

30th ICDE World Conference 10 to 13 November 2025

Wellington New Zealand

Concise Talks, Posters, Workshops & Panels

ABSTRACTS

Edited by Amanda Cossham, Bronte Car, and Claire Goode



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Editor's foreword

These proceedings from the 30th International Council for Distance Education (ICDE) World Conference 2025 represent some of the best research about online, distance and flexible education from around the world.

The theme for the conference was **Ako: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education**. The Māori concept of 'ako' means reciprocity in learning and teaching, the exchange of ideas. These proceedings will support ongoing engagement among distance education researchers as well as documenting the activity of the conference itself. Anyone seeking an overview of current research will find these proceedings valuable.

Papers include innovative practice, new developments, and novel theoretical frameworks and approaches, across all levels of education from K-12 through to higher education including vocational education.

Papers were linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, and topics include: assessment, micro-credentials, institutional culture, sustainable education and education systems, learning design, professional education for academics and teachers, student experience of distance education, evaluation frameworks, inclusivity and scalability, and Indigenous knowledge and knowledge transfer (among many others). Artificial intelligence features prominently and from many angles (including a focus on AI literacy), although not at the expense of other themes.

I would like to thank my co-editors, Dr Bronte Carr, who was largely responsible for editing the concise talk, workshop/panel, and poster abstract volume, and Dr Claire Goode, who assisted with the full papers volume. We acknowledge the support of Southland Institute of Technology (SIT) in providing Dr Carr's time for this work.

Dr Amanda Cossham

March 2026

Towards Sustainability in Distance and Online Higher Education: An Integral Model for Higher Education Institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean

Santiago Acosta¹ and Mary Morocho¹

¹ Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Quality in Higher Education

Concise talk

The Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Quality in Higher Distance Education (CALED) and the UNESCO Chair in Sustainable Development of the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL) present a comprehensive model to evaluate the sustainability of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in distance and online modality in Latin America and the Caribbean. This model includes eight key dimensions: governance, academia, research, links with society, quality assurance, internationalization, institutional welfare and infrastructure.

Through strategic indicators, the model allows the impact of HEIs to be measured in terms of accessibility, inclusion, resilience and sustainability, providing key information for informed decision-making. Its approach promotes quality, equity and innovation in distance education, addressing the current challenges of the sector in a digital and globalized context.

The research seeks to strengthen the accountability and scalability of HEIs, aligning them with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and emerging trends in higher education. The implementation of this model represents an essential tool for the continuous improvement of higher education in the region, ensuring a more inclusive, flexible and sustainable development.

Peer-Powered Resilience: Practical Strategies for Online Doctoral Success

Rima Al-Tawil¹, Kathryn Johnson³, and Chadia Mansour²

¹ Cape Breton University, ² Athabasca University, ³ Northern Michigan University

Concise talk

This presentation shares practical tips for successful doctoral program completion from the perspectives of six women from diverse backgrounds and academic disciplines. We started the Doctorate of Distance Education at Athabasca University in 2018 and all graduated, thanks at least in part to the support strategies we created amongst ourselves. What began as an informal forum for helping each other with coursework developed into a multi-faceted support system offering both structure and flexibility that may be easily adapted to a variety of contexts and groups. Key practices that sustained our connection included scheduled “silent library” sessions, regular check-ins, and impromptu “crisis meetings” during challenging periods. Through these strategies, we created a safe environment where vulnerability was welcomed, and difficulties discussed openly without judgment. The diversity of our disciplinary backgrounds—including nursing, language education, history, instructional design, and digital pedagogies—enriched our discussions and provided multiple perspectives on issues in distance education. We also discuss how our peer mentoring cultivated leadership skills in the field of open pedagogies, which many of us now apply in our professional roles with graduate students. Our presentation offers concrete strategies for building resilient, inclusive academic communities that persist beyond program completion into professional practice.

Micro-Credentialing: A Sustainability Model for Higher Education Institutions?

Melinda Bandalaria¹

¹ **University of the Philippines - Open University**

Concise talk

Process documentation research (PDR) was conducted at the University of the Philippines - Open University (UPOU) to look at how micro-credentialing can impact the operations of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in general and at the Open University in particular. The initial findings of the exploratory study hinted on the possibility of considering micro-credentialing as a sustainability model for academic institutions. Specifically, this paper will deal with the following: (a) describe the different micro-credentialing models being implemented by UPOU, (b) describe the different components of micro-credentialing implementation to make it work, and (c) present how micro-credentialing can be a sustainability model for HEIs. Focusing on the different types of sustainability: financial sustainability, technological sustainability, operations sustainability, environmental impact, and social acceptability/sustainability. These initial findings can guide other academics who are also interested in implementing micro-credentialing and those who are exploring different sustainability models in the context of education. Further, the findings of this study can provide initial inputs for other researchers to explore how other emerging trends in education, like Artificial Intelligence (AI), can enhance the micro-credentialing model for sustainability.



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Beyond Detection: A Pedagogical Approach to Academic Integrity and Originality

Grant Beevers¹

¹ **Inspira**

Concise talk

Academic integrity is the basis of education, essential for critical thinking, genuine learning, and intellectual authenticity. This presentation will explore the historical evolution of plagiarism, from early documented cases in Roman times to recent modern challenges posed by the internet, translation tools, and the rapid rise of Large Language Models. I will emphasise why the evolution of ensuring originality requires continuous innovation and collaboration rather than static, policing-oriented solutions.

Project Aspen: A Single-Source-of-Truth Approach to Digital Transformation in Higher Education

Ria Borromeo¹, Roberto Figueroa¹, Diego Maranan¹, Margaret Jarmin-Suarez¹, and Emely Amoloza¹

¹ **University of the Philippines - Open University**

Concise talk

Effective data management is critical to evidence-based decision-making in order to achieve equitable quality education. Centralizing data from various sources significantly enhances accuracy and institutional responsiveness while learning analytics plays a vital role in monitoring student progress. Project Aspen, implemented at the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies at the University of the Philippines - Open University, is a series of initiatives that collectively exemplifies an approach to academic digital transformation wherein academic and institutional data are centralized into a single-source-of-truth system. This is achieved by federating databases related to both employee and student information into a unified repository, leveraging flexible, low-cost, no-code tools like Airtable. Real-time reporting, automated analytics, and dynamic portfolio-generation enable streamlined processes, improved accountability, and flexible reporting. We highlight Aspen's ability to integrate data efficiently to address fragmented reporting and redundant data entry. Our talk highlights Aspen's framework, implementation challenges, and key successes, offering actionable insights for smaller institutions seeking to modernize their data infrastructures for digital transformation.

Integrating GenAI in Online Contexts: A Responsive Instructional Design Approach

Barb Brown, and Verena Roberts¹

¹Thompson Rivers University

Concise talk

Presenters will describe a responsive instructional design approach which embeds generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in the context of online teaching and learning in post-secondary settings. As part of a collaborative group of educators, the presenters are the co-authors of a chapter about practical uses of GenAI in learning design as part of a learning series for the University of Calgary's, Centre for Artificial Intelligence, Ethics, Literacy, and Integrity. Responsive instructors understand the context and interconnection of the components in a learning system and make purposeful changes to their learning designs which promote inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education practices. The presenters will draw on their instructional design and teaching experiences to explain how they used Torres et al. (2018) digital skill development framework for technology-mediated learning to design their responsive approach used in online courses integrating GenAI. Presenters will also distinguish between synchronous and asynchronous online learning design contexts and identify the potential intersections with experiential learning and open education practices to underscore expanded approaches for developing technology-mediated learning designs. The authors are in the process of conducting research to examine the expanded facets of the framework and potential for planning courses or lessons using GenAI-powered applications and for conducting research in instructional design in online learning contexts.

The BITE Project: Belonging and Inclusion in Tertiary Education

Adrienne Buckingham¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

Background/Aims: A sense of belonging in education promises to support the wellbeing of ākongā and promote academic outcomes such as engagement, retention and graduation. This study aimed to explore the factors which contribute to a sense of belonging and identify barriers to inclusion through a series of qualitative interviews using the Hui Process.

Methods: This study involved 12 participants who are enrolled in tertiary study. The researcher, a tauīwi woman, engaged with the Hui Process (Lacey et al., 2011) to guide the semi-structured, one-on-one interviews. The questions were largely strengths-based. The interviews were recorded and transcribed using Glean software. Thematic analysis using QUAGOL (Dierckx de Casterlé, 2012) helped to identify patterns in participants' experience of educational belonging in the tertiary environment. A follow up interview will ask if the participant is still enrolled at least 3 months after the initial interview.

Findings: The study anticipates generating insights into the perceived sense of belonging on campus. Ākongā described their own sense of place and connections in their own ways and identified some barriers to a sense of belonging. The themes that emerged were Lecturers/Kaimahi, the campus environment, peer relationships and identity reflection.

Conclusion/Significance: This research provides valuable insights for educators considering the relational practices which includes diverse students. Belonging and inclusion research has been done in tertiary education, but this project is specific to ākongā in the South, many of whom relocate to study. The participants include members of the rainbow and neurodiverse communities. The participants also reflect the bicultural and multicultural aspects of Aotearoa. How better to discover inclusive education that ask a range of ākongā about their experiences and share ākongā voice.

Dierckx de Casterlé, B., Gastmans, C., Bryon, E., & Denier, Y. (2012). QUAGOL: a guide for qualitative data analysis. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 49(3), 360-71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2011.09.012>

Lacey, C., Huria, T., Beckert, L., Gillies, M., & Pitama, S. (2011). The Hui Process: A framework to enhance the doctor-patient relationship with Māori. *New Zealand Medical Journal*, 124(1347), 72-78.

International Students' Perspectives on HyFlex Learning at a New Zealand Vocational Institute

Nathan Chicken, Jerrylynn Manuel¹, Orland Basas¹, Katrina Watt¹,
Carlo Gabriel¹, and Chandana Patabandige¹

¹ Southern Institute of Technology | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

Hybrid-Flexible (HyFlex) delivery is a model that affords ākonga (learners) greater accessibility to learning by providing them with the ability to participate in a manner that they prefer (onsite, online, or a combination of both). At the Southern Institute of Technology (a subsidiary of Te Pūkenga), HyFlex has been part of the organisation's repertoire of delivery modes since 2022 with approximately 20 programmes now on offer in that modality. In terms of course design, a conscious effort has been made to ensure that all learners, despite their geographic and temporal distribution, are able to engage with multiple sources of knowledge (i.e., online learning resources, instructors, and their peers). One area of concern is the impact of this type of design on international students who are not granted the same flexibility as their domestic counterparts because of the on-site attendance requirement stipulated by their visas and who may not be accustomed to a networked-learning style. It is questionable as to whether HyFlex is appropriate for papers with cohorts of mostly internationals. Using a phenomenological approach, this study sought to explore the perceptions of international students enrolled in post-graduate programmes at a vocational institute in New Zealand on their HyFlex experience.



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Do Educators as Learners Inform Classroom Activities?

Carolee Clyne^{1,2}, Surita Jhangiani³

¹Okanagan College, ²University of Northern British Columbia,

³University of British Columbia

Concise talk

This concise talk recaps a research study exploring what modes of learning educators prefer for themselves versus the modes selected for the learning environments they run. Technological tools, open practices and inclusive materials are weighted in contrast between personal preferences and educator choice for the classroom. This study looks to capture whether educators are aware of their own privilege in the selection of the materials, tools and activities for their learners. Reflection on the question “When they develop their educational environments do they consider flexibility and innovation through their choices for access, costs, and modalities?” Comparing how these choices align with what they prefer for their own learning experiences to identify if there exist lessons to consider for learning spaces. This talk looks to explore participants' perspectives on the impact of the study towards identifying the disruption of educator biases in selection of learning environment structures, tools, and resources.

Open Education for Veterinary Professionals: Enhancing Disease Outbreak Response for Food Security and Public Health

Naomi Cogger¹, Supatsak Subharat, and Katja Isaksen

¹ **Massey University**

Concise talk

Animal disease outbreaks threaten global food security and public health, particularly through zoonotic risks. Strengthening veterinary professionals' capacity to investigate outbreaks is essential for effective disease control. This presentation describes the development and evaluation of open e-modules designed for para-veterinary workers, field veterinarians, and central veterinary authorities. Developed in response to training conducted in Asia, these modules were created through shared learning and consultation, ensuring relevance to real-world challenges.

The modules integrate regional case studies. They are hosted on the World Organisation for Animal Health Education platform, are freely accessible, and designed for smartphones and tablets, addressing the resource constraints of professionals in remote areas. By leveraging technology, we improve access to quality education and enhance outbreak response capabilities.

Our approach aligns with *ako*, drawing from field experiences to create contextualized learning rather than enforcing rigid protocols. This fosters knowledge exchange and adaptation in disease control strategies. An ongoing evaluation will assess the impact on veterinary networks and disease resilience, ensuring that this open-access initiative contributes to sustainable improvements in animal health systems worldwide.

Transformation in Action: Looking Back Over 20 Plus Years at Open Polytechnic:

Mary-Liz Broadley¹ and Amanda Cossham¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

Open Polytechnic focuses uniquely on meeting the needs of people who want access to job-relevant learning delivered in their own time and place, playing an important role in Aotearoa New Zealand's tertiary education system.

Today, rapidly advancing digital technologies are re-shaping the world in which learners live, work, and study. We have developed, and continue to develop, new ways to enrich learners' experience of open, distance, flexible learning (ODFL); innovative and open teaching practices; creative ways to work together internally and externally with shareholders to maximise the scope of our programmes and provide these to learners, communities, iwi, and industries nationally; and new ways to re-vision flexible vocational learning to ensure accessibility and resilience in an increasingly fast-paced, 'always-on' world. Our ongoing organisational transformation responds to this reality, offering challenges and opportunities for kaimahi/staff. Drawing on the presenters' experiences and on discussions with other long-serving colleagues, this presentation will share perspectives of kaimahi/staff about how they have changed their teaching practices and learner-support approaches and continued to evolve to match changing societal expectations and meet diverse learner needs. We will conclude by discussing how we currently shape strategies to ensure responsiveness to our learners.

Impact of Contextualization of Engineering Education Material Taught in the Distance Mode

Gregory De Costa¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

Analysis of retention and completion rates of engineering education learners in the ODFL (open, distance, and flexible learning) mode indicate that these values increase as the learners go through the years. This is attributed to the learner getting accustomed to the ODFL mode, but are there other reasons?

Engineering education relates to eight attributes:

1. Natural science knowledge
2. Mathematics knowledge
3. Engineering fundamental knowledge
4. Specialized engineering knowledge
5. Design process knowledge
6. Engineering practice knowledge
7. Engineering in society knowledge
8. Research-based knowledge

The first three relate to fundamental knowledge associated in the first year of study, difficult to contextualize. The next five align to engineering in practice (Contextualization naturally happens) associated in the next 3 years of study.

Demographics indicate that Open Polytechnic's engineering learners are predominantly in the work force and hence not only the learning material but through their work contextualization of learning happens in the latter years.

Hence, it is evident that the contextualization percentage increases as the learner goes through the system and therefore it could be said that the retention and completion rates in Engineering education in the ODFL increases as contextualization increases.

ICCE Became ICDE in 1982: What was Gained? What was Lost?

John Daniel¹

¹ **Acsenda School of Management**

Concise talk

A healthy organisation needs some institutional memory. Much of this conference will obsess about the role of artificial intelligence in the future of distance education, but I shall remind you of our past. The name, membership and aims of ICDE have evolved in interesting ways since it was created 87 years ago in 1938, which is respectable longevity for a professional association. This is our 30th world conference and there are brief summaries of earlier conferences on the web. ICDE's history is quite well-documented.

When did ICDE start?

Correspondence education began in the mid-19th century and grew as postal services expanded. In 1936 a conference on supervised correspondence study was held in New York. One delegate was J. W. Gibson, director of high school correspondence instruction in British Columbia. Gibson knew leaders of correspondence education in other countries and suggested that it was time to get them together internationally. They convened in Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, in 1938.

However, World War II then intervened, and ten years elapsed before the next international meeting was held in Nebraska and the International Council for Correspondence Education was formally created. The 3rd conference was held in 1950 in Christchurch, and we are back in New Zealand again for this 30th ICDE conference.

Developments in the 1970s

I attended my first ICCE conference 50 years ago. That was in Brighton, UK, in 1975, and I was at subsequent meetings in New Delhi in 1978 and Vancouver in 1982. It was an important time in the development of open learning, and it changed ICCE.

The UK Open University had welcomed its first cohort of 25,000 students in 1971. It was an immediate media sensation and soon enrolled more students than any other UK university. In those days only a tiny proportion of the population had access to university in most countries, so the UKOU model attracted governments that were seeking to make higher education more widely available.

In this context, a speech by Walter Perry, the founding vice-chancellor of the UKOU, was the star turn at ICCE's Brighton conference in 1975. In presenting the UKOU's multi-media learning system and its achievements Perry criticised earlier manifestations of correspondence education. He alleged that its business model relied on retaining the tuition fees of learners who dropped out early in their courses because the providers offered them little support.

ICCE's president at the time was David Young, head of the Rapid Results College, a large provider of correspondence teaching internationally. In response to Perry's criticism, he pointed out that organisations like his, which were funded solely by tuition fees, would also be able support students more fully if, like the Open University, they had access to public funds. This exchange highlighted a growing tension within the ICCE membership.

During the 1970s open universities were created in various countries. To celebrate its 10th anniversary in 1979, the UKOU held a conference for people involved in these new institutions. I represented Athabasca University and was tremendously impressed by the vigour, idealism and determination of leaders such as Otto Peters, who founded the German FernUniversität in 1974 and Wichit Srisa-an, who created the Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University in Thailand in 1978.

As the UKOU's conference wound up, Walter Perry proposed the establishment of a follow-up mechanism, such as a global association of open universities, which became a lively topic of discussion within the international distance education community. At ICCE's New Delhi conference in 1978 I was named programme chair for the upcoming 1982 Vancouver conference and put together a programme committee. In our discussions, notably with David Sewart of the UKOU and Kevin Smith of Australia's University of New England, we concluded that broadening ICCE's membership to embrace the expanding field of distance education would provide a better forum for discussing the issues of open universities than creating a separate association for a small number of institutions.

Renaming the Council

To expand the membership and scope of ICCE we needed to give it a fresh identity, because most of the people and institutions we wished to attract did not use the term 'correspondence education'. Settling on the term 'distance education' was easy, because it was widely used in the titles of papers submitted to the 1982 conference. We saw 'distance education' simply as a term to identify this educational sector among practitioners, not necessarily as a descriptor for institutional publicity, where many expressions were in use, chosen largely for their perceived appeal to students.

The motion to change ICCE to ICDE gained majority support at the Vancouver conference. Sadly, most of the commercial and military correspondence schools, which had been an important constituency of ICCE, did not renew their membership in subsequent years. In my view that this had less to do with the change of name than the shift of emphasis that became evident in Vancouver. ICDE acquired a stronger focus on higher education and on public sector institutions. Theory and research took a larger place than ICCE had seen previously.

What's in a name?

I shall stop there in this short trip down our institutional memory lane. Since 1982 ICDE has grown and diversified enormously, greatly aided by the decision of the Government of Norway, in 1988, to fund a permanent secretariat for the Council in Oslo. At that time ICDE became the International Council for Open and Distance Education, although the acronym ICDE was unchanged. The name has not changed since then although our field seems always to be looking for new descriptors. The Open University was originally called the 'University of the Air'. Wikipedia says that our field is 'online, open and technology enhanced education'. The theme of this conference is 'inclusive, scalable and sustainable' education. Tuesday's book launch referred to 'opening education by design'.

All this is healthy. Online learning, web-based learning and artificial intelligence are all changing distance education. I simply hope they will all continue to make it more open.

How Higher Education Leaders Shape Institutional Resourcing Strategies to Prepare Students for AI-Driven Labour Markets: A Comparative Study

Josep Duart¹, and Patricia Mangeol^{1,2}

¹ **Universitat Oberta De Catalunya**, ² **Sandbox Inc.**

Concise talk

While research has begun exploring the pedagogy and labour market impacts of the adoption of generative AI in society, little attention has been paid to how HEI leaders strategically and equitably respond to AI-driven job market shifts.

This talk presents a study aiming to fill that gap by examining how leaders shape institutional responses to AI-driven labour markets, focusing on financial and human resourcing as transformation tools. Grounded in organizational sociology, the project leverages economic research to contextualize AI's labour market impacts and technology adoption frameworks to assess the role of individual perceptions of generative AI in decision-making.

Using a systematic literature review, an online survey of leaders, and a multiple-case study design, the research examines how three HEIs prepare students for AI-driven labour markets. Case selection ensures comparability (broad educational offer, social mobility and labour market preparation focus) and diversity (institutions from Europe, North America, and Asia, and one online institution).

One case study will be the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). Insights from preliminary data collection will be shared to initiate a discussion about advancing organizational change theories in higher education while supporting HEI leaders seeking to make equitable, forward-thinking resourcing decisions in the age of generative AI.

Empowering Global Voices in Curriculum Development: A Student-Driven Approach to Course Creation

Heidi Buchert Egan¹

¹Brigham Young University-Idaho

Concise talk

In the spirit of *ako*, which emphasizes reciprocal learning within education, our curriculum development process leverages the diverse experiences of international student assistants to enhance inclusive curriculum design practices. This concise talk will showcase the Brigham Young University-Idaho (BYU-Idaho) practice where students are not only consumers in the educational process but are pivotal in shaping course content that resonates with a global audience. By involving students as both assistants and cultural consultants, we actively engage them in reviewing and refining educational materials—including textbooks, assignments, and assessments—to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness. Additionally, program councils travel to countries where the student body is growing to find out region-specific needs, job skills, and applications that can be added to the curriculum. This approach not only enhances the accessibility and resilience of our programs but also significantly uplifts the quality and context of the curriculum. Our student-driven development process has transformed our curriculum planning, making a BYU-Idaho education more inclusive and reflective of our diverse student body. This presentation will give an overview of our processes, outcomes, and student feedback on this participatory model, offering insights into how such practices contribute to lifelong learning and uphold the principles of indigeneity, innovation, and openness in education.

Leveraging a Heutagogical Ethos in Postgraduate Professional Education

John Egan¹

¹ University of Auckland

Concise talk

Heutagogy “is concerned with learner-centred learning that sees the learner as the major agent in their own learning, which occurs as a result of personal experiences” (Hase & Kenyon, 2007). In particular, the concept of self-directed learning is advanced to self-determined learning. In other words, heutagogic learners drive the content and process of learning. This is not necessarily a solitary experience: teachers and mentors can help heutagogic learners, thus making it relevant to online postgraduate professional education.

Most postgraduate students will have transitioned towards self-directed and self-regulated learning, but purposive learning design can advance this further to self-determined learning. In particular, a flexible, equitable assessment ethos can allow different students to produce comparable pieces of work with similar cognitive loads, calibrated to their own learning goals. Reflective learning is key to this, either in the form of stand-alone assignments (such as a “flight path” requiring learners to reflect on what they want to learn from a course) or as elements of other assessments.

In the end, learners who engage substantively with the tasks develop their own socially situated heutagogic practice. These should serve them well professionally and if they wish to pursue advance postgraduate research studies.

Risk-Based Approach to Blended Learning Design: A Decision Framework for Sustainable Workplace Learning in the Canadian Healthcare Context

Deborah Exelby¹

¹ Athabasca University

Concise talk

Background: Experiential and work integrated learning ensures healthcare staff are competent and confident to provide safe patient care. However, new employee orientation, compliance training, and continuing education needs far outweigh training budgets, requiring instructional designers to utilize sustainable and scalable design practices. An evidence-informed framework is needed that balances training efficiency and effectiveness, for making ethical and justifiable design decisions for workplace training.

Purpose: The goal was to investigate how instructional designers use blended learning to manage the resource, time, and budget constraints of an ever-changing healthcare workplace. Relationships between learning content risk, delivery modes, and interaction techniques were evaluated to develop a decision framework that assists instructional designers in determining the best blended learning mix.

Method: This mixed methods study used an online anonymous survey and correlation analysis to explore the preferences of (n = 26) Canadian instructional designers representing the healthcare workplace context.

Results: Quantitative analysis found: (a) no preference for synchronous delivery, (b) low preference for blended learning delivery, and (c) high preference for in-person/face-to-face delivery via learner-instructor interaction specifically for high-risk learning content.

Conclusion: This study proposed a novel risk-based decision matrix for development of sustainable and effective blended learning in the healthcare workplace training environment.

Facilitating Scope Transition in Canadian Nursing Education: Improving Access, Quality, and Sustainability Through Innovation

Deborah Exelby¹, Kristin Petrovic¹, Venice Bryan¹, and Paige Gibbings¹

¹ Athabasca University

Concise talk

In Canada, Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) and Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs), are diploma-prepared nurses, while Registered Nurses (RNs) undertake an undergraduate degree. Few innovative nursing programs across Canada provide bridging education for LPN/RPN to the RN role. This study aims to identify markers of a successful transition in the final clinical preceptorship (CP) to provide recommendations that improve access, and quality programming for this diverse group of learners.

Goals and Methods

We used a qualitative, descriptive, two-phase design to explore the LPN/RPN transition to RN roles within three Canadian universities. Final CP students (n = 41) and preceptors (n = 48) were invited to participate in an anonymized digital survey and virtual interview. Data analysis was conducted in NVivo using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis framework (2006).

Results

Participants identified positive and negative CP influences and experiences that catalyse markers of transition, such as changes in role perception, clinical independence, and ways of thinking.

Conclusions

Findings suggest a tailored educational approach can facilitate a successful transition to the role of the RN. LPNs/RPNs who undertake further education to become RNs scaffold from such experience to advance their scope of practice and meet the ever-complex needs of the healthcare system.



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Not Another Online Discussion Forum! Ako and Asynchronicity for Access to Active Learning in a Dialogic Space

Dianne Forbes¹

¹ **University of Waikato**

Concise talk

Asynchronous Online Discussion (AOD) has been a mainstay of distance learning in university contexts for decades and has endured as a scalable and sustainable approach despite the increasing popularity of synchronous video technologies in recent years. When I started teaching online in 2002, I was immediately captivated by the potential AOD afforded for rich learning in an engaging dialogic space. Over many years, I have continued to teach, experiment, reflect and research AOD, with a focus on tertiary students' and teachers' participation and learning. My qualitative, interpretive work has explored diverse experiences and expectations, culminating in guidelines underpinning effective pedagogy. This concise talk will summarise key insights into the ways AOD embodies Ako, as knowledge-building and community engagement within a dialogic space. Inclusive practices in AOD will be discussed, with implications for access and equity. Topics touched upon will include student diversity, challenges, strategies, pedagogies, and assessment issues. The audience/participants will be invited to consider what can hinder AOD and how to generate AOD that is more active, dialogic, creative, critical, and relevant to students.

