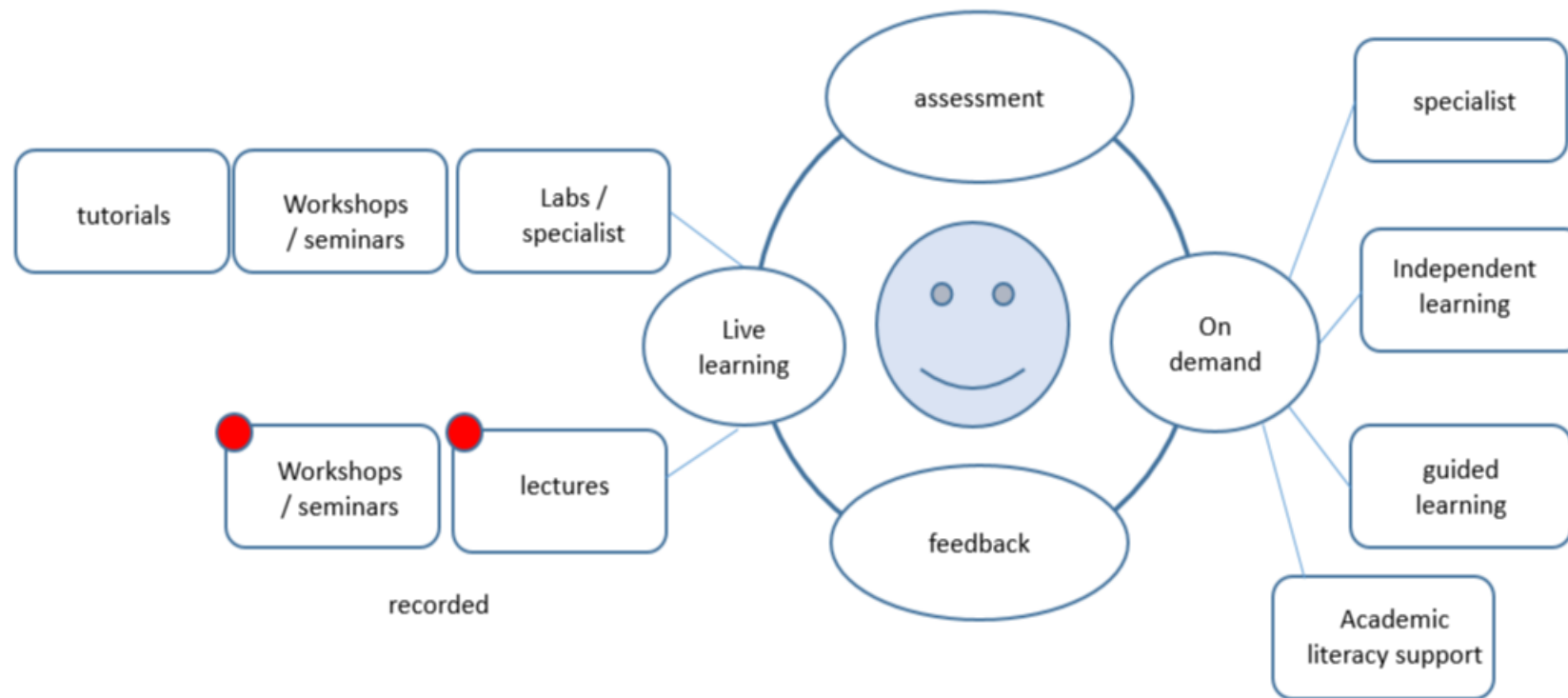- As with all online interaction, there are privacy concerns.

Benefits

- Students have the chance to learn to read other cues

- The conversation takes place while the student is comfortable in their home environment

- Meetings can take place at any time.

- Students do not need to travel to attend meetings

Helen Ball (May 2020) WonkHE blog

VLE and wider learning environment has a wealth of resources – but you need to be able to navigate

Structured approach to on-campus and on-demand delivery

Idea taken from: Centre for Education Management, University of Surrey (2020) AdvanceHE webinar

Digital Design team

✓ Centre for Academic Practice

✓ TEL team

✓ Centre for Academic Success

✓ digital champions from the Faculties

✓ External consultancy

Cross university road map of delivery with 36 courses identified in phase 1

Design sprints, bespoke workshops on digital solutions, learner engagement lunchtime sessions

encompass subject and skill expertise in staff development, digital pedagogy, academic literacy and student engagement.

o Consistency and Quality of Moodle Experience

o Teaching, Learning & Assessment Methods

o Communications and Community

Summary for discussion

How do we;

- o fully exploit the benefits of online learning environment?

