

ENHANCING ONLINE ENGAGEMENT: WORKSHOP REDEVELOPMENT FOR STUDENTS, BY STUDENTS

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SUBTHEME: Other

PROBLEM

We present a case study describing a student-staff partnership that aimed to increase student engagement in the online, external, zoom-mediated workshops of a foundational course in modelling and programming for science students. Students enrolled externally had reported they were unclear of online workshop learning objectives, and tutors observed that online workshops were more challenging to facilitate and had consistently lower engagement than in face-to-face workshops. This project aimed to enhance engagement and sense of belonging for the externally enrolled students.

ACTION

The online workshop experience was redesigned to address these challenges by implementing the concepts of nudging, expectation management and classroom management for engagement from Brown et al. (2022) conceptual framework of enhanced online learning. New resources were developed and implemented week-to-week during the semester, to receive real-time feedback from tutors and students. The project outcomes included 12 Jupyter Rise online workshop sheets incorporating signposting and explicit prompts to enhance student engagement, 12 Kahoot quizzes, 12 tutor “run sheets”, as well as the implementation and documentation of a novel strategy for a “facilitator/moderator” dynamic between the two academic staff leading the session.

REFLECTION

Resources have been permanently implemented, and we were granted ethics approval to host surveys on the course-pages for current and previous students. We received no statistically significant outcome from quantitative survey responses; the data demonstrated the diversity of student experience, and future direction will be to move from Likert scale questions to open response. However, tutor experience and student feedback indicate positive reception. For O. Jessop, personal tutor ratings increased in ‘was approachable’ (4.75 to 5), ‘encouraged student input’ (4.67 to 5), and ‘gave helpful feedback’ (4.77 to 5). Post-implementation qualitative tutor feedback from students praised “flow of workshops”, citing “feeling comfortable contributing and to ask questions”, and specifically referenced measures implemented as part of this upgrade. Overall course evaluations of “Learning Materials Assisted” scores in “strong agree” rose from 40% to 45% and scores in “disagree” declined from 2% to 0% immediately during and prior to implementation. Other universities have adopted this framework in response to our dissemination at the First Year in Maths Conference 2023.

REFERENCES

Brown, A., Lawrence, J., Basson, M., & Redmond, O. (2022) A conceptual framework to enhance student online learning and engagement in higher education, *Higher Education Research and Development*, 41:2, 284-299.

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