Myth-busting: Persistent Myths About Online Learning and Teaching in New Zealand Higher Education

Dianne Forbes¹ and Dilani Gedera²

¹ University of Waikato, ² Auckland University of Technology

Concise talk

When it comes to online education, everyone seems to have an opinion. But how well-informed are those opinions? What patterns of perception about online learning are evident in the general public? As experienced online teachers, researchers and specialists in digital education and innovative pedagogy, we sought to uncover and interrogate the myths that can hinder effective implementation of online education. We aimed to identify which myths are most pervasive among stakeholders, including students, educators and employers. We conducted a literature review to inform an online survey, distributed widely to the general public in order to probe and test the common myths and misconceptions about online learning. These myths include consideration of reciprocity, inclusion, engagement, and quality, in keeping with key themes of the conference. This concise presentation shares the survey and key findings and compares perceptions with research evidence. We conclude by offering evidence-based strategies to challenge and overcome these myths, with implications for policies, practices and pedagogies in online education.

Accessibility and Resilience: Rethinking Learning for All

Afshin Ghassemi¹ and Ana Barfield¹

¹ **Aga Khan Foundation**

Concise talk

Persistent inequities in education demand innovative approaches that prioritise accessibility and resilience. The Learning Hub, developed by the Aga Khan Foundation in collaboration with 150+ local and global partner organisations, responds to this challenge by providing practical learning resources. Our model fosters collaborative knowledge-sharing and lifelong learning, ensuring that diverse learners—from rural farmers to urban professionals, especially in developing countries—can engage in meaningful educational experiences, anywhere, at any time, free of charge.

By leveraging low-cost content production, participatory and human-centred learning design, and blended learning approaches, The Learning Hub can strengthen capacity building across numerous sectors. Our custom-built, low-cost learning management system (LMS) eliminates financial and technological barriers, allowing users to access high-quality content in 30 languages.

This concise talk will explore how policymakers, educators, and private sector leaders can harness The Learning Hub (and the learning which underpins it) to support inclusive, scalable learning, even in the most underserved communities. Additionally, we will examine how open and accessible learning ecosystems can disrupt traditional inter-sectoral silos, fostering cross-disciplinary knowledge exchange and resilience in education. This discussion is essential in the context of UNESCO's (2022) call for open educational resources (OER) as a driver of sustainable and equitable learning.

Exploring the Experiences of Educators Realising the Aspirations of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in Tertiary Online Teaching Praxis

Peter Graham¹ and Reupena Tawhai¹

¹ **Massey University**

Concise talk

In this concise talk we explore what it means to be Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led in your approaches to teaching and learning, and particularly what that looks like in the online tertiary space.

In 2023, Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University created the Kaiārahi Tiriti project to develop Tiriti-led practices among university staff. Aligning with the indigeneity theme of the conference, we outline what this development involved for Kaiārahi Tiriti educators working in curriculum development and online learning.

We explore what it means to Understand Te Tiriti o Waitangi – where do we begin to understand Te Tiriti and its place in our history so that we can intentionally and deliberately honour its Provisions and Principles in contemporary teaching; Explore identity and positionality – what role does our own sense of identity as educators have on Te Tiriti-led practice?; and Transform our practice – how might the Provisions and Principles of Te Tiriti be tangibly and meaningfully realised in online teaching practices?

We cover these experiences from both a Māori and Pākehā perspective, outlining our processes and missteps, describing potential pathways for other educators. The concise talk applies to the discipline of education and a sample of online educators.

A Framework for Equipping Educators for Contextually Relevant and Accessible Learning Design

Diane Hockridge¹ and Pauline Golder²

¹ Ridley College, ² Local Leaders International

Concise talk

Educators in majority world contexts often face significant challenges in developing contextually relevant and accessible online courses due to resource constraints and gaps in pedagogical and technological capacity. This paper describes the outcomes of a 3-year project aimed at equipping theological seminary educators in majority world contexts with skills for developing contextually relevant and accessible online and distance courses.

Recognizing that existing competency frameworks inadequately address majority world challenges, we developed the Distance/Online Theological Education Competency (D/OTEC) Framework through collaborative engagement with global educators. This framework informed the creation of fourteen online training courses and tailored workshops, designed for both individual and team-based professional development.

Drawing from multiple global workshop implementations, (including Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Ukraine), this paper discusses the critical importance of contextual factors in learning design. We highlight how the online courses and workshops based on the D/OTEC Framework are successfully supporting theological educators in developing online courses tailored to their specific contextual constraints and opportunities, leading to more accessible and sustainable educational outcomes in diverse global settings.

Using Case Studies to Engage Distance Learners in a Capstone Accountancy Course

Hedy Huang¹ and Fawzi Laswad¹

¹ **Massey University**

Concise talk

This research explores an innovative pedagogical approach to assessing distance learners' competencies in data analytics, teamwork, and oral communication. A key focus is enhancing their understanding of accounting's role in decarbonization and minimising the environmental impact of business operations.

A simulated travel dataset was created, including details on the employee roles, travel records, and real-world emission costs. Students collaborated in groups, using Power BI to analyse the company's carbon footprint and generate data-driven visual insights. They presented their findings, discussing the financial and environmental implications of business travel. These presentations required students to integrate knowledge from various accounting disciplines, critically evaluate their data visualisations, and propose actionable strategies to reduce carbon emissions while maintaining service quality.

Results showed that over 90% of students successfully met the four key learning outcomes—oral communication, teamwork, big data analytics, and awareness of environmental sustainability. The study highlighted significant differences in students' data analytics proficiency, reinforcing the value of teamwork in fostering collaborative learning. Additionally, students demonstrated strong engagement by actively participating in peer presentations, providing constructive feedback, and refining their analytical and communication skills.

This case study approach proved highly effective in enhancing distance learners' practical competencies while promoting sustainability awareness in business decision-making.

Scalable Education: Increase Access Without Compromising Quality

Jennifer Hunter¹ and Adam Lloyd

¹Brigham Young University – Idaho

Concise talk

Educators and institutions can design scalable learning models to increase access while maintaining accessibility, resilience, context, and quality. This presentation explores how to build courses and programs to grow efficiently without sacrificing learner outcomes.

Effective models increase accessibility by removing barriers related to geography, socioeconomic status, ability (no biases) and technology. Resilient programs adapt to technological, economic, and social disruptions as well as changing job markets. Context-driven courses align with local needs and workforce demands by utilizing real-world scenarios and simulations. High-quality education maintains academic rigor and industry relevance, even in high-enrolment environments (100+ course sizes). Streamlining courses and programs cuts the busywork and pet projects while delivering workforce readiness.

Drawing from global case studies, this session highlights best practices in curriculum design, technology integration, and pedagogical innovation. Participants will gain actionable strategies to scale education effectively, without comprising quality, ensuring learners master outcomes and develop meaningful, career-ready knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Expanding Access to Distance Higher Education: The OIJ Global Program and Challenges for Overseas Learners

Hiromi Ishida¹

¹ The Open University of Japan

Concise talk

The societal demand for and expectations surrounding distance higher education have been steadily increasing in recent years. The Open University of Japan (OUJ), founded with the mission of expanding access to higher education regardless of geographic location, economic status, or age, has been delivering high-quality educational opportunities across Japan for over four decades.

As of October 1, 2024, the estimated number of Japanese nationals residing overseas stands at approximately 1.29 million. In parallel, the global number of Japanese language learners exceeds 3.79 million, supported by over 18,000 educational institutions and more than 7,500 instructors. These figures underscore a growing international demand for Japanese-language-based higher education.

Distance education has long been recognized for its potential to mitigate learner isolation and enhance opportunities for social interaction. Reflecting growing concerns in this area, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has conducted recent surveys investigating the prevalence of loneliness and social isolation among Japanese expatriates. Addressing such psychosocial challenges has become a matter of national urgency.

In response to these pressing issues, OUJ implemented a two-year international monitoring study from FY2023 to FY2024, involving 430 participants across 50 countries. These individuals were formally enrolled as non-degree students and participated in OUJ coursework remotely from their respective locations abroad. The study aimed to empirically examine the educational needs and challenges associated with delivering Japanese-language higher education via distance learning on a global scale.

This presentation will provide an overview of the governmental findings regarding expatriate isolation, examine the potential of OUJ's educational model in addressing such challenges, and present key outcomes from the monitoring study—including a reported satisfaction rate of 88%. Furthermore, we will critically examine the challenges identified through the study and propose potential solutions. The session will conclude with an open discussion on the broader implications and future prospects of global distance education

Early University Learning for High School Students Using Open Courseware at the Open University of Japan

Kumiko Iwasaki¹

¹The Open University of Japan

Concise talk

From 2022 to 2024, a collaborative project was conducted between Chosei High School, a government-designated Super Science High School, and the Open University of Japan (OUJ). This initiative aimed to provide high school students with early university learning opportunities using OUJ's Open Courseware. Two approaches were implemented: (1) High school students voluntarily selected and studied an OUJ course using printed materials and online lectures during summer break, earning high school credit upon submitting reports; (2) Since 2023, up to 10 students per year officially enrolled in an OUJ course as credited students, completing reports and exams to earn university credits. The results showed that this program clarified students' academic goals, enhanced critical thinking, and facilitated access to advanced studies. Some participants excelled in competitions like the Informatics Olympiad. However, unlike Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) in the U.S., Japanese universities rarely recognize such credits. Future efforts will focus on gaining recognition for these credits at leading Japanese universities.

A Case Study for Introducing Interactive Oral Assessments

Lesley Jacobson¹, Cynthia Ogilvy¹ and Luchen Xia¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

The problem educators face with advancements in artificial intelligence and ease of contract cheating is ensuring authenticity of learner work while pursuing situated, authentic, relevant assessments that endure across multiple offerings has become more challenging. Confirming authorship is especially problematic in an Open Distance Flexible Learning (ODFL) environment like the Open Polytechnic's. An Interactive Oral Assessment (IOA) simulates everyday professional conversations, for example, allowing stakeholders to discuss a report and demonstrate understanding through synthesis of information. An IOA gives assessors confidence in the underpinning knowledge of ākongā. Careful task design, supported with clear criterion allows assessors to make clear, evidenced judgements. IOA supports the development of essential skills, such as critical thinking, communication, and negotiation which supports development of graduate attributes needed in future professional lives. IOA, as an assessment strategy, offers solutions to many of the problems faced with assessment today. However, introducing them, particularly in an ODFL environment, brings challenges. IOAs change the assessment landscape and support the development of graduates as 'fit for purpose' contributors in the workplace. What an IOA is, where and how it fits will be discussed including the key learnings gained to date.

‘Accessibility is Important, But You Couldn’t Facilitate Such Conversations Online’: Maximising Opportunities (While Minimizing Limitations) of Online Intergroup Dialogue Pedagogy

Grant Jackson¹, Sarah Schiffecker¹, and Oleksandra Poquet²

¹ Texas Tech University, ² Technical University of Munich

Concise talk

Since its development in the United States in the 1980s, intergroup dialogue (IGD) has become a prominent social justice pedagogy utilized in colleges and universities throughout the world. Grounded in decades of social psychological research, IGD brings together diverse student groups over multiple weeks to engage in learning and activities that prompt dialogue on matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion in a structured, co-facilitated, and reciprocal environment.

During the COVID-19 pandemic; however, IGD suddenly needed to be implemented online for the first time, challenging IGD instructors’ long-held assumptions and requiring them to “think outside the box” in ways that, post-pandemic, have the potential to increase access to this increasingly timely (and traditionally in-person) educational experience for a wide range of students. This development makes it important to study and understand the ways in which online delivery can enhance and/or hinder the purposes and intended outcomes of IGD and, by extension, other similar open and distance education efforts.

The purpose of this talk is to share and spark discussion with the ICDE community regarding the technological, pedagogical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal opportunities and limitations that colleagues and I have identified through multiple studies of online IGD over the last few years.

Designing for Lifelong Learning: The Future of Higher Education

Nina James¹

¹ **University of Adelaide**

Concise talk

The traditional role of universities as degree-granting institutions is rapidly evolving. In an era where skills become obsolete faster than ever, higher education must deliberately design for lifelong learning.

By reimagining curriculum design, universities can create learning pathways that support reskilling, upskilling, and personal growth, as well as continuing to deliver degree programs. Such models enable greater accessibility and flexibility, aligning with the needs of industries, employers, and individuals seeking continuous education. Through innovative modular and stackable curriculum, micro-credentials, multiple entry and exit points, and online learning strategies, universities can expand their impact beyond traditional cohorts, fostering a culture of lifelong engagement.

Drawing on lessons learned, this talk outlines an approach for shifting from exclusive degree-focused models to inclusive, scalable frameworks that serve diverse learners across their lifetimes. As an expert in micro-credentials and online learning, I will present a provocative case for universities to embrace their role as lifelong learning providers and discuss how this can be achieved. This transformation is essential for higher education to remain relevant, inclusive, and sustainable in a rapidly changing world.

An Investigation Into Learners' Perspectives on the Use of GenAI Applications in an ODFL Tertiary Environment

Renu Joshi¹, Indu Peiris¹ and Samuel Ekundayo¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

Recent literature indicates a rapid growth in the number of studies on the adoption of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in education. Still, existing literature suggests insufficient research exploring the impact of GenAI's use in the open distance and flexible learning (ODFL) environment and how best it may be employed in this space for teaching, learning and assessment purposes.

For ODFL learners, GenAI has the potential to improve their learning experience, deepen their engagement with learning materials, help them acquire new skills, stay relevant in the job market, and take control of their learning. At the same time, ODFL institutions must be cautious and ensure that the promise and potential of GenAI is balanced with pedagogical scrutiny, accountability, and meticulous planning and transparency.

Our research seeks to fill gaps in the existing literature and involves exploring learner perspectives and their expectations of GenAI in an ODFL environment using a questionnaire (Stage 1). This should help inform educational practices consistent with 'ako' (reciprocal teaching and learning). Our overall research will also explore educators' perspectives and how they contrast with those of the learners (Stage 2). We will present the preliminary findings of our Stage 1 empirical study and invite feedback from peers.

Artificial Intelligence and E-Learning as Tools in Business Education: A Study on Advancing Innovative and Open Learning

Sami Kajalo¹

¹ **Aalto University**

Concise talk

The fast growth of technology has changed business education. E-learning and artificial intelligence (AI) offer new ways to engage students, personalize learning, and improve results. This study looks at how these technologies help create innovative and open learning in business education. They also support inclusive and flexible learning. This study reviews existing research and shares my own teaching experiences. It explores how AI and e-learning tools can be used in business courses. The study highlights both benefits and challenges. AI supports learning by giving personalized feedback and real-time progress tracking. This helps students improve their performance. E-learning platforms make education more accessible. They allow flexible, self-paced learning for different student needs. However, there are still challenges. Adapting to new technology, digital skill gaps, and keeping students engaged are key issues. This study shares ways to deal with these problems. It focuses on how teachers can design learning environments that use technology effectively while keeping good teaching practices. This research adds to the ongoing conversation about the future of higher education. It offers practical advice for teachers. These insights help educators use new technologies to prepare students for success in the digital business world.

Learning to Critique with and Through Generative Artificial Intelligence

Elaine Khoo¹, Bronwen Cowie², Te Hurinui Renata Karaka-Clarke², Kate
Parker Corney³, Colleen O'Connor, and Genaro Vilanova Miranda De
Oliveira⁴

¹ Massey University, ² University of Waikato, ³ Queen Elizabeth College,
⁴ Charles Sturt University

Concise talk

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has sparked significant interest and concern regarding its implications for teaching and learning. Critical engagement with and through GenAI is crucial for preparing learners to navigate future work environments that are increasingly being shaped by GenAI ecosystems. Our presentation will focus on findings from a pilot study that is currently being conducted to explore how Social Sciences teachers can foster learner criticality by modelling attention to and use of GenAI's affordances. A software literacy framework (Khoo et al., 2017) is framing the conduct and implementation of case studies across two diverse secondary schools. Data will be collected through classroom observations, teacher-learner interviews, samples of learner work, and surveys. We will discuss the evolving roles of educators and learners to consider the skills and dispositions required and the nature of productive teaching-learning practices in a GenAI-supported Social Sciences context with a focus on informing cross-disciplinary learning. Our project aligns with Ako—emphasising the reciprocal nature of teaching and learning. We expect to contribute insights into innovative approaches for supporting critical thinking in the GenAI era (sub-theme of innovation and openness).

Khoo, E., Hight, C., Torrens, R., & Cowie, B. (2017). *Software literacy: Education and beyond*. Springer Singapore.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-7059-4>

Harbinger of Systemic Change: Designing Inclusive and Accessible Online Education

Margaret Korosec¹

¹ **University of Leeds**

Concise talk

As universities expand their digital and flexible learning portfolios, there is growing recognition that inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education must be foundational—not optional—elements of educational design. This concise talk shares the journey of a research-intensive university in the United Kingdom that set a strategic goal: to be widely recognised for its commitment to digital inclusion and accessibility.

What began as a single online degree programme—designed with intentional focus on inclusive access—became a catalyst for institution-wide change. The design and delivery of the MSc Disability Studies, Rights and Inclusion at the University of Leeds placed accessibility at the centre: from platform navigation and content formats to flexible assessment and support structures. This collaboration resulted in digital accessibility that far exceeded regulatory requirements and transcended into non-negotiable inclusive and accessible learning design and media production informed by user experience testing.

But beyond the immediate success of the degree itself, its development surfaced gaps in institutional systems, raised new expectations for staff capabilities, and demonstrated the transformative potential of inclusive digital design across the full end-to-end student experience.

This talk will offer a concise, reflective account of how that one online degree programme reshaped thinking across the university. It led to the creation of new cross-functional frameworks, embedded accessibility reviews into quality assurance processes, and catalysed stronger partnerships between academic faculty, digital learning teams, and other professional services. The result was a shift in mindset—from course-level compliance to a systemic culture of inclusion.

Key outcomes for participants in this session include:

- Understand the strategic leadership and investment required to support digital accessibility at scale.

Pedagoholographic Approach to Serve: The Digital Culture in a Vocational Training Context

France Lafleur¹, Younes Hadri², and Robin Rodrigue³

¹ Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, ² Centre de formation professionnelle des Riverains, ³ La Chaudière Integrated Centre on Industrial Mechanics

Concise talk

The development of digital competencies is now essential given the rapid growth and scope of information technologies. The relationship between teacher-learner-environment-knowledge is at the heart of lifelong, sustainable learning adapted to the needs of the communities. It requires mediation which reaches the effect of the learner to focus and maintain gains.

Pedagoholography was born from the fusion of holography and learning. Applications in holography exist presently in the arts for example. In pedagoholography, the teacher transmits their course in 3D from a studio toward a station installed in a distant vocational training centre.

Stakeholders from those centres, the Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières and the Québec ministry of education collaborate on a research-action-development project to analyse its implementation and promote the creation of a digital expertise centre as an innovative, evolving and adaptable solution to share mainly for trade knowledge.

This unique project grouping eight centres started in 2024 and enables sharing the expertise of different trades for far reaching communities and lack of qualified teachers.

Establishing relationships among communities, expertise, and knowledge promote complementary and sustainable environments. Pedagoholography is a tool to establish links, to bring forward today's values toward a future rich with sharing and opportunities.



Safeguarding Authentic Student Work in Open and Distance Learning Assessments

Roger Larsen¹

¹ **Norvalid**

Concise talk

The rise of AI-generated text challenges the integrity of open-book, take-home assessments in distance education. As the AI Assessment Scale highlights, traditional detection methods and honour systems are insufficient to ensure that students produce their own work. Without reliable solutions, institutions risk either redesigning assessments around AI use or losing confidence in student-authored submissions.

We present a novel, multi-step approach that enables educators to continue using open-book home exams while ensuring the authenticity of student work. Our method combines digital text forensics—analysing a student's historical writing samples to verify authorship—with an automated viva process, where students engage in a follow-up discussion about their submission. This multi-layer approach removes uncertainty in authorship validation, providing students with an opportunity to demonstrate their own voice and learning.

This presentation shares findings from pilot studies conducted across multiple institutions, demonstrating the effectiveness of our method in distinguishing genuine student work from AI-generated content. By safeguarding assessment authenticity without requiring physical supervision, this approach allows distance education to maintain rigorous academic standards while preserving the flexibility of open-book assessments. Crucially, it ensures that students continue to develop critical thinking and independent writing skills, preventing over-reliance on AI and fostering true intellectual growth.

The Balance Between Offering High-Quality Online Courses at Scale in Brazil

Fabrício Lazilha¹, Sara Martins¹, Paulo Fioroto¹, and Joao Mattar

¹ **Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo**

Concise talk

Distance education in Brazil has been instrumental in expanding inclusive, scalable, and sustainable access to higher education, particularly in response to the concentration of institutions in large urban centres. In 2024, over five million students enrolled in online courses, highlighting the sector's rapid growth. While regulatory frameworks guide online education, higher education institutions retain autonomy in course delivery, often relying on accredited support centres to ensure regional accessibility. However, managing these networks presents governance, student engagement, and retention challenges, requiring resilient models that balance quality and innovation at scale. This presentation will explore strategies for strengthening accessibility and resilience through improved governance, adaptive technologies, and student-centred engagement initiatives. Key performance indicators—completion rates, participation levels, and student satisfaction—are critical quality and sustainability measures. Additionally, leveraging technology and data-driven decision-making can optimize logistical and quality management processes, ensuring continuous innovation in distance education. By exchanging ideas and best practices, this talk aims to contribute to a more equitable, high-quality, and future-ready online education landscape, addressing the complexities of large-scale operations while fostering innovation and long-term sustainability.

AI as a Study Peer: A Case Study of Economic History and History of Economic Thought Courses

Namhyung Lee¹ and Chanwoo Yoo¹

¹ Korea National Open University

Concise talk

This paper examines the integration of Large Language Models (LLMs) in open distance learning at Korea National Open University, specifically analysing their impact on comprehensive reading assignments in economic history and history of economic thought courses. Our study addresses a distinctive challenge in South Korean higher education, where limited writing instruction and reading practice led to students struggling with academic writing tasks, thereby creating strong incentives for LLM use.

Our analysis of self-reported data across 2023-2024 shows LLM usage increased from 4.2% to 30% among students. While 60% avoided LLMs, primarily citing concerns about academic authenticity and skill development, LLM users reported high satisfaction (84%) and strong intention for continued use (97%), predominantly through ChatGPT (83%). These findings reveal a paradox: LLMs could potentially constrain independent thinking through hallucination issues, yet they might serve as valuable virtual study peers for isolated online learners.

Based on these insights, we are implementing specialized lectures on effective LLM utilisation in the first semester of 2025, focusing on literacy cultivation while maintaining academic integrity. This intervention aims to provide practical guidance for educational institutions adapting to technological innovation in distance learning environments.

Students Behaviour in Using Large Language Models: A Case of Introduction to Economics in Korea National Open University

Namhyung Lee¹, Se-Youn Jung¹, and Jongsung Baek²

¹ Korea National Open University, ² Inha University

Concise talk

As educational institutions adapt to the rapid advancement of AI technologies, this study examines the impact of Large Language Model (LLM) usage on student performance in Introduction to Economics at Korea National Open University. The main research question investigates whether LLM adoption during take-home assessments affects academic outcomes in a large-scale introductory economics course. Our research analyses behaviour and performance data from over 5,000 students in 2024, combining self-reported surveys on LLM usage patterns, user satisfaction, and future intentions with demographic data and assessment performance metrics. The assessment covered fundamental microeconomic concepts and their application to contemporary economic issues, including price relationships in commodity markets and dynamic pricing practices. Key findings will reveal correlation between LLM usage and performance, LLM satisfaction levels, usage patterns by demographic groups, etc. The study also identifies distinct user behaviour patterns and satisfaction levels that inform future pedagogical approaches. This research contributes empirical insights to the discourse on technological integration in open education, providing evidence-based recommendations for curriculum design and assessment methods in the AI era. The findings inform how educational institutions can adapt their teaching practices to embrace technological innovation while maintaining educational integrity.

A Future of Open Learning: GenAI and UDL as Catalysts for Scalable, Student-Centred Education

Antonia Levy¹ and Lance Eaton²

¹CUNY School of Professional Studies, ²Northeastern University

Concise talk

This concise talk explores the reciprocal relationship between emerging technologies and inclusive education practices, examining how generative AI (GenAI), open educational resources (OER), and the new Universal Design for Learning (UDL) 3.0 guidelines can enhance teaching and learning for all. With a focus on strengthening accessibility, resilience, and innovation in higher education, we examine how these frameworks and technologies can support the creation of adaptive and equitable learning experiences tailored to diverse student needs.

Grounded in UDL's emphasis on flexible, student-centred learning, this session presents compelling case studies that illustrate both challenges and breakthroughs in aligning GenAI and OER with accessibility principles. We explore how customized AI tools can operationalize UDL guidelines, enabling educators to design materials that engage learners in novel, inclusive ways while scaling these efforts to broader audiences.

The session invites collaborative dialogue about challenges and opportunities in this space, sharing concrete strategies for implementing these approaches. Together, we'll explore how combining AI innovation with open educational practices can create sustainable, responsive learning systems that honour diverse ways of knowing and learning. Participants will leave equipped with fresh insights, ready to contribute to an evolving dialogue about the future of inclusive, scalable education.

Project Nexus: Reimagining Global Higher Education Through Cosmogogy

Julie Lindsay¹, Rima Al-Tawil², Hakin Aydin³, and Chadia Mansour⁴

¹ University of Southern Queensland, ² Cape Breton University, ³ Ozyegin
University, ⁴ Athabasca University

Concise talk

This concise talk introduces Project Nexus, an ICDE Technology and Innovation Network (TIN) initiative exploring how we can transform siloed higher education institutions into interconnected hubs of collaborative learning. The vision of Project Nexus is for institutions to connect and collaboratively design learning experiences within a shared, living ecosystem to encourage authentic and innovative global problem-solving experiences for students and faculty across disciplines and borders.