- o best ensure courses and modules support student engagement?

- o support our students to engage with the on- and off-campus learning and teaching?

Transition to University: the digitally-enabled curriculum

Lessons from online provision
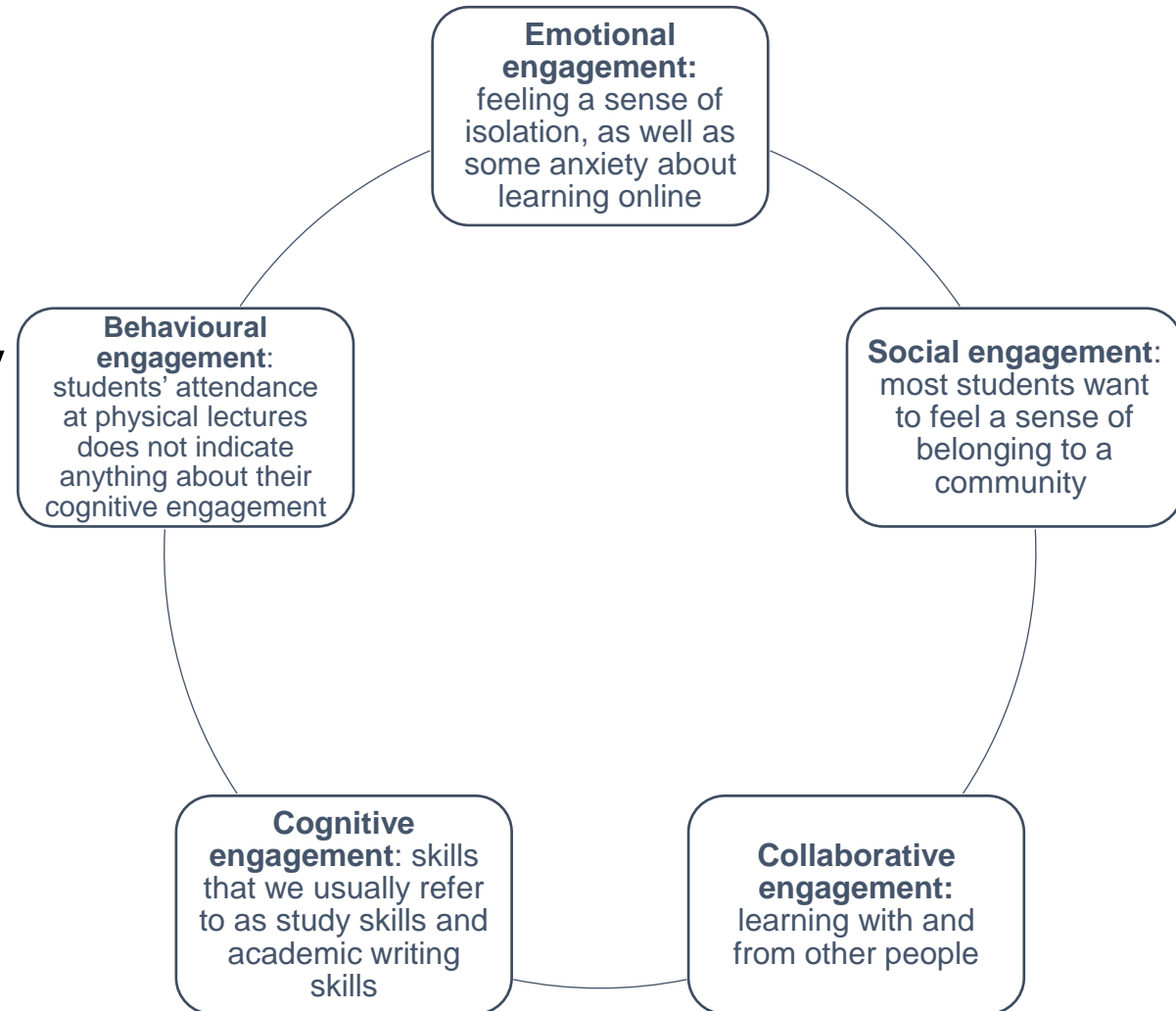
- flexible in terms of time, place and pace
- More inclusive – with effective facilitation
- Heightens students digital capability and skills for employment
- Structure and clear guidance on expectation critical