Central to this project is Lindsay's (2016) collaborative learning approach, Cosmogogy, defined as learning "with" rather than "about", which is not location based, and includes a contextual focus on the importance of co-creation of knowledge. As a pedagogical approach the Cosmogogy lens allows for an in-depth investigation and application into the intricate relationships between Human, AI, and World domains. It also supports a collaborative paradigm for reimagining learning that is embedded into core-curricula, with interdisciplinary problem-solving of global challenges.

Preliminary findings will be shared from a pilot project between participating institutions. Expected outcomes include a draft practical blueprint for future Project Nexus implementation with curriculum integration templates, flexible assessment frameworks, and technical infrastructure guidelines for the use of AI as a collaborative tool.

This work aligns with the conference theme of "Ako: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education" by demonstrating how collaborative learning across institutional and geographical boundaries can foster inclusivity, sustainability, and innovation in higher education while preparing students to address complex global challenges.

Lindsay, J. (2016). *The global educator: Leveraging technology for collaborative learning & teaching*. International Society for Technology in Education..

Building Pathways to Opportunity: Inclusive and Scalable Education Through Stackable Credentials

Adam Lloyd¹, Heidi Buchert Egan¹, and Cindy Goodwill¹

¹Brigham Young University-Idaho

Concise talk

This talk presents BYU-Pathway Worldwide’s transformative approach to higher education through the integration of industry-relevant certificates within 90-credit bachelor’s degrees. By structuring degrees around these certificates, students acquire employable skills early, fostering accelerated career advancement while progressing toward their degree completion within three years. This approach builds resilience by allowing learners—many of whom face financial, personal, or geographic barriers—to achieve meaningful milestones, reducing dropout rates and increasing economic mobility.

As designers, we focus on ensuring these programs are streamlined and high-quality, by systematically mapping knowledge, skills, and abilities to programmatic outcomes. This intentional curriculum design allows students to complete their degree in three years while securing valuable certifications along the way. By integrating career-relevant skills at every stage, this model not only accelerates educational timelines but also enhances accessibility, ensuring students can achieve both short-term employment success and long-term academic goals.

The talk will explore how BYU Pathway-Worldwide’s intentional curriculum design and stackable credentials create a more inclusive, scalable, and sustainable educational framework. We will focus on the lessons learned over the last three years, including initial findings, what worked, what did not work, and what changes we are making to increase the accessibility of the programs.

Contemporary Issues in Digital Assessment

Nathaniel Louwrens¹, Cynthia Ogilvy¹, Ralph Springett¹,
and Mark Nichols¹

¹Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

The demands on assessment practice in higher education are changing, particularly through technological advancements. In the context of change it is helpful to consider those issues that lend themselves to investigation. This paper draws on the views of international digital assessment experts to identify and rank contemporary themes in digital assessment across four categories: compliance, innovation, practices, and technology. Using a modified Delphi technique and strict eligibility criteria, an international call for participants resulted in n=14 contributors to themes across the four categories in an initial stage, and n=7 contributors to the subsequent ranking exercise. The themes will be outlined in this paper and lend themselves to further research and investigation. The assessment experts were asked to formulate research questions relevant to the themes. This paper briefly discusses the themes identified by the experts and identifies potential areas of future research.

Building Learning Designer skills and capability with Generative AI at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

Tesha Luafalealo¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

This concise talk describes the integration of Generative AI into Learning Design practices at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, focusing on building the skills and capabilities of learning designers. The talk explores the challenges posed by the rapid development of AI technologies, demands for efficiency, and the need for innovation across ways of working.

The talk is based on research that employed a mixed-methods approach, including qualitative interviews and focus groups with learning designers and their management. Data collected from seven design leaders and nine learning designers from populations of 55 and 12 respectively inform the practices, processes, and knowledgebase throughout the directorate. The study also explored the implementation of structured AI use within the Learning Design and Development Directorate to enhance consistency, technical accuracy, and future technological developments. The research is informing the ongoing change necessary to address further technological advancements and provides recommendations relevant to all organisations related to accommodating and adopting Generative AI in learning design practice, including changes in behaviours, practices, and environmental impacts.

Fostering Educational Innovation through Distance Mentoring Networking: Lessons Learned from the Italian Context

Giuseppina Rita Jose Mangione¹, Francesca Rossi¹, and
Silvia Panzavolta¹

¹ Indire

Concise talk

In recent years, distance mentoring networking has gained increasing attention as a strategy to foster pedagogical innovation, professional learning, and digital transformation in schools. International research has explored how structured school-to-school mentoring can facilitate peer learning, the dissemination of effective practices, and cross-institutional collaboration. The MenSI project, funded by the European Commission, investigated different mentoring models across six countries, experimenting with approaches to scale digital pedagogies and promote school improvement through structured mentoring networks. Within this international framework, the Italian case study involved 22 schools from INDIRE's innovation networks (Avanguardie Educative and Piccole Scuole), which piloted a structured hub-and-spoke model of distance mentoring.

Findings highlight the impact of distance mentoring networking on didactic innovation, professional development, and knowledge exchange across schools.

The research also explored the enabling conditions for sustaining distance mentoring models, identifying ten key factors—including structured collaboration, shared pedagogical vision, leadership engagement, and systematic feedback loops. These findings led to the development of MentorQ, a self-evaluation tool designed to help schools assess and refine their mentoring strategies, ensuring scalability and sustainability beyond project-based interventions.

This study contributes to global discussions on distance education, demonstrating how structured mentoring can drive long-term school improvement, digital equity and sustainable learning communities.

Examining Online Student Engagement and the Community of Inquiry in a CODEL Environment: The Moderating Effect of Shared Metacognition

Sune Mare¹

¹ **University of South Africa**

Concise talk

The biggest obstacles to online learning are lacking community, engagement, and participation, which may result in low throughput rates. Enhancing student-to-teacher, student-to-student, and student-to-content engagement is crucial, as is allowing students to participate in and regulate their online learning environment. The study aimed to ascertain how shared metacognition moderated the relationship between online student engagement and the community of inquiry. The study considered concepts related to online student engagement (application and observative learning behaviours), shared metacognition (self-regulation and co-regulation), and the Community of Inquiry Framework (teaching, cognitive, and social presence). The study used a survey approach. The sample (N = 626) consisted of honours students studying online at a South African CODEL university. Moderation regression analysis was used to determine how the constructs influenced one another. The preliminary results indicated that self-regulation moderated the association between social presence and online student engagement. It also revealed that co-regulation moderated the relationship between application learning behaviours and cognitive presence. The study's results might provide fresh perspectives on creating and instructing online courses to enhance student connection and participation. Teachers should be mindful of the different learning behaviours of students with strong or poor self-regulatory and co-regulatory skills in the community of inquiry presences to improve online student engagement. With a primary focus on the significance of self-regulation, application learning behaviours, and social presence, the relationships between the constructs identified in this study should help higher education institutions train teachers to conduct interactive online learning collaborations, improving student achievement and retention.



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Highlighting a 'Real People' Approach to Course Design to Enhance Social Presence and Increase Reciprocity in Online Courses

Terry Meechang¹

¹ Lincoln University

Concise talk

Building trust and fostering genuine connections are fundamental to effective online learning. This paper examines how Lincoln University has intentionally designed its online courses to enhance social presence through a 'real people' approach. By prioritising authenticity, reciprocity, and human connection, these strategies create more engaging and supportive virtual learning environments. We will share practical examples from recent course developments, demonstrating how a variety of 'real people' elements designed into an online course can build trust and strengthen student engagement through a heightened sense of community. This session provides insights for institutions looking to enhance social presence and enrich the online learning experience using an authentic approach to course design.



30th International Council for
Open and Distance Education
World Conference 2025

Through the Looking Glass: A Reflexive Consideration of a Journey into Academic Misconduct Land

Ami Moller¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

As the tertiary education sector continues to grapple with the academic misconduct aspect of our efforts to establish and sustain a culture of academic integrity, an increasing number of institutions are developing full-time positions dedicated to coordinating academic misconduct matters. This concise talk is a personal reflection on my move into such a position. I consider the shift from being a doctoral researcher exploring conceptions of writing assistance and plagiarism to becoming an investigator of potential academic misconduct at an ODFL institution. Particular attention is paid to how I work to ensure that the foundation on which I base my case management is informed by research and driven by an educational approach. Results from my research project directly inform my positionality as an investigator. Of note are findings and the implications they hold for not just addressing instances of academic misconduct but also how the academy can innovate to face the evolving challenges within academic integrity, including: reframing the acceptability of third-party writing assistance; responding to the efficiency motive; and moving beyond the term 'plagiarism'.



Papa Whakakōrero: A Resource That Makes You Talk

Hone Morris¹

¹ Massey University

Concise talk

This resource produced by He Kupenga hao i te Reo is a powerful learning tool for teaching Te Reo Māori but can be adapted to teach other languages. Conversation is the focus with the resource encouraging participants to exchange questions and answers to create dialogue and eventually full conversations. The resource is for all ages and an excellent way for family to learn together. The resource comes with a Guide with structured lessons. This resource contains 11 sets of cards to stimulate conversation and is based around everyday actions, modes of transport, towns and cities, buildings, natural places and expressing time.

Following are examples of how the resource stimulates dialogue through textual and visual prompts.

The sentences created here are:

Top: At _____ Polly will go to _____ to the _____ by _____ to _____ for _____

Bottom: On _____ Martha, Polly and Dave came to the _____ on a _____ to _____ about _____

The sentences created here are:

Top: At _____ Rona will go from _____ to _____ by _____ to _____ for _____.

Bottom: On _____ Mary and Peter came to _____ to the _____ on a _____ to _____ about _____.

The resource has 3 purchase options:

1. A set for two people.
2. A set for 10 people.
3. A set for 20 people.

Contextualising and Extending the Reach of Open Education

Brandon Muramatsu¹, James Glapa-Grossklag², Joy Shoemate²,
and DeLaina Tonks³

¹ Massachusetts Institute of Technology, ² College of the Canyons,
³ Mountain Heights Academy

Concise talk

Open Educational Resources (OER) have become essential infrastructure worldwide. We can learn from the varying contexts at different types of institutions with different student populations. Learn about approaches in use at a wide range of institutions, enabling factors, and how you might apply these approaches to your local context.

MIT OpenCourseWare (OCW) launched the Open Education movement in 2001. MIT OCW is further innovating its approaches to better meet learners where they are on mobile devices, with short form video and how to help faculty understand the pedagogy in use in its courses.

College of Canyons, an open enrolment, public community college is leveraging generative AI to update materials and expand on ways in which academics developed and implemented instructional materials. OER creation supported by AI is generating audiobooks, podcasts and custom illustrations that increase efficiency of production while also improving student engagement.

Mountain Heights Academy (MHA,) a public online charter school, has been implementing an Open Educational Resources (OER) curriculum since 2009. By combining the power of OER with generative AI, MHA showcases the potential for AI-driven innovations to extend the utility of OER materials while ensuring personalized learning experiences and equitable access for all students.



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Supporting Distance Learners with Pregnancy Loss

Samantha Murphy¹

¹The Open University

Concise talk

This concise talk draws upon my previous research into the experiences of students who are having a baby and/or caring for young children while studying at a distance learning institution. I also draw on my longstanding academic interest in pregnancy loss to consider what students might need when they have a miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death while studying at a distance. As such, it will present a review of literature around the needs of students who experience miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death as well as look at UK University guidelines for supporting such students. Many of these guidelines will be with regard to students who study face to face therefore tentative suggestions will be made about how to support bereaved students who study at a distance.

Appraising the Impact of Gender Differences on the Community of Inquiry Framework: Evidence from South Africa

Ashley Mutezo¹

¹ **University of South Africa**

Concise talk

Personal factors seem to affect online learning behaviours. There appears to be growing curiosity about the effects of demographic characteristics in a modern online learning setting; hence, there is an increasing focus on the significance of the community of inquiry (CoI) in an open and distance e-learning environment. The study investigated the effect of perceived demographics on the CoI components. The purposive sample comprised 525 registered honours students at a South African open and distance e-learning University. Participants completed the Community of Inquiry (CoI) questionnaire and provided demographic data. Data were analysed using multiple regressions and independent samples t-tests to determine the effects of the demographic variables, namely age, gender, location, and internet access, on the CoI framework. The preliminary results indicated that age, gender, location, and internet access result in significant differences in the community of inquiry. Thus, demographic variables in online learning should be considered when designing and developing online courses to enhance student learning experiences in online learning. These research findings yield valuable new perspectives about the impact of demographic variables in the context of open-distance e-learning in the post-COVID era.



Exploring Resilience and Coping Strategies in Indian Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Students

Krithika Nambiar¹ and PB Venkataraman¹

¹ **Birla Institute of Technology and Science Pilani**

Concise talk

This study investigates resilience and coping strategies among Indian students enrolled in Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) programs. Balancing academic, professional, and personal responsibilities presents unique challenges, particularly in the global south, where cultural expectations, family dynamics, and socioeconomic factors add layers of stress. Indian students often draw on family support, religious beliefs, and social networks to build resilience, but the mechanisms through which WIL experiences contribute to this process remain underexplored.

Preliminary findings from students at BITS Pilani's Work Integrated Learning Programme (WILP), India, reveal that engineers employ both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies, such as problem-solving, emotional regulation, mindfulness, and seeking social support. These strategies help them manage academic pressures and family expectations while maintaining mental well-being. Based on the findings of this study, we can provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing WIL programs to better support students' mental health and resilience development. These recommendations will inform institutional policies, program design, and support services, ultimately creating a more positive WIL experience for students to effectively manage the challenges of integrating academic learning with professional work.

Influence of Human-Centered Approach Towards the Development of a Sustainability Mindset in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: A Literature Review

Puvanambihai Natanasabapathy¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

With increased use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the world, the academic community are encouraged to embrace AI in education. While the opportunities and benefits of AI have brought much excitement across disciplines, we are also alerted of the challenges it brings that could compromise our authenticity and undermine our efforts towards sustainable development. If AI is used for sustainable development, paradoxical situations could emerge unless precautions are taken to ensure that sustainable development is indeed sustainable.

Research highlights that much of the problems hindering human progress towards sustainability stems from values and beliefs that lead to behaviours that undermine sustainability. Therefore, it is imperative that the development of human capabilities is supported with the development of a sustainability mindset as progress is made towards the desired level of sustainability through education.

The purpose of this paper is to study the AI Competency Framework for educators and learners about how the human-centred approach can influence the development of a sustainability mindset in the age of AI. Research highlights that critical reflection underpins transformative quality learning that leads to sustainability. Discussion will include a literature review of aspects and factors that will contribute to the development of a sustainability mindset.

Quality Dimensions and Attributes of Student Support Services for Students With Disabilities in an Open Distance Learning context

Sindile Amina Ngubane¹ and Asteria Nsamba¹

¹ **University of South Africa**

Concise talk

The concept of quality student support service is receiving considerable attention in open distance learning (ODL) in recent years. Attempts have been made by researchers to develop quality frameworks to understand, manage and evaluate the quality of support services within ODL. There is now a need to design quality framework to understand and evaluate the quality of support services for students with disabilities (SwD). The aim of this paper, therefore, is to present the findings of the evaluation of the quality of support services for SwD within an Open and Distance eLearning (ODEL) university, to understand and establish determinants by which SwD judge the quality of their support services. Qualitative methodology was utilised to collect data from a sample of SwD. The data is used to develop a framework to help understand and manage the quality of support services for SwD.



Incarcerated Postgraduate Students' Resilience During Supervision Through Open Distance Learning Modality

Sindile Amina Ngubane^{1,2}, Mbongiseni Mdakane^{2,3}, Zanele Dhlamini²,
and Bongani Innocent Nkambule^{1,2}

¹ Institute for Open and Distance Learning, ² University of South Africa,

³ University of Pretoria

Concise talk

This paper presents the findings of a study that explored resilience amongst incarcerated students pursuing postgraduate studies through ODL modality. A qualitative approach was adopted, and semi-structured interviews were employed for data collection from five postgraduate students, comprising of four master's and one doctoral student. The study adopted a thematic data analysis approach to identify patterns in ODL based supervision. The paper problematizes the lack of flexibility that exists in the security space which hinders equitable inclusion for postgraduate students who need unlimited access to technology and internet to progress and complete their research and thesis on time. Using the Humanising Pedagogy theory as a lens, the findings of the study suggest that there is: lack of equitable access to online research materials which limits their ability to have a detailed and up-to-date literature review; being unable to use internet at anytime, anywhere limits the incarcerated postgraduate students from accessing the ongoing research workshops which are meant to develop their research skills; when faced with a non-responsive supervisor, they find it difficult to engage due to lack of access to technological devices after hours. Based on these findings, the paper proposes a supervision model that develops resilience amongst incarcerated students.

A Design-Based Research Approach to Improving Student Learning in Marine Biology

Allyson O'Brien¹, Rebecca Hull¹, and Elisa Bone²

¹The University of Melbourne, ²Swinburne University of Technology

Concise talk

Marine biologists work in large collaborative teams, often on global issues such as climate change and fisheries. However, practical marine biology training is often localised, with limited opportunities for students to interact with peers outside class. Developing peer connections, global awareness and transferable communication skills is important for effective student learning in marine biology. Using a Design-Based Research approach, we are building a common curriculum designed by researchers, educators and learning designers to connect students studying marine biology in different countries. Our activities teach foundational skills in intertidal rocky shore species observation and identification and require students to communicate their knowledge through videos produced for an international audience of peers. Students then view videos produced by other cohorts and reflect on how aspects of the marine environment vary in different parts of the world. We share here outcomes, including student perceptions and responses, from the first implementation at the University of Melbourne and highlight how student feedback will be incorporated into our process of evaluation, reflection and redesign. We also explore ways to make the concept scalable and inclusive for more institutions and learning contexts.

Inclusive OER Around the Globe: An ICDE OERAC Perspective and Actions, Related to the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign

Ebba Ossiannilsson¹

¹ Ossiannilsson Quality in Open Online Learning Consultancy

Concise talk

ICDE OER Advocacy (OERAC) is one of the thematic hubs for the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign. OERAC, with its ambassadors from all six regions of the world, is committed to advocacy at international, regional, national, and local levels. During the session, the ambassadors will discuss critical examples from their advocacy work, research, and experiences with the intersection of openness, OER, ethics, and leadership. The questions of why, what, who, to whom, and how will be addressed, not least in line with the UNESCO OER Recommendation (2019) and the UNESCO Dubai OER Recommendation (2024). Drawing on the committee's extensive publications and workshop experience, panellist will explore how AI is reshaping OER development, sharing, and implementation. By way of introduction, the OERAC's mandates and key activities, research, publications, dissemination, and advocacy in the years since its inception in 2017 will be addressed. One of the latest innovations is the ICDE OER Hub, where official information on OER is accessible to all via the ICDE web. The audience will actively participate during the session, and their experiences, reflections and key learnings will feed into further advocacy work.

Defining a Model of HyFlex Teaching for Vocational Education in Aotearoa New Zealand

Emma Page¹

¹ Southern Institute of Technology | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

Hybrid Flexible (HyFlex) teaching and learning research is a rapidly growing field as more institutions adopt HyFlex practices following the Covid-19 pandemic. However, there is a much smaller body of research surrounding HyFlex as a deliberate, long term delivery mode, and scant literature situating HyFlex within the contexts of vocational education or in a bicultural setting. This study briefly examines the current state of HyFlex research and presents a model of HyFlex intended to meet the needs of New Zealand's vocational education sector. It draws upon Beatty's (2019) HyFlex principles and values, and Ngā Hau e Whā o Tāwhirimātea (Rātima et al., 2022) model of culturally responsive teaching in the tertiary education sector to present a holistic, culturally sustaining, flexible learning experience. Further, this presentation reflects upon the challenges, successes, and lessons learned when applying and scaling the HyFlex delivery model across a range of curriculum levels in a New Zealand polytechnic.

Beatty, B. J. (2019). *Hybrid-flexible course design: Implementing student directed hybrid classes*. EdTech Books.
<http://doi.org/10.59668/33>

Rātima, M., Macfarlane, A., Smith, J., Riki, N., Jones, K.-L., & Davies, L. K. (2022). *Ngā Hau e Whā o Tāwhirimātea: Culturally responsive teaching and learning for the tertiary sector*. Canterbury University Press.
<http://doi.org/10.26021/11870>

Debate as an Inclusive Teaching Methodology: Fostering Equity, Democratic Values, and Innovation in Learning

Silvia Panzavolta¹ and Elena Mosa¹

¹Indire

Concise talk

Debate has traditionally been perceived as an exclusive practice reserved for high-achieving students. However, this paper explores its inclusive potential in Italian schools, analysing its application in formal and non-formal contexts. Drawing on four research studies, the findings illustrate how Debate empowers marginalized students, enhances collaborative and metacognitive skills, and supports educators in creating inclusive learning environments. The first study involved 357 teachers, demonstrating that Debate aligns with the UDL principles, allowing students to express themselves through different modalities. The second study, conducted within La Forza del Dialogo project, analysed data from 1,868 secondary school students, teachers, and school leaders across 52 schools, revealing that Debate improves tolerance, perspective-taking, and civic competencies, in alignment with the LifeComp Framework. The third study presents the first-ever VR Debate experiment in Italy. Preliminary findings suggest that VR Debate enhances student engagement and participation, offering new ways to practice critical thinking and public speaking. The fourth study examines Debate in non-formal settings, such as Bologna's Centri Anni Verdi, where at-risk students aged 11–16, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and non-native Italian speakers, developed communication and critical thinking skills. The research confirms that Debate, when implemented effectively, supports student engagement, inclusion, and educational equity.

The Influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Teaching Practices

Cathia Papi¹, Serge Gérin-Lajoie, Marie-Hélène Hébert, Philippe Verville, and Amélie Beaudoin

¹ Université TÉLUQ

Concise talk

It has long been known that the pressure to succeed can lead students to plagiarize, cheat, or even pay someone to complete their work for graded assessments (Hollis, 2018; Kayisoglu & Temel, 2017). This phenomenon seems to be intensifying with generative AI, which produces natural language texts and provides satisfactory answers to various questions, enabling students to write a thesis (Bouhali et al., 2024) or pass exams (Carrasco et al., 2023). Concerns about the validity of academic transcripts and the credibility of degrees (Fendler et al., 2018) have grown in recent years.

To what extent does AI development lead educators to change how they assess learning or provide feedback? We aim to answer this by presenting findings from a systematic literature review on AI's influence in higher education assessments, conducted using the EPPI Centre's methodology (University College London). We will highlight how evolving assessment practices vary by discipline, teachers' awareness, and concerns about these new tools (Lye & Lim, 2024; Xia et al., 2024), among other findings.

Bouhali, K., Mohellebi, F., & Popotte, S. (2024). J'ai utilisé ChatGPT pour écrire mon mémoire. *Management & Datascience*, 8(2).

Carrasco, M., Silva, A. R., & Henriques, R. (2024). Detecting fraudulent student communication in a multiple choice online test computational environment. *Social IEEE Systems, Transactions* 11(1), 1108-1120. <https://doi.org/10.1109/TCSS.2023.3254504>

Fendler, R. J., Yates, M. C., & Godbey, J. M. (2018). Observing and determining social cheating on college exams. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning*, 12(1), Article 4. <https://doi.org/10.20429/ijstol.2018.120104>

Hollis, L. P. (2018) Ghost-students and the new wave of online cheating for community college students. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 2018(183). <http://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20314>

Kayisoglu, N. B., & Temel, C. (2017). An examination of attitudes towards cheating in exams by physical education and sports high school students. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 5(8), 1396-1402. <http://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2017.050813>

Lye, C. Y., & Lim, L. (2024). Generative artificial intelligence in tertiary education: Assessment redesign principles and considerations. *Education Sciences*, 14(6), 569. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14060569>

Xia, Q., Weng, X., Ouyang, F., Lin, T. J., & Chiu, T. K. F. (2024). A scoping review on how generative artificial intelligence transforms assessment in higher education. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 21(1), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-024-00468-z>

Distance Learning: An Asset for International Students' Accessibility to Higher Education?

Cathia Papi¹, Olivier Bégin-Caouette¹, Sarah Lajeunesse¹, Amélie
Beaudoin¹, and Gwënaelle André¹

¹ **Université TÉLUQ**

Concise talk

While distance learning has existed for a long time, it is undeniable that it has significantly expanded with the spread of the internet and experienced rapid growth during the recent pandemic. This mode of education enhances accessibility to higher education and promotes its internationalization. Therefore, it seems relevant to explore the challenges related to accessibility in terms of the inclusion of international students and their intercultural experience, emphasizing the reciprocity and mutual engagement of both international students and the host community.

To address this question, we are currently conducting a systematic literature review following the methodology developed by the EPPI Centre at University College London (2010). We have searched the Education Source, ERIC, Érudit, and Cairn databases for articles from the past twenty years. The results of this systematic review will be available starting in the summer of 2025. However, preliminary analyses already highlight some key findings. Notably, while the experience is not identical to that of students who can travel, international distance learning fosters self-confidence in some students, promotes openness to others, and encourages greater respect for cultural diversity. It can even contribute to a sense of community or global citizenship.

Guiding Principles for Responsible AI in the World of "Open"

Lisa Petrides¹

¹Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education

Concise talk

As a nonprofit working in the field of open education, we've witnessed the frenetic pace of all things AI. While exploring ways in which AI tools could be applied to our work, we also felt the need to take a collective deep breath and intentionally consider how—as an organization dedicated to making learning and knowledge-sharing participatory and open—we should apply our organizational values to the ways in which we engage with AI. Openness is a foundational pillar of the work we do because we believe that an open ethos is key to the development of equitable and inclusive learning environments and contributes to the creation of a more just society.

In creating a set of guiding principles in our approach to AI, we were committed to applying values of "open" in our work, from content libraries to pedagogical practice, and platform and tool development. In this way, "open" brings with it a set of values and ways of doing our work. In this talk, I will share examples of our implementation of these guiding principles in practice, including issues around commodification, provenance, data sovereignty, informed consent, intentional use, transparency, bias, and continuous evaluation.

Validation of an Online Engagement Framework

Mario Barahona Quesada¹, Peter McIlveen², and Petrea Redmond

¹ Universidad Estatal a Distancia, ² University of Southern Queensland

Concise talk

Developed through a deductive thematic analysis of the available literature on student engagement, the Online Engagement Framework (OEF) (Redmond et al., 2018) is a theoretical model that aims to provide guidance for researchers and scholars when exploring online engagement in higher education environments from a conceptual and practical perspective. To account for the construct of online student engagement, the OEF posits five key dimensions: Social, Cognitive, Behavioural, Collaborative, and Emotional Engagement. As a first step to further expand this framework and determine its empirical validity, in previous research (Barahona et al., 2024), we gathered evidence of content validity through expert judgment for a set of 124 items developed to constitute a measure representing the OEF. In the present study, we aimed to test, through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, if the validated item pool is consistent with the five-dimensional factor structure suggested by the OEF. Three hundred and twenty-eight English-speaking university students voluntarily participated in the study by completing our survey. In this concise talk, we explore the key findings of this study and discuss further directions regarding the OEF and its potential contributions to teaching and learning quality in the context of open, online, and distance learning.

Redmond, P., Heffernan, A., Abawi, L., Brown, A., & Henderson, R. (2018). An online engagement framework for higher education. *Online Learning*, 22(1), 183-204. <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v22i1.1175>

Barahona, M., Darwin, S., Durá-Castro, M., & Stevens, C. V. L. (2024). Analyzing teacher educators' perspectives on professional pedagogical responsibility in initial EFL teacher education. *Cogent Education*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2356429>

The Coconut Tree of Open and Digital Education- A Tree of Life in Papua New Guinea

Janet Bulumaris Rangou¹

¹ **Western Pacific University**

Concise talk

Open and digital education (OaDE) is likened to the coconut tree, as a tree of life. As women leadership for OaDE is advocate, lifelong learning opportunities are also promoted for more women and girls to be educated from the un-reached critical masses and the marginalised. In navigating gender dynamics and leadership in OaDE, this presentation is a Melanesian_ indigenous research proposal into a resilient narrative of leadership in the context of Papua New Guinea (PNG). The research aims to share the experiences of cultural contexts and gender dynamics from a leadership narrative in the world OaDE leadership pertaining to a newly established PNG university, whilst gauging the insights of experts in the world of OaDE. As a case study, it is seen through the research lens of a Melanesian researcher with a matrilineal ontological identity from a matrilineal society transacting an OaDE leadership role in a contrasting patrilineal context of the upper Highlands region of PNG. This preliminary work builds on a premise of cultural wealth in Melanesian values that needs to be fostered in the world for women leadership in OaDE in PNG. The proposed study advocates for Melanesian Women leadership values towards the promotion of OaDE in PNG.

Leaders Among Peers: A Case Study on Informal Faculty Leadership in Blended Learning

Maria Rowena Raymundo^{1,2}

¹ Athabasca University, ² University of the Philippines Open University

Concise talk

The digital revolution has prompted educational leaders to rethink traditional learning models and consider digital transformation. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Philippine education authorities mandated universities to adopt flexible blended learning to ensure the continuity of inclusive and accessible education. However, existing capacity-building programs for blended learning in the Philippines focus more on formal leaders than on faculty members who demonstrate leadership in practice, even without formal roles. Consequently, there are no national capacity-building programs for informal faculty leaders in blended learning. This study aims to identify and analyse the conditions that facilitate and hinder informal faculty leadership in blended learning and determine the support needs of informal leaders to guide the development of capacity-building programs. The embedded single-case study design focuses on a Philippine university system where participants are faculty members identified by peers as informal leaders in blended learning. Data is collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed using qualitative methods. Prior research shows that expert blended learning users among the faculty champion the uptake of e-learning among novice- or non-users to complement the support mechanisms provided by the institution. A program for informal leaders addresses a gap by supporting an underrepresented sector while complementing existing institutional blended learning initiatives.

Introducing the PASS Framework: Automated Online Feedback Loops for Students Using OER

Verena Roberts¹, Lindsay Blackstock, Sharon Brewer, and
Brenda Smith

¹Thompson Rivers University

Concise talk

When learning something new - the ability to compare and contrast your answer and process in a timely fashion that meets individual learner needs in your own time is invaluable for learners. The PASS (Platform Adapted Strategic Solutions) Framework was developed to provide a literature-based approach for solving practice problems in general chemistry by adapting and using open educational resources (OER) and promotes inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education practices. The PASS project focuses on finding, collecting, adapting/revising (where needed) and creating automated digital Chemistry solutions and feedback for OER practice problems for first-year Chemistry Courses using the PASS Framework. The PASS Framework is a step-by-step process designed to scaffold and support students as they individually complete Chemistry questions integrated from and adapted into open digital platforms. This presentation will highlight how using OER Chemistry questions integrated with the PASS framework can be used in different open platforms and present our initial research findings of student perspectives and expanded integrated GenAI projects. We will describe the potential of self-regulated learning that is scaffolded by timely feedback in equitable open online learning contexts.

Creating AISLA: An AI Student Learning Application for Our Course, “AI for Educators”

David Rose¹, Kieran Williamson, and Kathryn MacCallum

¹ **University of Canterbury**

Concise talk

Tuihono UC | UC Online has created a new professional development course called AI for Educators. Learner reflection and application of content to specific workplace needs were key pedagogical goals for the development team.

To meet these objectives, we developed AISLA (AI Student Learning Application), a customisable web application that wraps standardised prompts around large language models to create interactive learning activities. AISLA allowed us to design engaging learning experiences by defining AI personas that mirror roles that learners encounter when applying their knowledge. In our case, our New Zealand educator cohort used AISLA to engage in a reflective conversation with a colleague (roleplayed by an LLM) about implementing AI in teaching and learning, exploring practical considerations, ethical implications, and pedagogical benefits.

The application of personas and workplace scenarios to an AI chatbot is something that can be applied to a number of contexts. In the presentation, we will provide insights into how we developed AISLA and the learnings and insights we gained in this process. We will also talk about the pedagogical approaches we took in designing this tool and the considerations made to ensure that it would be a useful learning activity for students.

AI for Navigating Content in Online Courses: Why We Should Avoid a Learner-Led Approach

Vanessa Scholes¹, Rachel Van Gorp², Grayson Orr^{1,2}, and Colin Millar¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga,

² Otago Polytechnic | Te Pūkenga

Concise talk

Summaries of course content can support learners trying to navigate and learn from content in online courses. Emerging evidence suggests this support may be especially beneficial for neurodivergent learners. Large language model (LLM) AIs do well at generating summaries of course content. We analyse three ways that online education providers can support learner access to AI-generated summaries: learner-led, provider-led and educator-led. Something akin to the learner-led approach will occur if providers do not effectively offer one of the other two approaches. We identify the risks and benefits of each approach for education providers and learners. Our analysis argues against choosing the learner-led approach.

Beyond Texting: Transforming Higher Ed with WhatsApp

Ashley Smith¹

¹ Brigham Young University – Idaho

Concise talk

WhatsApp is one of the most widely used communication applications globally. There is a significant opportunity to leverage this platform to enhance communication and integrate it into the curriculum in higher education settings.

This presentation will provide practical examples of how WhatsApp can be incorporated into courses and demonstrate methods for fostering group collaboration and community building in online learning environments. These examples are drawn from having over 16,000 students using WhatsApp as part of the curriculum. It will also outline the types of support that can be offered to both instructors and students to ensure effective implementation.

Key topics will include the benefits of using WhatsApp, such as increased student engagement and participation, as well as best practices for integrating the platform into instructional design. Additionally, the presentation will address potential challenges, including privacy concerns and the importance of establishing clear usage guidelines.

By the conclusion of the session, attendees will gain an understanding of the advantages and limitations of using WhatsApp in online courses, along with actionable strategies for its effective integration into the curriculum.

Grading Reimagined: AI's Role in Shaping Academic Assessment and Feedback

Ashley Smith¹

¹ Brigham Young University – Idaho

Concise talk

As higher education continues to embrace digital transformation, artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as a pivotal tool in reshaping assessment methodologies. This presentation delves into the innovative use of AI for grading and providing meaningful feedback, a frontier that aligns with the conference theme of innovation and scalability.

The presentation will outline the guiding principles essential for integrating AI effectively and ethically into grading processes. The advantages of AI grading, such as consistency, efficiency, and the ability to deliver immediate feedback, will be discussed alongside its limitations, including challenges in recognizing nuances in student responses and ensuring fairness.

Furthermore, insights and results from an experiment involving the use of AI to grade over 10,000 student papers in a Writing 101 course will be presented. Attendees will gain an introductory understanding of the potential impacts of AI on grading and how to navigate its integration thoughtfully.

No Bandwidth, No Problem: Revolutionizing Education in Isolated Regions

Ashley Smith¹

¹Brigham Young University – Idaho

Concise talk

In the quest to democratize education, technological barriers such as limited internet access present significant challenges, particularly in remote and low-bandwidth areas. This presentation explores an innovative solution tailored to these environments: a mobile app designed to operate offline while synchronizing with the Canvas Learning Management System when connectivity is available. Our customized app encapsulates all necessary content, allowing students to engage with their coursework without continuous internet access. Through experiments conducted across several courses, we have refined the app to include robust learning strategies, such as integrated assignments, note-taking, and quizzing features, which support student learning independently of real-time internet availability. This approach not only aligns with the conference theme of innovation and openness but also expands educational opportunities to underrepresented student populations globally. We will discuss our approach, the educational strategies integrated into the app, and the outcomes of our experiments, providing insights into how similar models can be implemented to overcome geographical and technological constraints in education.

Truly Flexible (Flipped) Learning: An Evidence-Based Resource

Carol Sparkes¹

¹Thompson Rivers University

Concise talk

In this concise talk I will present research results from my sabbatical project. I will share my evidence-based open online flexible learning toolkit created for instructional designers and campus faculty when designing pedagogically-sound, blended, student-centred and accessible campus courses using active learning approaches. Blended learning design is not only more inclusive by providing more flexible options to students in how and where they learn but it is more sustainable because it allows students to reduce time travelling to campus for classes, reducing the number of vehicles on the roads, and therefore helping to alleviate the impact on climate change. I am seeking feedback from peers on this resource and would like to hear how it could be improved based on your experiences. Meta-analyses show that the flipped classroom design has on average significantly better results on academic achievement in higher education than traditional lecture (e.g., Bredow et al., 2021; Hew et al., 2021; Hew et al., 2020; Schmid et al., 2023; Sparkes, 2019). I look forward to discussing this with you.

Bredow, C. A., Roehling, P. V., Knorp, A. J., & Sweet, A. M. (2021). To flip or not to flip? A meta-analysis of the efficacy of flipped learning in higher education. *Review of Educational Research*, 91(6), 878-918.

<https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543211019122>

Hew, K. F., Jia, C., Gonda, D. E., & Bai, S. (2020). Transitioning to the “new normal” of learning in unpredictable times: pedagogical practices and learning performance in *fully online* flipped classrooms. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 17(57), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-020-00234-x>

Hew, K. F., Bai, S., Huang, W., Dawson, P., Du, J., Huang, G., Jia, C., & Thankrit, K. (2021). On the use of flipped classroom across various disciplines: Insights from a second-order meta-analysis. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 37(2), 132-151. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.6475>

Schmid, R. F., Borokhovski, E., Bernard, R. M., Pickup, D. I., & Abrami, P. C. (2023). A meta-analysis of online learning, blended learning, the flipped classroom and classroom instruction for pre-service and in-service teachers. *Computers and Education Open*, 5(15), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeo.2023.100142>

Sparkes, C. N. (2019). *Flipped Classrooms versus Traditional Classrooms: A systematic review and meta-analysis on student achievement in higher education* [Doctoral dissertation, Concordia University]. Spectrum Research Repository. https://spectrum.library.concordia.ca/id/eprint/985276/7/Sparkes_PhD_S2019.pdf



The Potential of Online Extensive Reading in Adult Learners' Second Language Learning and Teaching

Mitsue Tabata-Sandom¹

¹ Massey University

Concise talk

This talk will present part of the results obtained from three online Extensive Reading (ER) projects. The potential of online ER in the area of lifelong second language (L2) pedagogy will also be discussed. ER has been proven to increase L2 reading abilities, motivation to read in L2s, and abilities in other skill areas (e.g., Nation & Waring, 2019). Despite numerous positive findings, ER has not been widely practiced in some L2 pedagogical fields due to issues such as teachers'/institutions' insufficient understanding of ER, a lack of resources, and different pedagogical approaches taken by public education sectors. For example, ER does not seem to be proactively implemented in lifelong L2 pedagogy in English-speaking countries such as New Zealand, Aotearoa. However, the positive findings obtained from the three projects suggest the potential of ER for L2 English learning of adult learners, including adult immigrants. In the projects, the participants' vocabulary size and reading fluency increased, which suggests that ER enhanced their L2 reading abilities. Additionally, their pre- and post-project metaphors, which demonstrate their changed L2 reading conceptualizations (i.e., from "Torture" to "Expanded World"), will enable the audience to grasp the positive motivational shifts created by ER.

Designing an Indigenous Education for All Open Online Course

George Veletsianos¹, Cassie Scharber¹, Shandell Houlden²,
and Odia Wood-Krueger³

¹ University of Minnesota, ² Royal Roads University,

³ Wood Krueger Initiatives LLC

Concise talk

In partnership with Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC), and the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) at the University of Minnesota, our team is developing an open online course to increase awareness and understanding of the Tribal Nations in Minnesota. Inspired by the University of Alberta's Indigenous Canada course and SMSC's Understand Native Minnesota campaign, the audience for this course is the general public.

The course aims to amplify the histories and perspectives of the Tribal Nations of Minnesota and to foster relational accountability. Co-created with guidance from an Advisory Council composed of Tribal community members, we follow a culturally responsive and collaborative approach to curriculum development. The course was designed using an iterative approach, and it is modular and asynchronous. It consists of flexible assessments and offers multiple completion pathways. In this presentation we will explore the course's collaborative design process, emphasizing how Indigenous perspectives inform both pedagogy and methodology and how this translated to the design of the digital learning environment. By sharing this case study, we aim to contribute to broader conversations on the intersection of Indigeneity, digital education, and decolonial teaching and learning practices.

Undergraduate Student Assessment of a Virtual Classroom: A Case Study From a Private University in Malaysia for Business Faculty

Teh Lee Wah¹, and Siow Heng Loke²

¹ **Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology,**

² **Asia e University**

Concise talk

The purpose of this paper is to share the findings of a case study on student assessment of a virtual classroom in a private university using Khafejeh & Jebreen's (2016) five categories assessment criteria. The research was conducted on Year 2 and 3 of business students of different majors. The assessment criteria adopted consists of five categories namely, design, content, technical elements, operational elements and credibility.

The researcher created a Google Classroom as the virtual classroom. This virtual classroom was designed to cater the needs of teaching of a 14-week course entitled BACS3713 Management Information Systems. The materials available in the virtual classroom are lecture notes, tutorial questions, assignment questions, past year questions and quizzes. Besides that, the course syllabus, lecture and tutorial schedule, and assessment components were uploaded for reference purposes.

There were 265 respondents participated in this study, of whom 63.02% were female, while 36.60% were male and 0.38% unknown gender. The findings shows that all the respondents rated satisfactory and above for the assessment of the virtual classroom. The respondents rated a mean of 3.84 for design category, 3.86 for content category, 3.89 for technical category, 3.91 for operational category, 3.98 for credibility category.

Based on the findings of the study, where all assessment categories (design, content, technical, operational, and credibility) received satisfactory to above-average ratings, the author suggested some recommendations.

While students rated all areas positively, the design category had the lowest mean score (3.84). It is recommended that the faculty staff to introduce more interactive features such as multimedia content, embedded videos, gamified quizzes, or discussion forums to improve user experience and increase student engagement.



Furthermore, it is recommended that the university to invest in ongoing professional development for the faculty members to receive regular training on effective virtual classroom design, digital pedagogy, and use of tools like Google Classroom. This helps ensure content delivery remains engaging and up to date with evolving educational technologies.

Khafajeh, H., & Jebreen, I. (2016) A proposed assessment criterion for e-learning sites evaluation: An experts' opinion. *Computer and Information Science*, 9(4), 37-43. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/cis.v9n4p37>

OUC Global and Open Education: Opportunities and Challenges in the AI Era

Xiangxu Wang¹

¹The Open University of China

Concise talk

In the era of artificial intelligence, the Open University of China (OUC) is advancing global open education through the development of "OUC Global," an innovative online teaching and learning platform. Designed to address the challenges of accessibility, inclusivity, and multilingual education, the platform leverages AI technologies to provide personalized learning experiences for global learners. OUC Global features AI-powered learning assistants and virtual companions, offering real-time support and enhancing learner engagement. This presentation explores the opportunities and challenges associated with the platform's development, focusing on its potential to bridge educational gaps, foster international collaboration, and transform the global open education landscape. By examining the platform's objectives, progress, and future prospects, the presenter will demonstrate how OUC Global reflects OUC's vision of creating an inclusive, learner-centred educational ecosystem empowered by AI.

An Evolution of Platforms for Online Open Learning

Keith Webster¹

¹Thompson Rivers University

Concise talk

Open learning for online students exists in a tension between platform designs and configuration that best support the goals of openness, student ownership, and community-based learning with issues of privacy, and the administrative needs of post-secondary institutions.

In this presentation I will outline the development of two online graduate programs that integrated WordPress-based ePortfolios with a learning management system (LMS) or LMS-like platform in order to achieve a reasonable balance.

At Thompson Rivers University the Graduate Certificate in Online Teaching and Learning needed a platform that would support students sharing activity responses and reflection pieces, while also allowing peer critique and feedback. In some courses students actually needed a web space where they could host their online teaching or educational media objects.

At Royal Roads University the School of Education and Technology sought a redesign for the Master of Arts in Learning and Technology that pivoted towards open pedagogy, in line with student needs and faculty research priorities.

In both cases WordPress was an integral part of the solution, but not sufficient on its own. In this presentation I will describe the challenges and choices each program worked through as they balanced OEP, privacy, resources and administrative requirements.

Enabling Equity of Access to the Curriculum for Small Rural Schools in Aotearoa / New Zealand Through Distance Education

Rachel Whalley¹

¹ Kōtui Ako Virtual Learning Network Aotearoa

Concise talk

The Virtual Learning Network (VLN) distance learning initiative has been active in the schooling sector in Aotearoa / New Zealand since the 1990s and was pioneered in small rural schools. These schools make up a large percentage of schools learning online with Kōtui Ako VLN today.

In 2022 the VLN Primary (now Kōtui Ako VLN) trialled and evaluated a Ministry of Education funded initiative for U1 - U3 graded primary schools (schools with less than 150 learners) to participate in VLN programmes. This support aimed to reduce barriers for small, rural and isolated schools in gaining equitable access to a rich curriculum through online learning. Alongside this initiative, a Kaiarahi Māori (leadership) role was created within the VLN Primary to support Mātauranga Māori, Te Reo Māori me ōna Tikanga (Māori knowledge, language and customs).

This talk outlines the evolution of online, flexible, distance learning within the schooling sector. It draws on case studies and findings from the evaluation of the U1 - U3 schools initiative, which highlight challenges for small rural schools, and raises implications for policy makers on how online school networks can be leveraged to enable a more equitable schooling system for all ākonga (learners).

Promoting Older Adults' Vitality Through Lifelong Learning in University Settings

Xiangyang Zhang^{1,2} and Wen Tang¹

¹ Jiangsu Open University, ² Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria

Concise talk

As China's aging population continues to grow, understanding seniors' learning needs becomes increasingly vital. Indeed, older adults typically learn to maintain mental sharpness, pursue lifelong interests, and adapt to evolving technology. As a result of their educational engagement, their learning outcomes include not only new skills but also increased confidence and better social integration. Furthermore, learning significantly contributes to active aging by enhancing overall wellbeing, building meaningful social connections, and providing a sense of purpose. Consequently, these opportunities help older adults remain engaged in society while simultaneously challenging prevalent age stereotypes.

To investigate this phenomenon, our study uses an online questionnaire to examine older adult learning at Jiangsu Open University, thereby investigating learning needs, motivations, subject preferences, outcomes, and program evaluations. Additionally, the research explores the intricate connections between learning and active aging in today's rapidly changing digital environment. Understanding older learners' unique needs is essential for creating inclusive educational environments through open and distance learning. Therefore, by actively supporting lifelong learning among seniors, the Jiangsu Open University promotes individual wellbeing and contributes significantly to building an age-friendly society.

AI in Action: Global Perspectives on the Application of AI in Education

Souma Alhaj Ali¹, Dylan Barth, George Ubachs, Moustafa Hassan,
Obhajajie Juliet Inegbedion, and Santiago Acosta,

¹ Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University

Workshop/Panel

Theme: Innovation and Openness, Context and Quality

Moderator: Souma Alhaj Ali, Director for Excellence and Governance, Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University, UAE.

Panel Members:

Dylan Barth, Vice President of Innovation and Programs, Online Learning Consortium, USA.

George Ubachs, Managing Director, The European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU), Netherlands.

Moustafa Hassan, Vice-Chancellor of International Cooperation, Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University, UAE.

Obhajajie Juliet Inegbedion, Director of Quality Assurance, National Open University of Nigeria, Nigeria.

Santiago Acosta, Executive Director, Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Quality in Higher Distance Education (CALED), Ecuador.

Format of the Panel:

Introduction

Recognizing the transformative potential of AI, and as part of their commitment to advance quality education by promoting safe, ethical, and responsible integration of AI, the ICDE Quality Network has developed a report to provide insights on the adoption and implementation of AI in education within their respective institutions and regions across the globe. The report analyzes key dimensions such as the current status of adoption, its impact on educational quality, learner experiences, accessibility, and operational efficiency. Additionally, it highlights good practices, risks, and challenges encountered in different contexts.

This panel aims to present the main findings of the report and foster an engaging discussion among leading experts from five regions across the globe. By offering diverse perspectives, the panel will provide attendees with a deeper understanding of the role of AI and serve as a critical platform for dialogue, driving meaningful discussions on how AI can be leveraged to create inclusive and high-quality educational experiences worldwide.

Expected Outcomes in line with the central theme of AKO: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education.

Enhanced Global Understanding – Participants will gain insights into AI adoption in education across diverse regions, understanding both shared challenges and unique opportunities.

Best Practices and Strategies – Participants will learn about successful AI-driven initiatives and strategies that can be adapted to different educational settings.

Ethical and Practical Considerations – The discussion will highlight ethical frameworks and responsible AI implementation practices.

Collaborative Engagement – The panel will foster global collaboration, encouraging participants to share knowledge, form networks, and explore partnerships to advance AI in education.

Duration: 50 Minutes.

Structure

Opening Remarks (5 minutes): Introduction by the moderator, outlining the objectives of the panel and the significance of AI in education globally.

Expert Presentations (25 minutes): Each of the regional experts will provide a concise, data-driven presentation on AI adoption in their respective regions.

Open Q&A and Audience Interaction (15 minutes): Opportunity for attendees to engage with panelists through direct questions and reflections.

Closing Remarks (5 minutes): Summary of key takeaways and future directions from the moderator.

Navigating the World of Academic Publishing

Terry Anderson¹, Rory McGreal¹, and Som Naidu

¹Athabasca University

Workshop/Panel

This workshop is designed to provide researchers, particularly early-career academics, with a comprehensive understanding of the academic publishing landscape. The session will delve into the intricacies of the peer-review process, journal selection, manuscript preparation, and ethical considerations in academic writing.

The Editor of the International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning (IRRODL), Canada's first recognised open access journal, will conduct a workshop on open access publishing including discussion on the difference between genuine open access and "open washing". He will introduce the colours of open access (bronze, hybrid, green, gold and diamond,) and comment on the role of DOAJ and, in Canada, Érudit.

Educational publishing will be examined understanding that it is the most profitable arm of the entire publishing industry. The extent of their profits and the cost to students and institutions will be discussed along with the role that academics play in providing them with free labour. The phenomenon of "open washing" is exposed, in which predatory publishers (along with the major commercial publishers) capitalise on the open access phenomenon by requiring the payment of article processing charges. There will also be an explanation of predatory conferences and Zombie journals. The role of generative AI in will also be discussed.

Workshop Format

A Q&A format will form the basis of the workshop, beginning with a call for participants to reveal their major issues of concern regarding getting published in an academic publishing, the environment of academic publishing, the role of the commercial publishers, why open access and the use of artificial intelligence.

Depending on the interests of the attendees, the following subjects will be open for discussion.

- A brief overview of the academic publishing process, including roles of editors, reviewers, and publishers.
- Discussion of the different types of academic publications (journals, books, conference proceedings).
- The importance of identifying the target audience and selecting the appropriate publication venue.
- Explanation of the peer-review process.

- Tips for effectively responding to reviewer feedback.
- Strategies for handling rejection and resubmission.
- Guidelines for structuring and formatting manuscripts according to specific journal requirements.
- Writing clear, concise, and impactful abstracts and introductions.
- Discussion of plagiarism, data fabrication, and other forms of misconduct.
- Issues surrounding the use of AI in academic publishing.
- The importance of originality, transparency, and responsible research practices.
- Guidelines for avoiding conflicts of interest and ensuring ethical authorship.

Anticipated Outcomes

Depending on participant interest, by the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Understand the key stages of the academic publishing process.
- Understand the open access environment and commercial publishing
- Understand the issues around AI in academic publishing
- Select appropriate journals for their research.
- Prepare high-quality manuscripts that meet acceptable standards.
- Effectively navigate the peer-review processes
- Adhere to ethical guidelines in academic writing.

By fostering a collaborative and supportive learning environment, this workshop aims to empower researchers to excel in their academic careers.

Exploring the Contested Futures of Artificial Intelligence in Open, Distance, and Digital Education

John Y. H. Bai¹, Olaf Zawacki-Richter¹, Frank Senyo Loglo¹, and
Wolfgang Müskens¹

¹Carl Von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg

Workshop/Panel

The widespread availability of advanced artificial intelligence (AI) models has prompted a range of responses from scholars and practitioners in the field of Open, Distance, and Digital Education (ODDE; Zawacki-Richter & Jung, 2023). These technologies raise fundamental questions about the beliefs, assumptions, and practices underlying learning and teaching (Bai et al., 2023; Bai et al., 2024; Pelletier, 2023; Tuomi, 2018) and have spurred robust discussions for managing the opportunities and risks for students, educators, and institutions (e.g., Bozkurt et al., 2024; Rudolph et al., 2023). However, among the often-well-intentioned efforts to adapt to these new tools, there is also implicit, and sometimes-explicit, pressure placed on policymakers and education leaders to appear innovative and ‘up-to-date’ with the latest technological developments (Facer & Selwyn, 2021; Linderoth et al., 2024). This pressure provides fertile ground for an unexamined deference to dominant, techno-solutionist narratives of educational technology that overshadow pedagogical concerns and constrain how we imagine the possible futures of education (e.g., Lindgren & Dignum, 2023; Nørgård, 2022).