Emotional engagement: feeling a sense of isolation, as well as some anxiety about learning online

Social engagement: most students want to feel a sense of belonging to a community

Behavioural engagement: students' attendance at physical lectures does not indicate anything about their cognitive engagement

Collaborative engagement: learning with and from other people

Cognitive engagement: skills that we usually refer to as study skills and academic writing skills

Redmond et al (2018)

Transition of students to new ways of learning

Supporting effective management of expectations

Students transitioning into or from higher education should be able to access information to develop their own pathways for growth. They need to understand the higher education environment and their role in it.

Setting Goals: Establish your goals for what you want to achieve and plan how they will fit into your longer term goals.

Informed Realism: It is important to become familiar with any new requirements and to be realistic about how you will meet them.

Flexibility: Good coping mechanisms will come from approaching differences between reality and expectations with some flexibility.

Setting Goals
Managing Expectations
Flexibility
Informed Realism

Mindset card sort activity: cards

Fixed Mindset Statements 👎

Growth Mindset Statements 👍

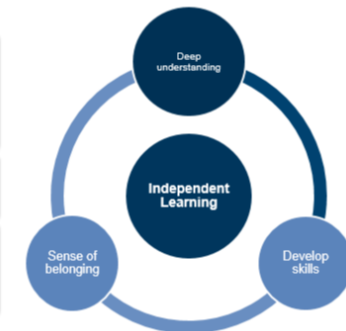|		
I have never been good at maths	I can't write essays	I always lose marks for poor referencing
I'm not clever enough to understand this	The other students understand this better	I give up too early
I never sleep well the night before an exam	This module is too hard	I should never have started this course
I can learn from my mistakes	9am lectures give me good practice for my future job	With a bit more effort my essay writing would improve

Supporting effective independent learning

By adopting a good strategy to manage your time and by prioritising and planning ahead using some of the tools provided in this workshop, you will better equip yourself to become an effective independent learner. Being an effective independent learner is a key requirement for success in higher education.

Deeper Understanding: By managing and planning your independent study time you can develop deeper understanding of the subject material because you find out more than you are told in class.

Skills Development: Graduate capabilities and employability skills can be enhanced.

Sense of Belonging: A sense of belonging to the academic community and the institution can be developed along with networking with fellow learners.

Deep understanding
Independent Learning
Sense of belonging
Develop skills

Enhancementthemes.ac.uk

Welcome to the Success course

This course has been designed to help you develop and enhance your academic skills.

Whether you are doing your first degree, or your Master's or PhD, this course provides information and support to help you achieve your full potential at Birmingham City University.

The course covers an introduction to **Starting University** (**Study Skills**

The course also has a section to help you plan your assign

Steps to Success Discovery Tool

Steps to Success Discovery Tool

The tool focuses on the following areas: university expectations; academic reading and writing; analysis of texts; referencing; study skills; working with numbers; reading and using data; practical IT skills; digital wellbeing and e-safety; digital communication and collaboration; wellbeing.

In approximately one week you will be emailed a report which outlines the areas of strength that were indicated by your answers and areas that you might like to focus some time and energy on developing. We'll also provide some links to information and services that are available to assist you at any point during your time at Birmingham City University.

Starting

You may start whenever you are ready. We recommend that you no take no longer than one hour to complete this.

Remote learning through a student lens

At the Centre for Academic Success we've created resources and how-to guides to help you as you navigate your remote learning.

Introduction to Remote Learning

Planning your Remote Learning

Technology for Remote Learning

Student vlogs on Remote Learning

Making the most of Remote Learning

Assessment – flexible approach

Digital Assessment Centre

✓ 80-seater PC centre

✓ bookable

✓ E-procturing capability for remote-access assessments

✓ synchronous assessment for those off- and on-campus

I think they are really good! Makes you feel more relaxed and also beneficial for those like myself who commute to University. Saves the stress of making sure I am there in plenty of time before the exam.

SU Pulse Survey

Summary for discussion

o Opportunity to review and realign assessment strategy

o Inclusive and accessible

o Support for those who need physical co-location

o Review impact on mental health and wellbeing of students