This workshop aims to empower practitioners and researchers in the field of ODDE to explore and co-design a diverse range of possible futures for AI in education. The design of this workshop is inspired by Macgilchrist et al.’s (2024) call to “explore the sociotechnical imaginaries, design proposals, and lived experiences” (p. 2) of educators. It is further informed by the Glocademia Matrix (Guilherme, 2022), a bottom-up, pluralistic, and decolonial framework for uplifting global perspectives, and exchanging ideas in broader, global discussions.

After a brief introduction on the fundamentals of AI (covering issues such as validity and generalisability, training and inference, etc.), the workshop compares and contrasts a scenario-based method (Fink & Siebe, 2011; Gutschow et al., 2016; Zwicky, 1966) with speculative methods (e.g., Nørgård, 2022; Pinkwart, 2016; Ross, 2022) for articulating visions of the future. Participants are invited to share their perspectives and expertise as educators to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a hypothetical application of AI in ODDE and to reconfigure the scenario based on their own preferred vision of the future. By articulating, exchanging, and co-constructing visions of preferred futures with colleagues from different localities and with different positionalities, participants in these

small-group activities can explore the many diverse values and goals underlying ODDE. These open discussions also provide further opportunities for the ODDE community to nurture empathy and perspective-taking for other stakeholders and work together towards more inclusive futures for education.

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Tuomi, I. (2018). *The impact of artificial intelligence on learning, teaching, and education*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2760/12297>

Zawacki-Richter, O., & Jung, I. (Eds.). (2023). *Handbook of open, distance and digital education* (1st ed.). Springer Singapore. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-2080-6>

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The Future of Work Skills

John Baker

Workshop/Panel

Session Abstract

What will it mean to be a skilled worker in the near and distant future? Why are younger people more worried about being replaced by AI than older workers? And what role does higher ed play in all of this?

As people increasingly adapt to artificial intelligence in the workplace, the nature of work and assumptions about human skill sets are likely to change – and have already, as different generations acclimatize to AI. But this doesn't mean human skills will become obsolete.

Referencing two data reports from D2L and Morning Consult, this session will explore the current and potential relationship between people and AI in the workplace and will remind us of the critical role we play – and will continue to play – as humans working alongside machines. As important, will be how higher ed can prepare students and faculty for this looming future and integrate necessary skills learning into current and future courses.

Session Outcomes/Takeaways

- Learn about shifting assumptions about workplace skills.
- Understand the importance of continuous learning in both the workplace and higher education.
- Feel empowered by a message of agency and hope in a changing world.

Session Participant Engagement Strategies

John will prepare questions to solicit stories and reactions from the audience.

Session Description / Plan

Nearly half of North America's employees recently surveyed said they were worried about being replaced by AI, but Gen Z and Millennial workers were more worried than their older counterparts. A similar trend is emerging in the ANZ region, where younger workers are expressing growing concerns about AI's impact on their careers. Should they be? And what does it mean to have AI as part of the post-secondary experience? How can faculty—and their post-secondary institutions—prepare for this future?

Pae Ako: An Innovative Model of Indigenous Distance Teacher Education for Sustainable Futures

Hona Black¹, Mari Ropata Te Hei¹, and Rawiri Wright²

¹ Massey University, ² Te Runanga Nui o Nga Kura Kaupapa Māori

Workshop/Panel

In this neo-liberal era, indigenous education continues to be under siege, including the preparation of graduate teachers for the kaupapa Māori immersion education sector. This seminar discusses the principles that underpin innovative teacher education distance programmes located within one university setting. The programmes represent the first mixed mode university based Initial Teacher Education programmes at both undergraduate and post graduate levels offered in Aotearoa New Zealand. The panel will deliberate on some of the key findings from 15 years of partnership between the kura kaupapa Māori sector and Massey, a western based institution. In particular, the panel will share what can happen when we are free to co-construct ITE programmes aimed at the sustainability of teacher supply for the kura kaupapa system of education underpinned by Te Aho Matua, the only philosophy of education to come out of Aotearoa New Zealand.

In Initial Teacher Education, alternative partnership models such as the partnership with Te Rūnanga Nui o Ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori, enables Massey to work with the community in order to address the sector's teacher supply issue. The challenge for the academy is sustaining kaupapa Māori higher education programmes that are community driven and what that means in practice. For example, how do we maintain respectful relationships in the preparation of graduate teachers between two competing and often times opposing systems? What strategies are required to navigate western systems dominated by neo-liberal sensibilities that are often at odds with Kaupapa Māori theory and praxis? How has the provision of immersion distance education responded to community priorities and aspirations?

How such programmes were forged, and some of the positive outcomes and challenges faced will be presented. For example, such challenges emerged at the intersection of kaupapa Māori and western ontological and epistemological imperatives in teacher education generally that have serious political implications for the future of kura kaupapa Māori unless they are addressed. At stake is ensuring that the kura kaupapa system of education continues to flourish in order to strengthen social, health and community knowledges and practices that mitigate harm, that nourish health and wellbeing of whānau and that enhance flourishing families and their communities.

Kia Mahi, Kia Kōrero | From Theory to Practice: Recognising and Embedding Ako in Online Learning Environments

Terri Brian¹ and Jody Takimoana¹

¹ Otago Polytechnic | Te Pūkenga

Workshop/Panel

In Aotearoa New Zealand, ako is an indigenous Māori framing of learning and teaching that has continued to develop and grow within both compulsory and post-secondary education. Ako encompasses a variety of understandings, interpretations, and “definitions”, which are generally focused on the concept of reciprocal learning. Although these are well-intentioned, they are unfortunately, often reductionist or tokenistic. Additionally, even though ako is becoming more widely recognised and valued as a learning and teaching approach, there are currently limited (although excellent) resources available to support its application, particularly in online learning (e.g. Card et al., 2022). The central theme of this conference is: Ako: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education but, we would like to ask the question: “What is Ako, and what does it look like in contemporary, online learning environments?”

In Aotearoa New Zealand, we are becoming increasingly aware of the diversity of our learner cohorts and the need to provide a range of options to support engagement and success. The move towards fully online modes of delivery has amplified this need, and there is much discussion as to what this means for pedagogy and praxis (Gillett-Swan, 2017). At Otago Polytechnic, the Te Ama Ako | Learning and Teaching Development team has been facilitating distance delivery of the Post Graduate Certificate in Learning Design (PGCLD) since 2023. The qualification is innovative in that it is guided by an ako framework which has been informed by Mātauraka / Mātauranga Māori and co-created by the teaching team and the Kaitohutohu Office. Additionally, because ako is also explicitly included in the learning outcomes, learners are expected to demonstrate their ability to embed it in their own learning design. To facilitate this, we have had to consider how ako might be applied to, and reflected in, our own practice, which has required re-conceptualising often more familiar and traditional paradigms of learning and teaching. It has also meant attempting to translate our evolving understanding into the online learning environment. Although we are fortunate to be guided by our Tumuaki Whakaako, we are discovering that meaningful engagement with ako and Mātauraka / Mātauranga Māori is a dynamic and evolving journey and, there is therefore, no one correct interpretation or application. This concept

presents its own challenges for both learners and facilitators, more used to well-defined theoretical frameworks.

Based on our experience, this workshop offers an opportunity for participants to expand their own understanding of ako, and to explore how it might be applied to online and distance education. By modelling ako in its design and facilitation, space will be created for guided group discussion, sharing of knowledge, and reflection on practice. It is intended that, through considering it in relation to their experience and context, participants will gain a new or developing understanding of ako and how it can be consciously and intentionally embedded in online learning environments to help promote and support learner achievement and success.

Card, A., Merry, R., & Carroll-Lind, J. (2022). *Bicultural principles of teaching and learning online | Ngā mātāpono kākano rua o te mahi ako tuihono*. New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Gillett-Swan, J. (2017). The challenges of online learning: supporting and engaging the isolated learner. *Journal of Learning Design*, 10(1), 20-30. <https://doi.org/10.5204/jld.v9i3.293>

Using the Technology Enhanced Learning Accreditation Standards (TELAS) Framework to Benchmark Quality Online Course Design

Chris Campbell¹ and Lisa Jacka²

¹ University of New South Wales, ² University of Southern Queensland

Workshop/Panel

While there are several frameworks that can be used when designing to ensure quality online learning, for example Course Design Rubric (Quality Matters, 2023) and the Online Learning Consortium (OLC) Quality Scorecard (Online Learning Consortium, 2024), another framework is now available. The Technology Enhanced Learning Accreditation Standards (TELAS) framework has been developed over eight years via consultation with a wide range of practitioners and stakeholders from the Australasian higher education sector. This framework is freely available <https://www.telas.edu.au/framework/> (TELAS, 2025) and aims to provide guidance in the design of quality online learning environments and provide a tool to assess this quality.

This hands-on workshop aims to:

1. Raise awareness of good practices in the design of quality online learning, as rationalised in the TELAS Framework.
2. Introduce individuals to the affordances for quality online learning design, against the TELAS Framework measures.
3. Moderate the assessment of online learning design against the TELAS Framework measures and develop a consistent understanding of how this assessment could be measured so that reliable benchmarking and comparison of performance could be broadly applied.
4. Encourage recognition of exemplary practice in the design of quality online learning.

The TELAS framework allows individuals to really understand their course with those in universities across Australasia using the framework in various ways, including focusing on some of the Domains, such as one or two of the Online Environment, Learner Support, Learning and Assessment Tasks or Learning Resources. Other universities are implementing the framework via Institutional TELAS (Huber et al., 2023). Others used it to inform the design and development of an online Pharmacy course. This research aimed to use the TELAS to provide quality assurance for the course with authors suggesting “the framework provided a cyclic process of reflective action and evaluation that severed as a

functional reflective tool to influence the online design of this course through deliberate alignment and constant reiteration and reflection with the research team” (Pingo et al., 2024, p.18).

This workshop is a hands-on workshop, that not only explains the TELAS framework <https://www.telas.edu.au/framework/> but allows participants to engage in group conversations in the room and use parts of the framework to ‘assess’ an online course. The interactive discussion provides a rich and in-depth experience and allows participants to understand the framework to be able to apply it.

Huber, E., Campbell, C., Thorneycroft, S., & Warburton, S. (2023). Transforming the university: One standard at a time. In T. Cochrane, V. Narayan, C. Brown, K. MacCallum, E. Bone, C. Deneen, R. Vanderburg, & B. Hurren (Eds.). *People partnerships and pedagogies. Proceedings ASCILITE 2023*. Christchurch. DOI. <https://doi.org/10.14742/apubs.2023.627>

Online Learning Consortium (2024). OLC Quality Scorecard Suite available at <https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/consult/olc-quality-scorecard-suite/>

Pingo, Z., Volk, H., & Dianati, S. (2024). Co-designing the first online pharmacy course with the technology-enhanced learning accreditation standards (TELAS) as a reflective tool. *Pacific Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning*, 6(2). 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.24135/pitel.v6i2.163>

Quality Matters (2023). *Course design rubric standards* Available at <https://www.qualitymatters.org/qa-resources/rubric-standards/higher-ed-rubric>

TELAS (2025). TELAS Framework. <https://www.telas.edu.au/framework/>

Strategic Decision-Making in a VUCA World With the Icarus Business Simulation

Lynsie Chew^{1,2} and Alan Parkinson^{1,2}

¹ University College London, ² University of London

Workshop/Panel

This hands-on and interactive workshop offers participants a unique opportunity to engage with Icarus, an award-winning, app-based business simulation that challenges individuals to navigate the complexities of strategic management within the context of a struggling airport. Designed to replicate the pressures of real-world decision-making, Icarus requires participants to collaborate in teams, develop strategic responses, and manage resources effectively while adapting to dynamic external forces.

Currently integrated into two online MSc programmes, the simulation has demonstrated its adaptability across diverse educational and professional settings, including in-person and online deliveries of executive education, continuing professional development (CPD) workshops, student induction events, and community-building exercises.

Please note: This session is not a sales pitch! It is a taster of an immersive learning experience designed to provide insight into a pedagogic approach that has successfully fostered community-building and enhanced learning among global cohorts of professionals online. Participants of this workshop will not complete the full learning outcomes of the simulation itself, but rather gain insight into its application, value, and pedagogical effectiveness. The workshop also provides a platform for the open exchange of ideas and other practices when using simulations within and for learning opportunities.

Why Simulation-Based Learning?

Simulation-based learning is increasingly recognised as a highly effective pedagogical tool, allowing participants to develop critical competencies through experiential learning, critical thinking, and decision-making skills (Kolb, 1984; Gredler, 2004). Icarus fosters interconnected thinking, an essential capability for contemporary managers and future business leaders navigating today's volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) business environments (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014).

As competitive pressures intensify across international sectors, the ability to collaborate, think strategically, and solve problems creatively is increasingly vital for effective strategic planning and execution (Mintzberg, 1994). The risk-free yet realistic simulation environment provides an

opportunity to test strategies, analyse decision outcomes, and refine business judgement through iterative practice (Salas et al., 2009).

Workshop Format & Participation Details

To maximise engagement, participants will need to bring their own device (iPhone, Android smartphone, Android tablet, iPad, or Windows 10 laptop) with the Icarus simulation pre-downloaded from the relevant App store for their device(s). Login details and technical support will be provided during the session.

Anticipated Workshop Outcomes

By the end of this workshop, participants will:

1. Gain a clear understanding of the pedagogical approach underlying simulation-based learning activities within online and blended educational programmes.
2. Develop insights into the practical benefits and challenges of implementing online simulations to enhance student engagement and experiential learning.
3. Recognise best practices for effectively integrating simulation-based tools into diverse educational and professional contexts.
4. Evaluate the potential impact of simulation-based pedagogies on student engagement, decision-making skills, and critical thinking capabilities in online learning environments.
5. Reflect critically on how simulation-based learning approaches, exemplified by the Icarus simulation, might be adapted or applied to their own teaching or professional practices.

This session provides a practical, pedagogical framework and tangible strategies to leverage simulation-based learning, empowering participants with valuable insights to innovate their educational and professional development practices.

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Salas, E., Wildman, J. L., & Piccolo, R. F. (2009). Using simulation-based training to enhance management education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 8(4), 559–573. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMLE.2009.47785474>



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Blending Innovation in Technology and Values of Openness for Future Forward Learning

Carolee Clyne^{1,2}, Surita Jhangiani³

¹Okanagan College, ²University of Northern British Columbia,

³University of British Columbia

Workshop/Panel

This concise talk recaps a research study exploring what modes of learning educators prefer for themselves versus the modes selected for the learning environments they run (in-person, online, or hi-flex modalities are considered). Technological tools, open practices, and inclusive materials are weighed in contrast between personal preferences and educator choice for the classroom. This study looks to capture whether educators are aware of their own privilege in the selection of materials, tools, and activities for their learners. Reflection on the question “When they develop their educational environments do they consider flexibility and innovation through their choices for access, costs, and modalities?” Comparing how these choices align with what they prefer for their own learning experiences to identify if there exist lessons to consider for learning spaces. This talk looks to explore participants' perspectives on the impact of the study towards identifying the disruption of educator biases in selection of learning environment structures, tools, and resources.

Ditch Expensive Textbooks! Create Your Own OER in 5 Easy Steps

Heidi Buchert Egan¹ and Jennifer Hunter¹

¹Brigham Young University – Idaho

Workshop/Panel

Educators and designers can create Open Educational Resources (OER) to increase accessibility, resilience, context, and quality in learning. This presentation explores practical strategies to write and implement OER to reduce the costly materials expense often passed along to students.

By designing accessible content, educators remove barriers for diverse learners, including those with disabilities or limited internet access. Resilient OER adapt to evolving knowledge and changing educational needs. Context-driven resources ensure relevance by incorporating local perspectives, industries, and cultures. Maintaining high-quality standards preserves academic rigor while promoting collaboration and peer review.

If you attend with a laptop and existing course material (LMS or textbook) you should leave this 50-minute workshop with at least one chapter (if not more) of an OER started. This workshop provides step-by-step guidance on writing, licensing, and distributing OER effectively. Case studies illustrate successful implementations, highlighting best practices and common pitfalls. Participants will leave with a clear framework to create impactful, sustainable, and freely available learning materials to empower more students worldwide to afford higher education.

Enhancing Students' Information Evaluation Capability Using the Te Whatu Aho Rau Evaluation Framework

Angela Feekery¹ and Reupena Tawhai¹

¹ **Massey University**

Workshop/Panel

When students enter tertiary study, they are encouraged to engage with quality information, specifically journal articles, to develop disciplinary information literacy (IL). IL instruction is often focused on searching library databases that provide peer-reviewed materials.

Yet, students continue to struggle with finding, evaluating and using credible sources, often relying on Google, and now emerging generative AI tools, for information. The complex digital landscape, filled with misinformation and opinion-based content, makes critical information evaluation essential.

Traditional Western information evaluation methods, like CARS or CRAPP, offer structured, linear approaches, which do not fully address the challenges or significance of critical information evaluation.

This workshop introduces Te Whatu Aho Rau, a te ao Māori-informed framework that fosters deeper engagement with the information evaluation process. Grounded in indigenous values, the framework promotes holistic information evaluation practices, adaptable across cultural and disciplinary contexts. The framework encourages respect for indigenous values and ways of knowing. Participants will explore ways to adopt/adapt Te Whatu Aho Rau for use within their geographical, educational and disciplinary contexts to enhance their students' information evaluation capability.

Activities

- Outline the Framework (10 mins)
- Explore current practice (10 mins): Participants reflect on and discuss existing approaches to teaching information evaluation, identifying strengths and areas for improvement while considering how Te Whatu Aho Rau may complement or replace existing approaches.
- Apply the Framework (15 mins): Participants evaluate a variety of information sources - journal articles, new articles, blog posts and AI-generated content – using Te Whatu Aho Rau to evaluate the credibility, relevance and quality of sources.
- Customise/Implement the Framework (15 mins): Participants will discuss in groups ways to adapt the Te Whatu Aho Rau framework to specific disciplinary contexts, reflecting the unique information needs of their disciplines and student cohorts. This will support them to implement Te Whatu Aho Rau (or their adapted version) in their courses/contexts or

consider how they may explore indigenous-informed holistic information evaluation within their cultural contexts.

Outcomes

- Enhanced information evaluation teaching practices: Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how they evaluate the credibility of information and explore ways to explicitly embed information literacy development into their teaching contexts. They should have increased confidence and competence for guiding students to critically assess the credibility of information sources.
- Increased awareness of te ao Māori principles: Participants will learn about the te ao Māori-informed approach to information evaluation and appreciate the value of incorporating indigenous perspectives into educational frameworks to enrich their teaching practices.
- Informed practical application of Te Whatu Aho Rau: Participants will gain confidence in using and adapting the framework in their educational settings.
- Enhanced information evaluation capability for students: By implementing the framework, participants will improve students' information literacy capabilities and empower them to navigate the digital information critically and make informed decisions about sources they use to support their learning.

A Blueprint for Glocalised Scalability: AI in Higher Education

Jozefa Fawcett¹, Dianne Stratton-Maher¹, Evangelia Manousou, Ebba Ossiannilsson, Syeda Madeeha Bokhari, Afolabi Folashade, and Richard Kajumbula

¹ICDE Technology and Innovation Network

Workshop/Panel

Theme

This workshop, aligned with ICDE Technology and Innovation Network (TIN) Goals 2: Innovative Learning and 3: Global Digital Pedagogy, pilots the Blueprint for Glocalised Scalability: AI in Higher Education, providing a structured approach to AI integration in diverse higher education settings. It explores the glocalised model, ensuring AI adoption is scalable, adaptable, and inclusive by balancing global capabilities with local needs, policies, and cultures. Through interactive activities, participants will engage with AI tools and techniques to enrich digital learning experiences in higher education. These activities will reinforce digital citizenship, ethical AI use, and the practical application of AI-enhanced learning. Grounded in the ICDE Strategy Plan 2025–2028 pillars: Building a Culture of Care, Nurturing Curiosity, and Embracing Challenges, this workshop promotes the collaborative development of scalable, context-specific AI solutions.

Activities

The workshop combines collaborative hands-on engagement with digital tools, to pilot the Blueprint for Glocalised Scalability: AI in Higher Education.

1. Presentation on Glocalisation and AI Integration (10 min): A concise presentation will introduce the Blueprint for Glocalised Scalability: AI in Higher Education, focusing on how AI can balance global potential with local educational needs. It will highlight key principles, such as AI literacy, human-centered design, and the importance of social and cultural inclusion, providing a foundational understanding of the 'glocalisation blueprint.'
2. Breakout Group Activity (30 min): Participants will choose one of two focused activities:
 - Developing an AI Integration Strategy: Participants will design AI-enhanced teaching methods tailored to their institutions, guided by the blueprint. Emphasising scalability and innovative learning, this activity will explore effective AI adoption to enhance educational experiences.

- Hands-On Interaction with Open Education Resources (OER) Platform: Participants will explore the OER platform, examining its applications for global digital pedagogy, including open-access resources, AI-supported cross-cultural learning, and accessibility, ensuring alignment with institutional needs and scalability.
 - To enhance engagement and collaboration, the panel will use app-based tools such as Padlet for brainstorming, Engageli for interactive polling, and AI-enhanced discussion prompts throughout the session.
3. Collaborative Discussion and Q&A (10 min): The session will conclude with an open discussion, where participants can share insights, ask questions, and receive feedback. This will refine their understanding of AI's challenges and opportunities in advancing innovative learning and global digital pedagogy.

Anticipated Outcomes

By the end of the workshop, participants will:

- Understand the principles of glocalisation in AI integration.
- Develop scalable and innovative AI enhanced teaching approaches.
- Engage with AI-supported OER's to enhance global digital pedagogy.
- Identify key challenges and solutions for sustainable AI adoption in higher education.

This workshop equips participants with the knowledge and blueprint to drive inclusive, contextually relevant, and sustainable AI adoption in higher education.

Post-Workshop Use & Dissemination

Hands-on explorations, discussions, and insights from the session will be compiled into a shared document on the OER platform to support ongoing collaboration. Findings will refine the Blueprint for Glocalised Scalability and guide future ICDE TIN initiatives.

Scalable Approaches for Sustainable Online Learning: OPM and University Partnership Models

Dawn Gilmore¹, Chinh Nguyen¹, Liz Smith², Ali Ogilvie³, Michael
Graham⁴, Stephen Ablitt⁵, and Eamon Vale⁵

¹ University of Melbourne, ² University of New South Wales, ³ University of Western Australia,
⁴ Valley College, ⁵ Keypath Education

Workshop/Panel

This panel addresses the Innovation & Openness theme of the ICDE 2025 conference by exploring the evolving role of Online Program Management (OPM) companies in higher education. It examines how universities and OPMs can partner to design and deliver impactful online learning experiences.

Drawing on key frameworks—including the Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Wernerfelt, 1984; Kero & Bogale, 2023) and HolonIQ's Higher Education Digital Capability Framework (2020)—the panel will discuss how universities can assess their internal strengths, uncover capability gaps, and identify opportunities for strategic collaboration. The discussion will explore how institutions can better understand the long-term value and sustainability of partnerships with OPMs.

Through case study examples and practical insights, the panel aims to offer scalable and sustainable approaches to online learning—designed to support innovation, openness, and growth across the higher education sector.

Summaries of key themes

Theme one: OPM Scene setting

Graham will provide an overview of OPM history and marketplace with comprehensive evidence from the first research into OPMs in the United States. Insights and lessons learned will be shared as higher education navigates the relationships with OPMs.

Theme two: Outsourcing in the university value chain and decision-making tools

Universities must strategically assess whether to 'protect', 'make', 'buy', or blend services to effectively partner with OPMs. Utilising Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991; Kero & Bogale, 2023; Prahalad & Hamel, 1990; Wernerfelt, 1984) and Holon IQ's Higher Education Digital Capability Framework (2020), Nguyen & Gilmore will present 10 approaches in the OPM market's demand and supply, which empowers universities to understand their unique resources, identify gaps in their in-house competencies, and partner to enhance and diversify their in-house capabilities. By doing so,

universities can position themselves for sustainable competitive advantages in the online education landscape (Otter, 2021).

Theme three: The role of trust in OPM-University partnerships

Ogilvie presents Australian case studies offering valuable insights into building trust, managing conflicts, and striking a balance between risks and rewards in partnerships. These insights can help institutions navigate challenges and maximise the benefits of OPM partnerships leveraging the lessons learned from stakeholders on both sides of these challenging and complex relationships.

Theme four: Global partnerships and learning design

Vale will provide analyses from a Malaysian case study to explore the dynamics of faculty interactions with OPMs. This theme will explore the challenges and opportunities encountered when transitioning courses from face-to-face to online formats, highlighting the significant time commitment and adaptability required for success, while acknowledging that working with OPMs brings new methodologies and technologies to the design and delivery of university programs. Educators and administrators need to understand these innovations to enhance the quality and effectiveness of their online offerings.

Theme five: Navigating academic quality in the OPM context

Abblitt presents a case study offering valuable insights into academic quality in the OPM context. How do learning designers influence academic quality in OPM partnerships? Key issues will be shared regarding academic engagement.

Theme six: The Faculty experience of OPM partnerships

Smith presents an Australian case study of the faculty experience of establishing a large OPM collaboration and will share the lived experiences of those involved. The insights documented in this case study inform the recommendations that will be presented on how best to manage faculty involvement in OPM partnerships for successful outcomes.

Proposed Panel Members

- Dr Dawn Gilmore is Associate Professor, Academic Product & Student Experience, University of Melbourne
- Dr Chinh Nguyen is Senior Advisor (Student Experience), University of Melbourne
- Dr Stephen Abblitt is Academic Development Manager, Keypath Education (Australia & Asia Pacific)
- Dr. Michael Graham is President of Valley College, West Virginia, USA
- Eamon Vale is a senior manager at Keypath Education APAC
- Liz Smith is the Director of Learning Experience at University of New South Wales
- Ali Ogilvie is Associate Director, Education Innovation and Business Development, University of Western Australia



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50-Minute Panel Outline

1. Introduction (5 minutes)
 - Welcome and Opening Remarks
 - Brief Overview of the Symposium Topics and Objectives
2. Section 1: OPM scene setting (6 minutes)
3. Section 2: Outsourcing in the university value chain and decision-making tools (6 minutes)
4. Section 3: The role of trust in OPM-University partnerships (6 minutes)
5. Section 4: Global partnerships and learning design (6 minutes)
6. Section 5: Navigating academic quality in the OPM context (6 minutes)
7. Section 6: Faculty wellbeing (6 minutes)
8. Q&A Session and Wrap-Up (9 minutes)

Strategies to Engage Attendees

- Interactive Polls and Surveys, Videos, Live Q&A, Case Study Examples and Audience Participation.

Intended Audience

- Higher education administrators and leaders, faculty and instructional designers, educational technologists, policy makers and stakeholders in online education, OPM partners and representatives.

Expected Outcomes

- Outsourcing in the university value chain and decision-making tools.
- Practical insights from case studies on faculty experiences in OPM partnerships.
- Clear strategies and principles for successful long-term university-OPM partnerships.
- Actionable playbooks for setting up and managing OPM collaborations or transitioning away from them.

Key Takeaways

- The latest trends in OPM approaches and their implications for those working in universities.
- Key faculty and staff's perspectives working with OPMs.
- Strategies for maintaining and enhancing quality in teaching and learning through OPM collaborations.
- Recommendations for successful engagement in OPM collaborations.

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Global Advocacy for Local Impact: ICDE Members Campaign for Inclusive, Scalable and Sustainable Education

Torunn Gjelsvik¹

¹International Council for Open and Distance Education

Workshop/Panel

Panel overview

This dynamic panel will showcase the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign, implemented in 2022 to amplify ICDE's advocacy for open, flexible, and distance education worldwide. The session will highlight experiences and outcomes from regional task forces across the globe, addressing common opportunities and challenges in shaping inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education.

Moderator: Torunn Gjelsvik, ICDE Secretary General

Regional Representatives (to be confirmed)

- Dylan Barth (North America)
- Teresa Mwoma (Africa)
- Dr. Myra C. Almodiel (Asia)
- Ralph Springett and Rajni Chand (Oceania)
- Mary Morocho (Latin America)
- Kate Lister and Mychelle Pride (Europe):

Session Structure (50 minutes)

Introduction (5 minutes): Overview of the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign and Alignment with ICDE's purpose: "Together we shape inclusive, scalable and sustainable education".

Regional Insights (25 minutes)

- Panelists share key takeaways from their regional task forces
- Discussion on interpreting ICDE's purpose statement in various contexts

Interactive Q&A (15 minutes)

- Audience engagement through questions/interaction/polls
- Exploration of regional challenges and effective messaging strategies

Conclusion and Call to Action (5 minutes)

- Summary of key insights
- Invitation for attendees to join the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign

Expected Outcomes

- Contextualising Inclusive, Scalable and Sustainable Education: Gain diverse perspectives on implementing ICDE's purpose statement across regions.
- Indigenous Knowledge Integration: Explore approaches to incorporate indigenous wisdom in advocacy efforts
- Regional Challenge Mapping: Identify key issues and develop effective messaging for different contexts
- Global Collaboration: Foster knowledge sharing and active participation in the ICDE Global Advocacy Campaign

Relevance to Conference Theme

This panel embodies the conference theme "Ako: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education" by facilitating a global exchange of advocacy strategies. It addresses:

1. Accessibility and Resilience: Examining diverse approaches to overcome educational barriers.
2. Context and Quality: Aligning advocacy with regional needs, policies and quality standards.
3. Innovation and Openness: Showcasing innovative advocacy methods and fostering open dialogue

By bringing together global perspectives, this panel will provide attendees with valuable insights into the power of locally adapted advocacy in driving inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education worldwide.

Creating Inclusive and Sustainable Open Education Infrastructure in Your Local Context

James Glapa-grossklag^{1,2}, Ash Barber^{1,2,3}, and Joy Shoemate^{1,2}

¹College of the Canyons, ²OER Collective at the Council of Australasian University Librarians,
³University of South Australia

Workshop/Panel

Open Educational Resources (OER) have evolved from innovation to infrastructure in higher education. In this session, learn from leaders of diverse Open Education projects that integrate OER into the infrastructure of their respective organizations and consider how you can apply lessons learned to your own context to create an inclusive and sustainable Open Education program.

Educators from Australia and the United States will share their approaches to making Open Education inclusive and sustainable elements of their institutional ecology. Examples include:

- The largest ever public investment in history in OER with a \$115M USD grant program to support California Community Colleges in developing Zero Textbook Cost pathways.
- A US community college, College of the Canyons, that provides a robust internal training and publishing program for OER.
- An award-winning member-supported collaboration, the Council of Australasian University Librarians' (CAUL) OER Collective, building capacity across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand to publish, adopt, and adapt regionally relevant OER.

In this session, participants will:

- Identify lessons learned from the models presented.
- Describe the limiting and enabling factors in their own context.
- Identify how the models presented can be adapted to their local context.
- Plan for action when returning to their home institution.

California has made the largest public investment in history in OER and Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) degrees with a \$115M USD grant program to support California Community Colleges in developing and implementing ZTC pathways. Colleges are developing hundreds of ZTC pathways to transform the student experience in the country's largest system of higher education, serving 2.1M students across 116 colleges. What support do colleges receive? How are inclusive and open pedagogy woven into support for colleges? College of the Canyons maintains a robust internal training and publishing program for OER, having supported faculty in publishing 75+ OERs. The OER Collective is a participant-



funded service of the Council of Australasian University Librarians (CAUL) which is the peak body organisation for university libraries across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Awarded the OE Global Award for Excellence in Open Collaboration, the Collective builds institutional capacity for OER publishing. With most universities in the Australasian region lacking dedicated OER staff, centralising support, training, and grants through the OER Collective has been critical in enabling many institutions to engage in open education.

Key questions for participants are:

1. How can you begin to explore and apply ideas from the presented programs when returning to your institution?
2. Who are your key constituencies for support and collaboration?
3. Who should you connect with at the ICDE conference that may help your progress?

To make the session interactive, participants will start by sharing the state of their Open Education programs and identify key limiting and enabling factors in their local context.

Throughout the session, facilitators will engage participants with the 1, 2, 4, All method to ensure that everyone is engaged and making connections.

Lead Presenter

James Glapa-Grossklag is Dean, Educational Technology, Learning Resources, and Distance Learning at College of the Canyons (USA). He serves as Technical Assistance Provider for the California Community Colleges' Zero Textbook Cost Degree Program, the largest ever public investment in OER.

He is past President of Open Education Global, the Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources, and Directors of Educational Technology in California Higher Education. James served as a trainer on OER for the US Department of State in the Middle East and North Africa and was Innovation Scholar in Residence at RMIT University in Australia. He held the appointment of Global OER Ambassador for ICDE 2017-21. In 2018, he was recognized as one of the Top 10 global influencers in OER for the past decade. In 2019, he received the President's Award from Open Education Global for "advancing open education around the world through his exceptional dedication, outstanding contribution, and exemplary service." In 2024, he delivered the opening keynote for the Open Ed Conference, entitled "Open Education as Resistance."

James is currently OER Fellow for the Michelson 20MM Foundation and a faculty member in the AAC&U Institute on OER. Most recently, he is co-leading, with Carnegie Mellon University, the development of a national training program to help faculty from broad-access institutions learn to teach with generative AI.

Bridging Design Prototypes and Sustainable Micro- innovations in Flexible Learning

Gloria Gomez^{1,2}

¹Oceanbrowser, ²Save Sight Institute - University of Sydney

Workshop/Panel

The bridging design prototype (BDP) approach is a human-centred design method for individual designers or small organisations with incomplete multidisciplinary teams and limited resources. A bridging design prototype is a fully functional rapid prototype built with features familiar to a user community and with novel features that a designer incorporates after careful analysis of relevant data. It capitalises on a user community's prior knowledge (i.e. the knowledge a user already has about a situation or an activity) and recognises their context realities. These characteristics bring user communities into the development process early while a designer or team employs it for learning about the user community, the context, and the practice. Experimentations should not require the presence of designers. By functional, it means all features should operate. But BDPs are not necessarily minimum viable products, as the digital or tangible materials with which they are built could have a limited lifespan.

Informed by concepts drawn from four design methods and one learning theory, this approach emerged during my doctoral research and enabled the development of a BDP for preschool concept mapping that teachers would accept to incorporate into real activities with their students. This BDP helped me (the designer) gain entry to real settings and made it possible to investigate issues in preschool concept mapping from an interaction design perspective. Outside of my own research, early childhood experts have used it to inform their own concept mapping research on metacognitive skills and science education or promote bottom-up adoption of concept maps as a new didactic tool to teach children with speech impairments. In the latter project, explorations with BDP adaptations and a new design (an app for the interactive whiteboard developed by a teacher) transformed speech therapists and teachers into designers.

Bridging design prototypes have also been implemented to: (a) research and develop a suitable technology to enhance engagement, feedback, and connection in asynchronous distance education; and (b) inform the development of online guided-discovery resources to enhance the first-year experience of on-campus and off-campus students. Background research for BDP implementations has informed project proposals to study and explore smart technologies for the transition to early algebra and gamified assistive technology to improve how professionals with severe impairment work and study.

This introductory workshop will walk participants through the six principles of the BDP approach. Illustrative examples and critical reflections on selected outcomes will demonstrate how BDPs appear to mitigate adoption barriers and afford experimentations in real settings. Bottom-up problem-solving activities appear to promote sustainable micro-innovations such as enabling users (i.e., teachers and students) to become designers and decentering external designer participation to give way to community designs. These outcomes might help address what researchers have described as the gap between the promise of research in technology enhanced learning and practice in educational institutions, which can only be bridged through the dissemination of a participatory culture of learning design among teachers and decision makers at institutional level.

Customising Professional Development: Strategies for Inclusivity, Scalability, and Sustainability

Maggie Hartnett¹ and Fleur Connor-Douglas¹

¹Massey University

Workshop/Panel

Creative, educationally-sound design responses are an essential component in harnessing the opportunities disruption has brought to the higher education sector. One such response was called for at Massey University in 2022. With 1500+ teaching staff across multiple campuses, a newly created Teaching Academy (TA) of 2.5 staff was tasked with designing a new approach to ongoing professional development (PD) for the teaching community. The traditional campus-based workshop model, catering for the interested, was no longer viable and not aligned with the strategic direction of the university (Massey University, 2022; 2023). Productive consultation, innovative design thinking, collaborative strength-based partnerships, and leveraging technology and existing networks, allowed the TA team to concentrate our effort, break down silos and weave strong institutional connections. The results were a comprehensive teaching PD offer (i.e., learning and teaching ecosystem) using limited resources.

A two-fold innovation initially involved articulating and visually representing an institutional learning and teaching eco-system and subsequently designing a hyflex teaching development and recognition pathway for staff. The pathway allows for a tailored experience, flexible enough to meet the learning goals of a diverse teaching community while offering sustainable support and guidance. Reflecting well-established elements of effective professional development and taking a 'just for me, just in time, just enough' approach, the layered development pathway acts as a way finder through the eco-system, promoting continuous, intentional teaching development evidenced in portfolios that can be used for promotion and recognition. While implementation is still in the early stages, the signs are positive, addressing perceptions of a lack of support for teaching. and more reporting "an invaluable and incredibly user-friendly resource as I have embarked on my new role."

Using the PD ecosystem at Massey University as a case study, participants will critically engage in activities that enable them to evaluate which elements may translate to their institutional contexts. The workshop aligns with the conference sub-theme of Context and Quality, emphasising the customisation of PD to for inclusion, scalability, and sustainability.

Activities

Activities will take the form of short plenary sessions interspersed with small group breakout activities as a basis for conversations. The Massey PD eco-system is used as a foundation to engage participants in active conversations about the challenges, benefits and key themes of PD in their contexts with a view to identifying commonalities. Then using the ecosystem participants will work through identifying how it may be applied in their institution.

Anticipated outcomes

- Participants will gain insights into shared challenges, benefits, and key PD themes.
- Participants will critically engage with the eco-system model and learn how it can be adapted to their own institutional PD needs.

Alignment with conference themes

This workshop aligns with the sub-theme of Context and Quality by emphasising the importance of tailoring PD to specific educational contexts.

Global Benchmarking Insights: Lessons From the Implementation Across Six Continents

Moustafa Hassan¹

¹Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University,

Workshop/Panel

Overview

As online, open, and technology-enhanced education continues to expand globally, institutions face the challenge of ensuring inclusivity, scalability, and sustainability in education. The Benchmarking Framework for Online and Distance Higher Education, developed in 2019 and implemented across three cycles, provides a structured approach for universities to assess, compare and improve their performance. Rooted in principles of openness, transparency, and data-sharing, the framework aligns strongly with the ICDE World Conference 2025 central theme, "Ako: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education," as well as the subthemes of "Context and Quality" and "Innovation and Openness." The global adoption of the Benchmarking Framework and collaborative nature reflect a commitment to knowledge exchange and institutional improvement.

This panel will feature institutional representatives sharing how benchmarking has shaped their strategic decisions and policies, highlighting key findings, best practices, and future directions for online and technology-enhanced education.

Panel Objectives

1. Showcase real-world applications of the benchmarking framework in diverse institutional contexts.
2. Highlight lessons learned from three rounds of global implementation (2022–2024).
3. Present data-driven improvements in online learning, student services, and digital infrastructure.
4. Facilitate an interactive discussion on how participation in the Benchmarking Framework has helped institutions shape strategic decision-making and policy development.

Target Audience

Higher education leaders, quality assurance professionals, and policymakers

Structure of the Panel

- A. Opening Remarks & Context Setting (10 minutes)

- Introduction to the Benchmarking Framework and its alignment with the ICDE 2025 theme and subthemes.
- Brief overview of the Global Implementation Reports' key findings and emerging trends.

B. Institutional Case Studies (25 minutes)

Each panellist will present a short case study (5 minutes) focusing on:

- How their institution applied the benchmarking framework.
- Key areas of improvement identified through benchmarking.
- Institutional strategies and policy changes influenced by benchmarking data.
- Impact on student services, digital infrastructure, and future institutional priorities.

C. Interactive Discussion & Q&A (15 minutes)

Audience engagement through facilitated discussion on how active participation in the Benchmarking Framework has influenced institutional decision-making and quality assurance practices.

Moderation and Panelists

Moderator:

Ms. Torunn Gjelsvik, Secretary General at ICDE - International Council for Open and Distance Education.

Panelists (Benchmarking Consortium Experts)

The panel will consist of active experts from the Benchmarking Consortium, representing diverse global perspectives.

1. Africa & Middle East – Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University (UAE) Prof. Moustafa Hassan, Vice Chancellor for International Cooperation
2. Asia – University of the Philippines Open University (Philippines) Prof. Dr. Melinda dela Peña Bandalaria, Chancellor.
3. Europe – International Telematic University UNINETTUNO (Italy) Prof. Elpidio Romano, Head of Internal Quality, Vice Dean Engineering (TBC)
4. North & South America – Tecnológico de Monterrey (Mexico) Dr. Maribell Reyes, Director for Digital Education
5. Oceania – Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, Te Pūkenga. (TBC)

Supporting Students to Become Lifelong Learners and Reflective Practitioners

Kristina Hoeppe¹

¹Catalyst IT

Workshop/Panel

Digital portfolios offer lots of opportunities for educators in open, distance, and online learning to personalise their offering to their students and give them agency over their own learning. To recognise the far-reaching possibilities of portfolios in regard to lifelong, intentional, and integrative learning, AAC&U added portfolios as the eleventh High-Impact Practice (Watson et al. 2016) in 2016. A few years earlier, in 2011, Helen L. Chen created and championed the concept of 'folio thinking' (Penny Light et al., 2011) that focuses on students telling their learning story by contextualising their learning evidence, reflecting on it, and making connections between different learning events. In a world that requires professionals to transfer skills to adapt to new contexts and be willing to continue to learn, being a reflective practitioner is beneficial and dare we say essential to progress in one's career.

In this workshop, you will learn about different types of portfolios and their benefits as well as how you can leverage generative AI to support your students' reflective practice and put that into the wider context of universal design for learning. This session is a chance for you to explore the use of an AI tool hands-on from both the learner and the educator side to critically reflect on benefits and drawbacks of using such a tool in your own practice.

By the end of this workshop, you will have gained insight into the different types of portfolios, their strengths, and how you can support your students in becoming lifelong learners and reflective practitioners.

Penny Light, T., Chen, H. L., & Ittelson, J. C. (2011). *Documenting learning with ePortfolios: A guide for college instructors*. Jossey-Bass. <https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Documenting+Learning+with+ePortfolios%3A+A+Guide+for+College+Instructors-p-9780470636206>

Watson, C. E., Kuh, G. D., Rhodes, T. L., Penny Light, T., & Chen, H. L. (2016). Editorial: ePortfolios: The eleventh High Impact Practice. *International Journal of EPortfolio*, 6(2), 65–69. <https://www.theijep.com/pdf/IJEP254.pdf>

Building the Quality Blueprint for Stackable Education: A Global Perspective

Juliet Inegbedion and Moustafa Hassan¹

¹Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University

Workshop/Panel

Overview

The stackable learning approach has the potential to reshape higher education and to enhance flexibility for learners. Offering modular, cumulative and flexible learning pathways that enable learners to build credentials over time and truly reflecting the global ambition for lifelong and continuous learning. However, while micro-credentials, badges, and short courses can offer greater flexibility and accessibility, quality assurance, credit transferability, and institutional recognition of these offerings remain key challenges, particularly at scale. Numerous regional and international activities have attempted to engage with these issues to provide clear guidance to stakeholders as they attempt to pilot and mainstream stackable learning approaches both at system and institutional levels.

To address these concerns, a new initiative by the Benchmarking Consortium on Smart, Online, Open, and Technology-Enhanced Higher Education has embarked on a journey to develop a Quality Assurance Blueprint for Stackable Education. This initiative aims to build from and on previous work in this area to define an international framework for assessing, accrediting, and integrating stackable credentials into formal degree pathways while ensuring academic integrity and workforce relevance.

Aligned with the ICDE World Conference 2025 subthemes “Context and Quality and Innovation and Openness,” Participants in ICDE will be engaged with during the session to provide key feedback and reaction to the Blueprint as part of a co-construction and international validation exercise.

Panel Objectives

- Discuss the stackable learning models and the importance of assuring their quality.
- Explore the challenges and the global best practices in assessing, accrediting, and integrating stackable credentials.
- Highlight insights from the quality Blueprint for Stackable Education produced by the Benchmarking Consortium’s Technical Committee.
- Engage with co-construction activity to provide feedback from ICDE participants from their regional and international perspectives on the Blueprint for Stackable Education.

Structure of the Panel

1. Opening Remarks (10 minutes)
 - Introduction to the stackable education model and its importance to widen accessibility and enhance openness.
2. Expert Panel Discussion (25 minutes)

Key Discussion Points

- Ensuring Quality Assurance & Standardization
 - What best practices do institutions follow to assess and validate stackable credentials effectively?
 - Pathways for Credit Transferability and Recognition
 - How can stackable units be mapped to formal degree programs?
 - What role should regulatory bodies and industry play in ensuring acceptance?
 - Sustainability and Institutional Commitment
 - What policies are needed to ensure the long-term viability of stackable models?
 - How can students' progression in stackable education be effectively monitored and evaluated?
3. Interactive Discussion & Audience Engagement (15 minutes)
 - Q&A Session: Participants engage with panellists on best practices and policy considerations.

Moderator

- Prof. Moustafa Hassan, VC Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University

Panellists

1. Prof. Dr. Lily Chan, Chief Executive, Vice Chancellor, Wawasan Open University, Malaysia
2. Mr. George Ubachs, Managing director of the European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU)
3. Dr. Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl Associate Professor of Information Technology, Director of Micro-Credential Strategy and Innovation, Dublin City University.
4. Prof. Juliet INEGBEDION Professor, Professor of Educational Administration and Planning, National Open University of Nigeria.

Redefining Global Education: Smart Learning for a Sustainable and Inclusive Future

Asha Singh Kanwar¹ and Lin Xu¹

¹Beijing Normal University

Workshop/Panel

Organizers

Global Smart Education Network (GSENeT)

International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE)

Asia e University (AeU)

Beijing Normal University (BNU)

Background

In an era characterized by rapid technological advancements, the global education sector faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities. The theme 'Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education' underscores the importance of innovation to transform global education through advancements in technology, particularly artificial intelligence (AI). Smart education integrates appropriate technologies, innovative pedagogies and human-centred learning approaches to develop smart learning environments, thereby fostering inclusivity, scalability, and sustainability.

This plenary session will bring together experts from GSENeT) to share concrete examples of how innovative and open policies and strategies can effectively leverage emerging technologies to shape a more inclusive, sustainable future for education. It will address the issues under Sub Themes 'Accessibility and Resilience', 'Context and Quality' and 'Innovation and Openness'.

Objectives

1. Showcase Smart Education Practices: Present current practices and examples to demonstrate how technologies are transforming learning outcomes.
2. Promote Inclusivity and Scalability: Discuss strategies to make smart learning accessible to diverse populations, ensuring equitable access to quality education.
3. Encourage Openness and Collaboration: Foster the creation and sharing of educational resources and promote global collaboration.

Expected outcomes

1. Actionable Insights: Enhanced understanding of how smart education can be harnessed for inclusivity, scalability, and sustainability.
2. Policy Recommendations: Guidelines for policymakers to promote and implement smart learning initiatives.
3. Sharing Best Practices: Cases studies and practical strategies compiled for implementing smart education in diverse contexts.

Format

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Moderator: Prof. Asha Singh Kanwar, Chair of the Governing Board of the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies and Education (IITE), Chair Professor at SLIBNU 5 min
3. Panel discussion to focus on but not be limited to the following questions:

Proposed Questions

- 1) How can smart education technologies be designed and deployed to address diverse learner needs, particularly those of facing barriers—while ensuring that all students have equitable access to digital tools and resources?
- 2) What strategies and best practices can institutions adopt to scale up smart education initiatives, particularly in regions with limited infrastructure, without compromising quality or sustainability?
- 3) In what ways can institutions-industry-government partnerships enhance smart education projects, and how can we ensure meaningful stakeholder engagement for continuous improvement?

Q&A

Summary and Closing

Potential Panelists

- Prof. CHEN Li, Former Vice-President of BNU, China
- Prof. DATO' Dr. Ahmed Ansary, Founder President and CEO, AeU, Malaysia
- Prof. HUANG Ronghuai, Co-Dean of Smart Learning Institute of BNU, UNESCO Chair on AI in Education, China
- Ms. Torunn Gjelsvik, Secretary General, ICDE, Norway
- Dr. Mansoor Alawar, Chancellor, Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University, UAE (TBC)
- Prof. Olaf Zawacki-Richter, Professor of Educational Technology, Dean of Faculty of Education and Social Sciences, Director of Center for Open Education Research (COER), University of Oldenburg, Germany (TBC)

Conceiving and Promoting Hope in Distance Education: A Workshop for Transformative Pedagogical Practice

Elaine Khoo¹, Clare Mouat¹, and Alice Beban¹

¹ Massey University

Workshop/Panel

In today's era of converging crisis, distance learners in higher education face unprecedented academic challenges. These challenges manifest as anxiety, isolation, and disengagement, significantly shaping learner participation and outcomes. While existing literature documents these challenges and responses, there remains a pressing need to develop constructive frameworks that promote learner wellbeing, participation, engagement, and career preparedness for uncertain futures (whether emergent, aspirational, or dystopian). We propose hope as a transformative agenda for how distance educators might reconceptualise their roles and for practical and learner empowerment in and beyond distance education contexts. Our response heeds the challenge to bring about transformative learning experiences for educator and learner resilience by "making hope practical in a world where despair would seem far more convincing" (Lingard et al., 2003, p. 1).

This interactive workshop invites participants into a collaborative exploration of hope, hope-based pedagogies, and the significance of hope in distance higher education. It draws from our recent scoping review of hope and hope-based pedagogical approaches in higher education. We undertook a review of English, peer-reviewed articles published between 2014 to 2025 from six databases. Nineteen studies from a wide array of geographic and disciplinary locations met our search parameters.

Key findings underscore hope as valuable to fostering learner sense of belonging and confidence, and engendering meaning and purpose. However, potential tensions include the need to provide social support and care for students, while also enabling students to work through their own reflective journeys of discovery. This includes the ability to hold hope and despair together.

Our findings and proposed workshop align directly with *ako* - the conference theme – emphasising the reciprocal nature of learning and teaching and particularly relevant in creating inclusive and sustainable learning environments in distance higher education. This workshop embodies multiple dimensions of *ako*: through the reciprocal learning that shaped our collaborative research, through the co-creation and experimentation with innovative approaches to hopeful pedagogies, and in our focus on classroom practices that nurture resilient learners. Alongside classroom-level strategies, we will invite critical reflections on how institutional structures such as teaching policies and curriculum frameworks might also be reshaped to support hope-based education.

Our workshop will:

1. Share an overview of the findings from our scoping study on hope and its application in higher education as emerging evidence linking hope to learning outcomes.
2. Explore the diverse and contested meanings of hope.
3. Discuss practical applications of hope-based pedagogies across diverse sociocultural and institutional contexts.

Workshop Takeaways

Anticipated outcomes from the workshop are:

1. Richer understanding of how hopeful pedagogies can shape curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment practices in distance education.
2. A post-workshop summary shared with participants, capturing co-developed strategies for integrating hopeful pedagogies in distance education.
3. Building a community of practice of scholars and practitioners supporting how we might enact hopeful pedagogies.

Note: Participants will preferably have access to internet-enabled mobile devices/laptops to participate.

Lingard, B., Hayes, D., Mills, M., & Christie, P. (2003). *Leading learning: Making hope practical in schools*. Open University Press. <https://books.google.co.nz/books?id=xrJ2NpCCEFQC>

Nurturing Māori Identity: Integrating Te Reo and Tikanga in Education

Christine Te Kiri¹

¹Te Aho O Te Kura Pounamu

Workshop/Panel

In an era where cultural preservation and revitalisation are paramount, our school, Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu has embarked on a transformative journey to integrate Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori into our educational environment. This workshop, "Nurturing Māori Identity: Integrating Te Reo and Tikanga in Distance Education," will explore the innovative strategies and activities we have implemented to honour and promote Māori culture within our online and at distance educational operations and community.

Our approach is multifaceted, focusing on both language and cultural practices. We have introduced te reo me ona tikanga Māori as an integral component of our curriculum, ensuring not only the visibility of the language but also honouring mātauranga Māori to be seen, experienced and learnt in our offerings. This initiative is supported by professional development for kaimahi (staff), enabling them to build their capabilities in te reo Māori and incorporate Māori perspectives across the organisation.

In addition to our provisions in curriculum, we have embedded tikanga Māori into our school's routines and events. From karakia (prayers) to the celebration of Matariki (Māori New Year), our kura (school) has become immersed in Māori customs and values, fostering a deep respect, and understanding of Māori heritage.

The anticipated outcomes of this initiative are profound. We aim to create a school environment where Māori students feel a strong sense of belonging and pride in their identity, while non-Māori students gain a greater appreciation and respect for Māori culture. By nurturing Māori identity, we are not only preserving a vital part of New Zealand's heritage but also promoting a more inclusive and culturally aware society.

This workshop will be highly interactive, featuring our mihi app and showcasing our LMS My Te Kura. Attendees will have the opportunity to share their experiences and insights, fostering a collaborative learning environment. We will also provide ample time for Q&A, allowing for a rich exchange of ideas and best practices.

Join us in this session to discover how our school is making a meaningful impact by integrating te reo and tikanga Māori into education and learn how you can implement similar strategies in your own educational context.

Mind the Overlap: The Power of Open UDL

Antonia Levy¹ and Kelly Hammond¹

¹CUNY School of Professional Studies

Workshop/Panel

Join us in this interactive workshop for a hands-on exploration of Open UDL, a new pedagogical approach at the intersection of Open Educational Practices (OEP) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) that we developed for one of our advanced online faculty workshops.

Open UDL bridges the gap between two powerful educational frameworks. UDL, with its emphasis on providing multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression, has long been recognized as a cornerstone of inclusive, accessible education. OEP, on the other hand, champion the creation, use, and reuse of openly licensed educational resources, fostering a culture of sharing and collaboration in teaching and learning. By bringing these two approaches together, Open UDL offers a comprehensive strategy for creating learning experiences that are not only accessible and engaging for all learners but also open, adaptable, and sustainable.

Workshop Activities

After a short introduction to the ways UDL and OEP complement each other, we will dive into interactive group activities to map the overlap of the principles of both approaches, review assessments from various disciplines through the Open UDL lens and develop next steps for participants' own Open UDL practice.

There will be plenty of time for discussion, plus we will provide a digital swag bag of resources, hoping participants will leave feeling inspired and equipped to explore Open UDL and apply it to their courses, programs, or instructional design practice.

This workshop is designed to benefit instructors, course developers, program directors, instructional designers, and CTL staff.

Learning Outcomes

- Define Open UDL, i.e. identifying how UDL guidelines overlap with the attributes of OER and Open Pedagogy.
- Critique sample assignments and assessments through the lens of Open UDL.
- Articulate one achievable next step for implementing Open UDL in your courses, your programs, or your instructional design practice.

Alignment with Conference Theme

Open UDL exemplifies 'ako' by recognizing that accessible, open education is inherently reciprocal - as educators make their content more universally accessible, they simultaneously learn from and adapt to diverse learner perspectives and needs.

The workshop design aligns with the following conference dimensions:

- Innovation and Openness, through its integration of technology and open practices.
- Accessibility and Resilience, by equipping educators with tools to create more inclusive learning environments.

The workshop emphasizes scalability through its digital components, sustainability through its focus on open educational practices, and inclusivity through its universal design foundation.

Participants will leave with practical tools, a supportive network, and actionable strategies for implementing more inclusive and open educational practices in their own contexts.

Catalyst: Transforming Higher Education Together

Julie Lindsay¹

¹ University of Southern Queensland

Workshop/Panel

The ICDE Technology and Innovation Network (TIN) brings together forward-thinking educators, researchers, and practitioners from across the ICDE global community who are passionate about advancing technology-enhanced learning and innovative pedagogical approaches in education. Since inception and launch in June 2024 members of the dynamic TIN community have engaged through regular online meetings and collaborative initiatives.

This session will share cross institution and cross-country collaborative projects that stemmed from ‘moonshot’ ideation. Participants will explore the research, and collaborative outcomes aligned with the overriding goal to transform higher education by being a catalyst for change. As with a catalyst in chemistry, TIN aims to combine different elements to create something new. ‘Catalyst’ also represents the transformative nature of TIN’s work, implies acceleration of positive change, and suggests the ripple effect of innovation.

Project Themes

- AI in Education
- Design for Innovative Learning
- Global Digital Pedagogy
- Innovation Showcase

Session Activities

Technology and Innovation Network members will share project ideation, development and outcomes as a panel. Participants are invited to interact with project leaders via small group discussions. They will also be encouraged to share innovative ideas, experiences and questions via digital platforms. It is important to TIN members that new voices are included in the session through active contribution and discussion around current and future collaborative projects.

Expected Outcomes

Aligned with the conference theme of Ako: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education.

By attending this session, participants will:

1. Explore shared ideation and development approaches of TIN member projects.
2. Discuss innovation and glocalization in education and how these concepts and practices can be further supported.
3. Appreciate the power of global learning networks and ideas as the catalyst for change, sustainability knowledge-sharing, and problem-solving in education.
4. Consider leadership attributes for resilience and adaptation in higher education by fostering Care, Curiosity, and Challenge in a rapidly changing global landscape.
5. Contribute and collaborate with others and build stronger networks and partnerships for future projects.



What does Institutional Integrity Really Mean for Higher Education?

Stephen Marshall¹

¹Victoria University of Wellington

Workshop/Panel

Systems of higher education are globally facing the challenge of remaining relevant to their societies and to the needs of people throughout their lives. Defining higher education purely as a means to obtain qualifications in the most efficient manner is driving a degradation of the system even as numbers of students grow. If higher education is to move beyond a mass system defined by economic efficiency and direct employment outcomes, new models of success need to be identified and defined.

In this workshop the concept of higher education as an institution sustaining the intellectual integrity of societies is explored. The intention is to work with participants using a futures brainstorming process to identify the integrity features of higher education that are important to a range of stakeholders and drive a wide range of social outcomes.

Workshop Plan (1 hour, 50 minutes)

- Brief framing introduction of concept of institutional integrity and futures brainstorming process (15 min).
- Small group brainstorming to identify forms of integrity that could be valued by different stakeholders (20 min).
- Collective sensemaking to cluster integrity elements into coherent domains (15 min).
- Small group brainstorming of domains to identify success measures and specific outcomes of potential value to stakeholders (30 min.)
- Collective sensemaking and reflection on institutional integrity (30 min).

Workshop Outcomes

1. Collective development of a shared understanding of how integrity framing might influence future conceptions of success for higher education
2. A draft model of institutional integrity providing a starting point for further development
3. A draft set of success measures for institutional integrity able to be used internationally to assess the current state of higher education systems

Preparing for the future of Distance Education: Is Your Organisation Ready for the Shift?

John Milne¹ and Saba Azeem

¹ **Ako Aotearoa**

Workshop/Panel

Theme and outcomes

Distance educators navigate complex challenges that require coordinated efforts to support learners. While technologies like artificial intelligence will transform learning and teaching processes, other factors such as social, environmental, and economic will also drive transformation. For example, social factors such as learner choice impact teaching. Learners increasingly prefer flexible learning options, and organisations are adapting to meet the needs of tech-savvy students who favour shorter, engaging online courses (Ahmed & Ahmad, 2023). Other important social factors include the multicultural nature of New Zealand society. This has resulted in a push for more culturally responsive teaching. A key challenge for organisations is how they prepare their educators for change, including through the training of trainers and the models used for professional development.

Various organisations identify trends in education, with reports such as Educause Horizon Teaching and Learning edition (Pelletier et al., 2024) and the Deloitte Insights (Clark et al., 2024) higher education trends highlighting factors that will shape the future of distance education. While these international frameworks give a good way to consider the bigger picture, they also miss some of the local needs.

In this workshop participants will discuss emerging trends in distance education and evaluate their relevance to their own situations. Join this workshop to explore what the future holds and discover ways to make the most of the emerging opportunities. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of adaptability in navigating these changes and the role of collaboration among educators, technologists, and policymakers in developing innovative solutions. Let's look at how organisations are preparing their educators and think about how well these approaches work for the future of distance education. By the end of the workshop, participants will gain practical insights and strategies through collaboration to help adapt to future changes in distance education.

Activities

In this interactive workshop, participants will discuss the key drivers of change in distance education by examining international reports of future trends. They will explore if they are relevant to their

context, share their experience in responding to these trends, and discuss strategies for adapting to anticipated changes. AI-generated scenarios will be used to help participants envision and plan for upcoming shifts in a dynamic and practical way.

- Ahmed, A. L., & Ahmad, E. (2023). *The future of New Zealand tertiary education: Generation alpha*. Available from <https://nzqri.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/The-Future-of-Tertiary-Education-Embracing-Online-Courses-and-AI-Tools.pdf>
- Clark, C., Cluver, M., Fishman, T., and Kunkel, D. (2024). *Deloitte 2024 higher education trends*. Available from <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/public-sector/latest-trends-in-higher-education.html>
- Pelletier, K., McCormack, M., Muscanell, N., Reeves, J., Robert, J., and Arbino, N. (2024) 2024 EDUCAUSE horizon report, teaching and learning edition. Available from <https://library.educause.edu/resources/2024/5/2024-educause-horizon-report-teaching-and-learning-edition>

Policy Development for Open, Flexible and Distance Learning

Som Naidu¹

¹Technology Education and Design Associates

Workshop/Panel

The COVID-19 pandemic forced educational institutions globally to engage with open, flexible and distance learning methods to remain viable and operational. Much of this, however, has been hasty and without the development or realignment of strategic plans and policies. Many argued that there was no time to engage in such planning, while many did not know how and where to begin with this kind of re-imagination and re-engineering of core business models.

This workshop proposal seeks to address that deficit, and as such it is especially suited for those who are embarking on or already engaged with such policy development in relation to a reimagination of their core business models. Participants in this workshop will engage with how to begin engaging with policy development for open, flexible and distance learning—for now, and in the future. This will involve foremost, exploring the key dimensions of open, flexible and distance learning, namely: (a) Open access which is about inclusive, equal and flexible access to educational opportunities without barriers such as entry qualifications and ability to pay; (b) Open learning which is about the ability of students to be able to study and learn at any time, from anywhere and at any pace; and (c) Open scholarship which is about the release of educational resources under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation, repurposing and redistribution by others.

Workshop activities will involve participants using an a priori framework to develop a draft policy along key dimensions of the learning and teaching transaction. These are:

- (a) Learning experience design which is about the design and development of productive learning experiences so that each learner is able to make most of the learning opportunities they afford;
- (b) Learner-content engagement which is about learners' engagement and interaction with the subject matter in ways that suit individuals, and their approaches to studying, its time, place and pace;
- (c) Learner-teacher engagement which is about choices learners have in relation to the mode and method of their engagement and interaction with their teachers and tutors;
- (d) Learner-learner engagement which is about choices learners have in relation to their engagement and interaction with their peers in small and large groups, and in offline and online modes;

- (e) Learner engagement with the learning environment which is about adaptable access, interaction and engagement with the learning environment;
- (f) Learner engagement with assessment activities which is about choices learners have in relation to the fulfillment of their assessment requirements;
- (g) Learner engagement with feedback which is about choices learners have in relation to access to feedback on their learning and assessment activities; and
- (h) Learner engagement with the institution which is about choices learners have in relation to their engagement with the services of the educational institution.

Global Synergies in Open Education: Is “All Things Open” the Way Forward?

Ebba Ossiannilsson¹, Torunn Gjelsvik, Rory Mc Greal, and Aras Bozkurt

¹Former ICDE OERAC Chair, ²Icde Board

Workshop/Panel

Introduction

This workshop builds on the experience from previous ICDE OER Chairs, Ambassadors and open education experts with various backgrounds. Panelists will discuss critical outcomes from their work, research and experiences, addressing the intersection of openness relating to open-source software, open data, open AI models, open standards, ethics and leadership. In 2025, ICDE launched its Open Education Network, a new initiative on all things open, as a direct response to the 2024 UNESCO Dubai Declaration’s call for international collaboration. The network welcomes all ICDE members with interest and expertise within open education and related topics and provides a broader space for cross border collaboration within multiple aspects of openness.

By offering diverse perspectives, the panel will provide attendees with a deeper understanding of the role of Open Education as a driver for inclusive, scalable and sustainable education, and discuss global synergies for the coming years.

Expected Outcomes in line with the central theme of AKO: Exchanging ideas for inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education and conference sub-themes.

- Accessibility and Resilience: Discussion on how open education enhances access to education and global resilience.
- Indigeneity: Include perspectives on incorporating indigenous knowledge in open education
- Innovation and Openness – Explore how AI is reshaping the development through the intersection of AI, open data, and open education.
- Best Practices and Strategies – Participants will learn about successful Open Education initiatives and strategies that are inclusive, scalable and sustainable.
- Collaborative Engagement – The panel will foster global collaboration, encouraging participants to share knowledge and actively take part in the newly launched ICDE Open Education Network.

Structure

- Opening Remarks (5 minutes): Introduction by the moderator, outlining the objectives of the panel and the significance of open education globally.
- Expert Insights (25 minutes): Panelist takeaways and discussion on the development of Open Education through the intersection of AI and various aspects of open.
- Open Q&A and Audience Interaction (15 minutes): Opportunity for attendees to engage with panelists through direct questions, reflections and real-time audience polling.
- Closing Remarks (5 minutes): Summary of key takeaways and call to action for attendees to join the ICDE Open Education Network, fostering ongoing collaboration beyond the conference

Background

Open Education has been a strategic priority for ICDE's for over two decades. As a consultative partner to UNESCO, ICDE works towards the UN Development Goal number four, and has been a member of the UNESCO OER Dynamic Coalition since its establishment in 2020, following the global adoption of the UNESCO OER Recommendation (2019). Furthermore, ICDE has advocated for openness in education through the appointment of OER Chairs and Ambassadors, particularly through the ICDE OER Advocacy Committee (2017-2024), and through dedicated OER projects (ENCORE+, the ICDE Francophone OER Africa project and the ICDE Portuguese OER Project). In 2025, ICDE launched its new Open Education Network, a broader initiative for various aspects of Open.

Rooted in Place: Engaging Students through Place-Based Education

Nicole Otero¹ and Caroline Torres¹

¹ University of Hawai'i Kapi'olani Community College

Workshop/Panel

Research indicates that place-based education significantly boosts student engagement, learning outcomes, and overall success (Place-based Education Evaluation Collaborative, 2010). In the unique context of Hawai'i, this educational approach (referred to as 'āina-based learning) focuses on making learning more relevant and meaningful by integrating Native Hawaiian culture and values. By incorporating indigenous ways of knowing and fostering connections with the local community, 'āina-based learning not only enriches the learning experience for students but also honors and preserves the rich cultural heritage of the region. Through the lens of 'āina-based education, participants will explore how to create a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment while decolonizing curriculum and instruction. By grounding education in the local context, educators can help students develop a deeper understanding of their surroundings, cultivate a sense of belonging, and foster a more profound respect for the land and its cultural significance.

This workshop aims to provide educators with practical strategies to effectively implement an 'āina-based approach in their classrooms. We will begin with a brief discussion of the impacts of 'āina-based learning on student engagement and success. We will then share real-world examples of how we have grounded lessons in the cultural and environmental context of Hawai'i, which will highlight strategies to engage a diverse range of students, including local, immigrant, and international learners. Presenters will share a variety of 'āina-based materials and projects, alongside effective assessment tools that have been utilized in their teaching practice. Participants will learn about the challenges and successes encountered in applying this pedagogical strategy, thus gaining insights into the practical aspects of implementing place-based education.

Following the brief introduction and sharing, the next component of this workshop will be the opportunity for participants to engage in collaborative discussions and exchange of ideas in alignment with the conference theme of 'ako', the reciprocity of teaching and learning. Presenters will support participants in a structured brainstorm of innovative ways to weave place-based learning strategies into their existing context and curricula, fostering an environment of shared learning and creativity. This interactive session is designed to inspire not only those who are already familiar with place-based education but also those who are encountering these concepts for the first time. The workshop will encourage attendees to reflect on their teaching practices and consider how they can integrate the



principles of place-based education to enhance student engagement and success. We will close with an opportunity for participants to identify next steps in implementation or enhancement of their place-based instruction.

Ultimately, this workshop aspires to empower educators to embrace place-based education as a transformative approach to teaching and learning. By the end of the session, participants will leave with practical tools and hopefully renewed inspiration for making education more relevant and impactful for all students.

Co-Creating Digital Wellness in Online Education

Agnieszka Palalas¹

¹Athabasca University

Workshop/Panel

Workshop Description: This interactive workshop embraces the practice of reciprocal teaching and learning to explore the intricate relationship between digital wellness and effective online learning in higher education (and other digital learning settings). Specifically, it focuses on the challenges and opportunities presented by the ever-evolving digital landscape, including AI, and learners' experiences amidst digital disarray, time pressures, overwhelm, safety concerns, attentional crises, and digital persona issues. Grounded in the understanding that inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education requires a holistic approach, this workshop introduces the Digital Wellness Framework for Online Learning Design (DW-FOLD) as a practical guide for fostering student flourishing in digital spaces. Drawing on research and mindfulness principles, DW-FOLD offers eight interconnected dimensions—Awareness, Balance, Attention, Safety, Identity, Agency, Community, and Achievement—as a framework for reimagining online pedagogy and curriculum design. Insights from studies on Attentional Literacy will be included. The workshop will emphasize reciprocal learning through shared experiences, collaborative activities, and open dialogue.

Activities

- **Sharing Our Digital Stories:** Participants will engage in a sharing circle, exploring their experiences with technology in online learning - opportunities and challenges of digital learning, reflecting on their own experiences and identifying key stressors for online learners. The integration of digital technology in the classroom, including AI tools, will be considered along with its impact on the macro level and how our in-class practices can both enhance and hinder inclusivity, scalability, and sustainability in education.
- **Exploring DW-FOLD:** The eight dimensions of DW-FOLD will be introduced, highlighting their interconnections and how they address the challenges of the digital learning environment.
- **Weaving DW-FOLD into Teaching Practice:** Hands-on activities will guide participants in applying DW-FOLD to their own teaching contexts; they will co-create/revise online learning activities, incorporating strategies that promote digital wellbeing, e.g.:
 - **Awareness:** Encouraging reflection on digital habits through journaling and discussions.

- Balance: Co-creating structured flexibility into courses with clear expectations and choices.
- Attention: Exploring mindfulness practices and attentional literacy strategies as a community.
- Safety: Creating safe spaces for authentic interaction and fostering digital citizenship.
- Identity: Supporting learners in developing authentic digital identities.
- Agency: Providing opportunities for learner self-regulation and co-regulation.
- Community: Building inclusive online learning communities through reciprocal sharing and support.
- Achievement: Co-developing assessment strategies that recognize diverse forms of learning and celebrate collective success.
- Collective Reflection: Participants will create action plans for integrating digital wellness principles and the DW-FOLD framework into their future online teaching practice. Feedback from colleagues will be invited.
- Sustaining Our Practice: Participants will discuss strategies for integrating DW-FOLD into their teaching practice.

Outcomes

- Increased awareness of challenges and opportunities of digital learning.
- Deepened understanding of digital wellbeing and its importance to individual learners as well as inclusive, scalable, and sustainable education.
- Practical skills in applying DW-FOLD and its eight dimensions to curriculum design and pedagogical practice.
- Development of concrete strategies for fostering digital wellness in online learning.
- Cultivation of a supportive community of practice focused on digital wellbeing in higher education.

Transformation and Innovation: Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

Paulina Pannen¹

¹Universitas Terbuka

Workshop/Panel

Background

The scope and extent of artificial intelligence (AI) applications in education are rapidly expanding. Generative AI (GenAI) technologies, such as ChatGPT, are increasingly being adopted across global educational sectors. Educators need to carefully consider this trend because it has significant implications for the future of higher education.

Generative AI promises to give higher education the ability to provide deeper learning, a more personalised experience for students, and a reduced workload for lecturers. However, this will require focusing on what and how we want students to learn and how they can obtain the tools to thrive in a ubiquitous AI environment.

While traditional AI focuses on analysing data and making decisions, GenAI goes further by creating new content based on learned patterns. This makes GenAI a powerful tool for creative applications and innovation, especially in teaching and learning in higher education, thus changing the landscape of higher education.

Who

The panel is about Transformation and Innovation in higher education caused by Artificial Intelligence, including GenAI. Five leading institutions in online education are participating in this panel: UNESCO International Center for Higher Education Innovation (ICHEI), Tsinghua University, XuetangX, University of the Philippines Open University, Wawasan Open University, and ICE Institute—Universitas Terbuka. The moderator will be from the panelist.

The speaker/Representative of each institution will showcase their work on innovatively implementing AI in their practices/institutions/countries and illustrate how AI transforms their practices.

Objective

In addition to sharing each institution's activities in transforming and innovating with AI in higher education, this panel is expected to provide an opportunity to network among participants and initiate continuous discussions regarding AI and the transformation and innovation of HE.

**Strategy**

The panel will be in a Q&A (talk show) model, moderated based on the five questions. The Q&A will invite participation from the panel attendees, allowing more time for discussion.

Outcome

In addition to networking, this panel's outcome is expected to be articles from the five institutions and others (from the audience) who are interested in participating that will be published in a book.

Braver Spaces: Exploring Gender Inclusion in Education

Tara Pond, Milla Inkilä¹, and Chelsea Haughton

¹AcademyEX

Workshop/Panel

When you meet someone new, what do you assume about them? How do these assumptions shape the way you address and interact with them? In education, unspoken norms about gender influence everything from classroom discussions to research design—often without us realising it.

This interactive workshop invites participants into a brave space—one where we move beyond surface-level awareness and engage in critical reflection and open dialogue about intersectional gender inclusion in education. Rather than presenting a predefined set of solutions, this session will encourage participants to question, unlearn, and co-create strategies that foster belonging for all learners.

Why attend?

This session is designed for educators, researchers, and professionals who are interested in reflecting on, and coming away with practical tools for increasing gender inclusion competency in their own contexts. Whether they are: new to conversations about gender inclusion and seeking a starting point; an educator or researcher wanting to deepen their understanding; looking for practical yet scalable and sustainable ways to integrate gender inclusion into their work and build allyship towards transgender and gender-diverse students.

What to expect?

Through engaging activities, group discussions, and reflection exercises, we will explore:

How our perceptions of gender are formed and reinforced

How these perceptions shape learning environments, teaching practices and academic research

What small, intentional changes can foster more inclusive and affirming educational spaces

Activities

Participants will be encouraged to challenge their own assumptions through a series of dynamic exercises, which include:

- Interactive assumption-mapping: Before introductions, participants will be asked to consider what they assume about the facilitators and reflect on how assumptions about gender influence their perceptions of others. (10 mins)

- Visual representations of gender: Participants will engage in an artistic drawing/collage exercise to explore how they conceptualise gender and how these understandings shape education. (20 mins)
- Peer dialogue: Small-group discussions will provide space for participants to share experiences, ask questions, and exchange ideas about gender inclusion. (20 mins)

Rather than providing a checklist of best practices, this session is an exploration - a chance to question, listen, and exchange ideas in the spirit of ako, reciprocal learning. Throughout the workshop, we will share what we have learned and highlight the role of brave space and ako - emphasising that learning about gender inclusion is a continuous, collaborative process rather than a one-time training and how discomfort can be embraced as a catalyst for deeper reflection and growth.

Outcomes

Participants will leave this workshop with some new perspectives, a deeper understanding of their role in shaping inclusive education, and actionable ideas for fostering belonging in their learning environments.

Education is an evolving landscape, and inclusion is not a destination but a continuous journey. This session provides an opportunity to think critically, exchange ideas, and reflect on how we shape the learning spaces around us.

The Many Versions of Distance Learning: Exploring Emerging Approaches to Ako Across Systems and Digital Dimensions

Sarah Prestridge¹, Dawn Gilmore², Lucia Stejer³, Mutuota Kigotho⁴,
and Sharon Altena⁵

¹Griffith University, ²University of Melbourne, ³TAFE NSW, ⁴University of New England,
⁵Queensland University of Technology

Workshop/Panel

Overview

In this panel educators from various sectors of education in Australia will unpack different approaches to distance education examining Ako using the representation of the teacher/instructors as the 'Meddler in the middle' (McWilliams, 2008). Ako requires teacher and student to take on reciprocal roles within the teaching and learning dynamic. The shift to a Meddler position for the educator provides a gateway to redefining their role as well as redefining the roles of the students when engaging online. The Meddler works to position themselves as a co-learner, a critique, an inquiring stance that presents opportunities for exploration of ideas and concepts rather than the re-teller or enabler of Q&A dialogue that represents a one-way communication system. Each panelist will present a case of online learning where the Meddler is illustrated. Cases will be drawn from Higher Education, k-12 Schooling and Vocational education in synchronous, asynchronous and or in combination to examine the shaping of the educator as the Meddler in the middle in a digital place.

Example Case K-12 schooling: Due to a lack of discussion within an asynchronous class forum a high school teacher shifted from a pre-dominant repository of task-based learning system to collaborative small group activities underpinned by reciprocal teaching using defined roles for students. With initial teacher instructional videos, a small set of tasks plus initial stepping back of the teacher, students self-form groups, created group working spaces in OneNote and worked together to co-contribute to tasks. A major finding to shift teaching from instructor to meddler was in focusing on and deconstructing student learning processes with the students.

Format of panel:

Each panelist will provide a short 6min presentation. This will be followed by working groups exploring implications and actions for institutions, research, and practice. Each panelist will lead a small group



through a discussion using the leading question: What principles guide the shift to a Meddler position when designing and delivering online learning in your institution. The groups will reform with each panelist sharing the principles created by their group.

Panel outcome:

The actionable outcome will be a list of guiding principles that frame the move to Ako using the Meddler in the middle as a conduit within online learning places.

Developing Effective Prompts for GenAI Chatbots

Nijel Ratonel¹ and Ashley Howard Kerr¹

¹Torrens University Australia

Workshop/Panel

As universities around the world confront the emergence of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in higher education, the Learning Experience Design (LED) team at Torrens University Australia has led an initiative to explore the affordances of GenAI in the summative assessment of PSY101: Organisational Psychology - Worker and Workplace Wellbeing. This transformative project aligns with the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council's (APAC) direction to modernise the Bachelor of Psychological Science at Torrens University Australia (TUA) and the university's teaching and learning philosophy, ensuring that PSY101 students experience authentic, relevant, and sustainable learning. For instance, the first assessment of PSY101 involves an artificial intelligence (AI) consultation where students will interact with an AI human resources (HR) manager (chatbot). Leading the design and development of this intelligent agent for PSY101 are Ashley Howard Kerr, Senior Learning Experience Designer, and Nijel Ratonel, Learning Experience Designer.

Facilitated by TUA's LED team, this workshop aims to equip chatbot developers, learning facilitators and learning designers with the skills and knowledge to create effective GenAI prompts using a structured template for educational purposes. The template includes sections on the chatbot's character, knowledge and expertise, role and behaviour and how it will interact and provide feedback.

For 35 minutes, the workshop will examine case studies or examples of chatbots with distinct personalities and focus on establishing a bespoke chatbot's persona tailored to different contexts. Furthermore, the workshop will prescribe the language and tone for various use cases in formative learning activities and summative assessments. For instance, participants will apply Grice's maxims or the rules followed by people when communicating, as cited in Renkema and Schubert's (2018) literature, to match the chatbot's responses with learner expectations. Finally, this workshop will cover practical tips and advice to develop an interaction structure and an example of a scenario-based conversation simulating educational experiences that provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-life settings.

In the spirit of innovation and openness, the remaining 15 minutes of the workshop will encourage like-minded individuals to actively seek ideas and promote the exchange of information and expertise across organisational boundaries amidst the proliferation of GenAI in teaching and learning practices. Participants of this workshop are encouraged to bring their devices or a pen and paper for the practical

hands-on activity. Additionally, there will be opportunities for participants to ask questions or share the GenAI prompts they have written.

By the end of the workshop, participants will have a comprehensive understanding of how to create effective prompts for chatbots using the provided template. Participants are expected to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

- A. Define the personality, traits, knowledge base and expertise areas of the chatbot.
- B. Describe the role and expected behaviour of the chatbot in various scenarios.
- C. Structure the interaction flow and scenarios for effective chatbot-learner communication.
- D. Develop guidelines for providing constructive feedback to learners.
- E. Prescribe the appropriate language and tone for various use cases.

Renkema, J. & Schubert, C. (2018). *Introduction to discourse studies* (New ed.). John Benjamins.



Integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Culturally Responsive Online Pedagogy and Curriculum Transformation in Public Health

Christina Severinsen¹, Bevan Erueti¹, and Farzanah Desai

¹Massey University

Workshop/Panel

Abstract

This workshop explores how culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum transformation can meaningfully honour Indigenous knowledge systems with online and distance education. Drawing on key Indigenous pedagogical frameworks, like the Whakapiri framework, we will outline practical approaches to embedding Indigenous perspectives in course development, assessment, and student engagement. Workshop participants will engage in best practice demonstration showcasing an example of Indigenous-aligned teaching and online design, followed by collaborative discussions and hands-on activities to reflect on their own teaching practices and explore strategies for integrating Indigenous principles and values into online education. By the end of the session, participants will leave with practical insights to enhance the inclusivity and cultural responsiveness of their curriculum and pedagogy in digital learning environments.

Workshop Objectives

1. Identify practical strategies for integrating Indigenous knowledge systems into online public health education.
2. Explore Indigenous pedagogical frameworks and their role in curriculum design and assessment.
3. Develop an initial action plan to apply culturally responsive teaching strategies in their own online courses.

Workshop Format and Activities

This session will be structured to encourage engagement, collaboration and application:

1. Introductions and Context Setting (10min)
2. Best Practice Demonstration and Framework Exploration (15min)
3. Hands-on Application: Indigenous-aligned Curriculum Transformation (10min)
4. Action Planning: Moving from Theory to Practice (10min)

5. Closing and Next Steps (5min)

Anticipated Outcomes

By participating in this workshop, attendees will gain a clearer understanding of how Indigenous perspectives shape public health education in online learning. They will leave with practical tools for embedding Indigenous pedagogies in digital curriculum and assessment, as well as a draft action plan to integrate culturally responsive strategies into their own teaching practices. Additionally, participants will establish connections with peers engaged in similar efforts, fostering ongoing collaboration and shared learning beyond the session.

Relevance to the Conference Theme

This workshop aligns with the 'Indigeneity' theme by providing an applied approach to embedding Indigenous perspectives within culturally responsive online pedagogy and curriculum transformation. As higher education institutions navigate their obligations to Indigenous communities, this session will offer a space to explore how pedagogy and curriculum can be transformed to centre Indigenous knowledge systems, ensuring they are actively protected and advanced within digital learning environments.

Sketchy Thinking

Tammy Soanes-White¹ and Donna-Lynn Baskin¹

¹ Aurora College

Workshop/Panel

Theme

Educators from around the world have been employing sketchnoting as an active and engaging strategy to increase students' comprehension and synthesis of knowledge. This form of visual representation provides the learner with a means of realizing content, whether listening or reading, as story, as a personally lived experience. Sketchnoting viscerally and emotionally links mental imagery and imagination with affective processes to generate meaning and elaborate comprehension, retain and integrate information, as well as activate engagement and personal investment in the learning process. Combining auditory (listening) and kinetic (sketching) activities means that the learner's knowledge acquisition becomes embodied, both literally and figuratively, as knowledge co-creation. Learners don't need to be artists to sketchnote; the drawing is simply mark making and it creates the space for learners to communicate their learning with their own unique style.

Activities

This is a highly participatory workshop that will provide participants with an opportunity to practice listening and taking notes graphically. Participants will be provided with necessary resources including paper and markers. Moderators will support and model participants with key skills to get started. Tactile and kinetic exercises will be used for practice and reflective feedback will be encouraged.

Anticipated outcomes of the workshop

Participants will take away a deeper understanding of the critical importance of graphic literacy in the classroom and the opportunity to assist learners in seeing and learning differently. The workshop will assist participants into tapping into their own higher levels of learning and communication.

A Global Micro-Credential Readiness & Maturity Model: A Framework for Growing Sustainable and Inclusive Approaches

Caroline Steel¹ and Herman van der Merwe²

¹Consulting University of Queensland - Caroline Steel Global, ²North West University

Workshop/Panel

Micro-credentials are transforming education and workforce development, yet institutions struggle with ensuring accessibility, quality, and sustainability.

This interactive workshop introduces the Micro-credential Maturity Model (MMM), a structured framework for assessing institutional readiness and decision-making for developing inclusive, scalable micro-credentialing approaches.

Using a case study from North-West University (South Africa), participants will explore how the model has been applied to plan the implementation of micro-credentials, align micro-credentials with workforce and stakeholder needs, improve educational accessibility, and build sustainable practices.

Workshop Structure (50 minutes)

1. Introduction (10 min): Overview of micro-credential challenges and the MMM framework.
2. Case Study (10 min): Lessons from NWU's implementation of the model.
3. Institutional Self-Assessment (10 min): Participants use Mentimeter to evaluate their institution's readiness and maturity stage.
4. Discussion, Mentimeter Summaries & Next Steps (20 min): Small-group discussions and sharing on key takeaways and strategies for strengthening micro-credential scalability and accessibility.

Outcomes

By the end of the session, participants will:

- Have a clearer understanding of their institution's micro-credential maturity and next steps.
- Gain practical insights from NWU's case study.
- Identify realistic strategies for enhancing accessibility, resilience, and workforce alignment.



This session is designed for education leaders and professionals working to refine their micro-credential offerings in a rapidly evolving landscape.

How Long is a Piece of String? Estimating Learning Hours in ODFL

Helen Tolja¹, Johanna Ippel¹, Xin Huang¹, and Madhuri Sedlmeir¹

¹Open Polytechnic New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Workshop/Panel

Estimating course learning hours is a key activity for learning designers as it leads to a balanced course aligned to notional learning hours. It ensures that the workload is manageable and evenly distributed, supporting ākongā | learners to manage their own time effectively.

However, estimating time is usually a matter of guesswork for learning designers. Our literature search has identified various existing guidelines for determining the time required to complete online learning tasks. Existing tools to assist learning designers to estimate task duration, but these are mostly geared towards blended learning. These existing tools primarily focus on reading and writing, and there is lack of research in STEM-related activities.

We identified the need to address the research gap in STEM-related activities by proposing a new framework and pilot it internally. This led us to develop an app that leverages existing research as well as our own STEM-related research to estimate task duration for asynchronous learners.

Workshop aim: To gain an understanding of the principles and assumptions that underpin learner workload estimation, and to apply them to your own practice.

During the workshop we will share key findings from our research and explain the principles and assumptions that underpin the calculations. Participants will have the opportunity to compare their own estimations of learner workload with the calculations based on our research. There will also be an opportunity to discuss the assumptions we have used and any limitations, as well as how this process can be applied in the participants' own contexts. The workshop will conclude with a short discussion and Q&A session.

The proposed workshop will follow this structure:

- A brief overview of learning hours, including a definition of directed and self-directed learning hours in an ODFL context, and the challenges involved in estimating workload, including STEM courses. (5 mins)
- Small group: Participants estimate times for activities in a short section of an ODFL STEM, accounting or business course. Learning activities will include calculations, videos, readings and written tasks. (15 mins)

- Whole group: Facilitators explain their assumptions and methodologies, with reference to the research. (10 mins)
- Small group: Participants compare their estimates with the estimates from the learner workload estimation app the facilitators have developed. (10 mins)
- Whole group: A chance to discuss surprising findings and answer questions, share insights. (10 mins)

This workshop supports the following themes of the conference:

- Innovation: The team has created an app to estimate ākonga | learner workload. They have also researched a hitherto overlooked area, that of calculating time for STEM activities.
- Context and quality: Supports quality standards as it provides a framework for design decisions and can be adapted for use in a range of different learning contexts.
- Inclusiveness: Accurate workload estimation helps provide realistic expectations, thus creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for ākonga | learners.

Relational Responsibilities in Reconciliation: An Indigenous Settler Writing Team

Jessica Willows¹

¹University of Victoria

Workshop/Panel

Presenters Elder Johnny Aitken and educator Jess Willows will engage educators in a discussion and inquiry of Indigenous-settler relations by sharing their experiences as an Indigenous-settler writing team. Throughout this presentation, educators will engage in provocations to promote discussion and sharing of ideas in reconciliation, education and healing.

The presenters initially sought to find practical “entry points” into how to effectively integrate Indigenous content into public school curriculum in Canada’s most western province, the highly colonially named, British Columbia. In this collaboration they intentionally wove two perspectives together: an Indigenous person with lived experience as a survivor of genocide and a Settler benefiting from the outcome of colonialism and pursuing a PhD in a system that has had a significant role in the genocide of the people of the land they live on. Storytelling naturally became the “entry point”; their first story, *Two Tricksters Find Friendship* is for readers aged 6-9 and is designed to be used in classrooms. The story details two fictional characters, Johnny and Jessie; characters based on the writers’ experiences as young children. The characters explore truth, healing and reconciliation in their small rural island community. Reciprocity and redress are sub-narratives in the story, as well as the weaving in of Coast Salish Culture.

Using the principles of Indigenous Métissage (Donald, 2012), the presenters will describe their process to bring the complex and conflictual nature of Indigenous-settler relations, into expression through writing. They argue that the braiding together of the contextual state of Canada’s Indigenous-settler relations with their relationship as friends and writers, and the friendship described in the story makes us stronger.

For example, the parallel of the writer’s relationship with the characters in the story demonstrates the ethical relationality (Donald, 2012) needed to create a culture of safety to do this work together. This comes with mutual responsibilities that extend to the living and non-living entities that surround us. In their personal lives and in the children’s story, the temperate rainforest and the ocean are woven into their relationships and the archetype of Raven is their guide. This is a reminder to be responsible in all of our relations.

As the late Murray Sinclair, Indigenous Leader, Judge and Senator explained “reconciliation is about creating a relationship of mutual respect”. In their process, Johnny and Jess are creating a culture of collaboration and healing. Their desire is to become a healthy example of an Indigenous person working alongside a member of the settler community in a good way and at the same time, becoming good friends. Sitting side-by-side, they write each sentence of each story together and in doing so, their collective weaving seeks to create equity of voice.

This workshop aligns with the conference theme of Indigeneity: this work together increases the representation of Indigenous culture and knowledge systems. This project provides appropriate ways to explore reconciliation and Indigenous understandings as a teaching tool.

Donald, D. (2012). Indigenous Métissage: a decolonizing research sensibility. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 25(5), 533-555. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2011.554449>

Connecting Communities to Careers: Empowering Rural Workforce Development

Robin Brushey¹ and Wendy Somerville¹

¹Contact North | Contact Nord

Poster

Contact North | Contact Nord (CNICN) bridges the gap between education and employment for underemployed and undereducated adults in Ontario. Through partnerships with over 600 healthcare and social assistance agencies and 260 education providers, CNICN supports industry-specific upskilling in construction, food production, healthcare, and hospitality. Its client-centered approach ensures access to free or low-cost training, as well as credit programming, financial aid guidance, encouragement, and technology resources. Participants receive tailored learning options to help overcome their barriers to employment.

CNICN collaborates with over 840 referral contacts and engages in local labour market discussions, helping align training to employer needs. Popular courses include computer training, bookkeeping, and healthcare skills. The initiative fosters rural workforce development by connecting educational opportunities with labour demands, enhancing employability, supporting local employers, and contributing to community growth. CNICN's results highlight the impact of targeted training in revitalizing rural economies and empowering job seekers.

Scaling Up Virtual Mentoring Component of Training a New Cadre in the Indian Health Care System Through Mentor Feedback

Sheela C¹, Jachin Velavan¹, Nesam Christina¹, Greeda Alexander¹,
Rajan Srinivasan¹, Pradeep Ninan¹, Rebekah Zechariah¹, and Sunitha
Varghese¹

¹Christian Medical College

Poster

The Community Health Officer (CHO) is a new cadre within the Indian public health system. In 2021, a large virtual mentoring project was planned to mentor 36,000 CHOs across all the states of the country using a mentorship cascade model. 5 Master Trainers (MTs) would train 30 National Mentors (NMs) who would train and mentor 1000 State Mentors (SMs), who would in turn mentor the CHOs assigned to them from their state.

A purposively designed and piloted electronic, self-administered questionnaire was sent to all SMs to collate their perspectives on various components of the CHO Mentoring Program.

Mentor feedback midway through the project suggested that the virtual mentoring model being employed is effective, accessible, and potentially transformational. Also, their feedback on various aspects of the program helped to tailor the course duration, modify the content of the Live Group mentoring sessions, look for ways to strengthen internet connectivity, and train SMs better with the GROW model for the Personal Mentoring sessions. Thus, mentor feedback helped tremendously in course correction and strengthening this nationwide mentorship program. So far, 30 NMs, 393 SMs, and 15719 CHOs have been mentored in this project.

Building a Sustainable Delivery Framework for the Community College

Carolee Clyne¹, Joan Ragsdale¹, Samantha Lenci¹, Jordan Perrey¹,
and Danelle Greebe¹

¹Okanagan College

Poster

This Sustainable Delivery Framework is the emerging solution to embrace inclusive and open education enabling multi-access learning options for learners anywhere, anytime in the region, with the outcome of increasing access and ultimately enrolment. This framework has been built on global and local research, sector reports, surveys of learner expectations, emerging technological opportunities, and current economic realities. The resulting model enables learners to be supported throughout their various life stages, recognizing their prior skills, knowledge and abilities as the college moves from course-based programming to learning outcome/competency-based learning. This recognition of existing knowledge creates a learning environment that welcomes diverse learners and invites their knowledge, including Indigenous knowledge, to be woven into the learning experience enriching all learners. This poster illustrates the elements necessary and how they interconnect to support a new higher education approach.



30th International Council for
Open and Distance Education
World Conference 2025

Using Systematic Approaches to Support Teaching Staff to Design Rich, Connected Online Learning Experiences

Fleur Connor-Douglas¹ and Leanne Reynolds

¹Massey University

Poster

Quality online learning design is critical to student engagement but often an underestimated teaching skill. As educational designers, we have developed digital learning frameworks (DLFs) to facilitate transition away from use of Moodle course sites as resource repositories which lack clear navigation, teacher presence and learning engagement. DLFs are essentially headings and labels that transform collections of resources into a contextualised, quality learning experience. We showcase a range of DLFs that translate evidence-based practices into effective student experiences relating to the conference themes of context and quality. DLFs promote the development of design skills through more contextualised guidance than other resources provided by the university. Preliminary outcomes show high uptake metrics, improvements in student experience, and development of staff understanding and confidence in online design. Challenges include implementing processes and behaviours needed to ensure DLF use continues with educational integrity and teacher understanding despite limited resourcing and staff-turnover.

Developing Intercultural Competence Through a Twinning Class Approach in Collaborative Online International Learning Between Japan and the Philippines

Roberto Jr Bacani Figueroa¹, and Aya Fukuda²

¹University of the Philippines - Open University, ²Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Poster

This poster presents a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) initiative that bridges traditional and distance education models. As part of the Transpacific Bridge Program of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, a special topics course on digital platforms and intercultural communication was co-developed and co-taught by faculty from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and the University of the Philippines Open University.

Grounded in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, the course utilized digital tools so that students can learn about intercultural communication through relevant tasks for applying its concepts.

Survey data showed that students from both institutions reported high levels of intercultural competence gained at the end of the course. Qualitative responses further reveal that students described the experience as one that expanded their perspectives, built meaningful cross-cultural friendships, and deepened their understanding of diverse values. Students from both universities appreciated how interacting across cultures created a richer, more engaging learning environment.



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Improving Student Resilience through Innovative Student Support Strategies: An Indian Experience with Distance Medical Education Courses

Martha Grace¹, Sunitha Varghese¹, and Jachin Velavan¹

¹Christian Medical College

Poster

Distance Education Unit runs courses for in-service health professionals in Southeast Asia, enrolling mostly mid-career learners. The health profession itself is stressful; learners find it difficult to cope with the rigorous course demands and eventually drop out. A ten-year analysis of course completion rates shows that it varies from 45 to 69 percent. To minimize difficulties for learners, Student Support Initiatives were started. Individualized attention is given to each learner and their situation, extending deadlines, creating pending task plans, and interactive tailored sessions for lagging learners. Though student support personnel often face a less-than-ideal response rate from learners, the larger picture of eventually contributing to the quality of the health system motivates them. Learners express that being more available and being emotionally and psychologically sensitive to the needs of the learners can improve the effectiveness of Student support services while appreciating the efforts that have been made.

Student Engagement in Digital Learning Management Systems in Aotearoa New Zealand

Andrew Hall¹

¹Victoria University of Wellington

Poster

This mixed methods study explored how New Zealand higher education students engage with the Canvas LMS (learning management system) and the factors influencing their engagement, focusing on psychosocial and structural influences. Using an explanatory sequential design, it began with a quantitative survey (n=134) to identify patterns, followed by qualitative focus groups to explore underlying reasons. Survey data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while focus group data underwent deductive thematic analysis, guided by Braun and Clarke's framework and Kahu & Nelson's model. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a comprehensive understanding of factors shaping student engagement, offering practical suggestions for enhancing digital learning environments. This study specifically examined NZ Aotearoa students, aiming to identify ways digital technologies can enhance their educational outcomes.

Enhancing HE Teachers' Digital Competences through Learning Circles: A Flexible, Personalised, and Practice-Oriented Learning Format

Pernille Stenkil Hansen¹

¹ **University of Southern Denmark**

Poster

The rise of generative AI compels educational developers in higher education to identify and provide more resilient and responsive approaches to faculty development to give teachers the opportunity to continually evolve their understanding and qualify their use of these emerging technologies in their teaching.

Learning circles enable teachers to set personal development goals, self-regulate their learning, and share knowledge within a supportive community of practice. By addressing their own teaching needs and challenges, the development becomes relevant and meaningful, facilitating the transfer of learning to their practices. Each learning circle includes up to 5 teachers and a facilitator, participating online or face-to-face in an action-based learning process that involves self-study, synchronous or asynchronous attendance, and practical application in their teaching.

This poster showcases how specific tailor-made learning circles have been used as a competence development format to spread knowledge of and promote the use of generative AI among faculty and staff, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and resilient educational landscape at the university.

Embedding Literacy Strategies in Asynchronous Courseware: A Reflective Approach at Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

Rebecca Harvey¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Poster

Implicitly embedding literacy strategies in asynchronous courseware provides learners with the necessary support to succeed in digital learning environments while also helping them acquire the subject-specific skills they need to succeed in their studies.

This poster shares the journey of designing a professional development (PD) course for learning designers at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand that focuses on ākonga's implicit development of literacy skills. The initiative underscores a commitment to quality education and equity goals.

The PD course design emphasises practical approaches to asynchronous literacy skill development. This includes program-wide planning of the development of literacy skills and the design of formative tasks that support ākonga through decoding, comprehension, complex text reflection and critical analysis skills.

Initial findings from redeveloped courses using the strategies covered in the PD course indicate that these improvements can lead to increasing levels of literacy skills, higher learner engagement and a more inclusive educational environment in open, distance, and flexible learning contexts.

Challenges and Successes in Moving to an Online Format for Professional Development in a Distance Learning Faculty

Lucille Hatley¹ and Melissa James¹

¹Southern Institute of Technology | Te Pūkenga

Poster

This research examines the challenges and successes of transitioning a traditional annual onsite professional development workshop to an online format for distance learning facilitators in one educational setting. Professional development plays a critical role in equipping facilitators with the knowledge, skills, and capabilities needed to effectively facilitate online learning experiences for adult learners. The shift from in-person to virtual environments presents a unique set of obstacles, including technological barriers, participant engagement, and maintaining the interactive, collaborative atmosphere that prior onsite workshops fostered. This study investigates the experiences and overall satisfaction of facilitators in the transition to an online workshop format and also highlights successful strategies and new learnings that will inform future professional development practices.

Ensuring Quality Assurance Across Teams and Time

Ellimay Hendricks¹

¹ Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Poster

Quality assurance is an important aspect of learning design (Evanick, 2023). At Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, we have been implementing a shift from completing static reviews to establishing an ongoing quality assurance process. The Quality Review Document (QRD) was developed as an instrument to support both courseware and assessment quality assurance throughout the often-dynamic creation and maintenance of learning material. The QRD records design decisions by kaimahi (staff) in different teams in the time and context of their engagement. This information is then utilised and updated during future scoping and revision. Challenges we have faced involve establishing a congruent understanding and implementation of the QRD at scale. The next steps include incorporating existing ākonga (learner) voice, and collating QRD data across programs by converting QRDs into a user-friendly interface. The intention is to ensure that the quality review process is as resilient as the courseware it supports.

Evanick, J. (2023). Online education innovation strategies to gain support and accomplish team goals. In D. Guralnick, M.E. Auer, & A. Poce (Eds) *Creative Approaches to Technology-Enhanced Learning for the Workplace and Higher Education: TLIC 2023* (Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems, vol. 767). Springer, Cham.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-41637-8_15

iClocker App: Estimating Learning Hours in ODFL

Johanna Ippel¹, Helen Tolja, Xin Huang¹, and Madhuri Sedlmeir¹

¹Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Poster

Estimating course learning hours ensures the workload is manageable and evenly distributed, supporting ākonga | learners to manage their own time effectively.

However, estimating time is usually a matter of guesswork for learning designers. To support this process, we have developed an app based on existing research as well as our own.

The poster will showcase the app in action, with annotated screenshots and a QR code linking to a video demonstration.

The poster will outline the research that underpins the calculations used in the app.

This poster supports the following conference themes:

- Innovation: App development; new area of research (STEM learning hours).
- Context and quality: Supports quality standards by providing a framework for design decisions; can be adapted for a range of different learning contexts.
- Scalability: The app supports increased users, features, and data while maintaining performance and cost-effectiveness.

Beyond Tech: People and Processes for Sustainable Change

Jean Jacoby and Andrew Rowatt¹

¹Massey University

Poster

This presentation highlights the role of human intelligence in navigating the complex ecology of language learning online, based on qualitative multiple-case study research investigating the use of Instructional Conversations (ICs) for teaching English in Canada.

The results show that the ecology of the synchronous online environment reflects a dynamic and interconnected process that is mediated by human intelligence (instructors) and their ability to orchestrate the intricacies of complex interactions to assist language learners. Driven by a holistic approach, such ecology encompasses: (a) task design and its dynamic implementation, (b) purposeful use of affordances of multimodal digital tools, (c) use of ICs for classroom management (regulating participation and engagement), and (d) use of ICs for mediation of language development/learning. These assertions reveal the unique competencies of human intelligence in digital spaces and how learning is contingent on the human intelligence (instructors') agile decision making and reciprocally dynamic interactions with their learners and the environment.

Powerful Moments and Their Impacts on Motivation and Engagement in Distance Learning

Melissa James¹

¹Southern Institute of Technology | Te Pūkenga

Poster

This qualitative research explores how purposefully crafted moments of recognition and celebration impact the motivation and engagement of adult learners in a distance education setting. Four key elements that contribute to powerful moments are elevation, insight, pride, and connection. This research focuses primarily on elevation and pride through analysing the impact of personalised connections and experiences that recognise and celebrate effort and achievements in memorable ways. Through intentionally creating these moments, the research examines the potential effects on the distance learning experience including fostering deeper connections to learning, making study more impactful, engaging, emotionally resonant, and memorable for adult learners.

Content Analysis of Assignment Feedback for a Novel EMDR University Training Program Combining Hybrid In- Person and Distance Delivery

Lily Jardine¹, Josh Viljoen^{1,3}, Zara Mansoor², Susanna Every-Palmer²,
Tom Flewett², Ben Daniel², Maryann Stevens², and Elliot Bell^{1,2}

¹ Massey University, ² University of Otago, ³ Victoria University of Wellington

Poster

This study presents the qualitative evaluation of markers' assessment feedback from the University of Otago's (2023) Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) psychological therapy training course. Two studies used feedback themes, sub-competency coding counts, and average grade scores to identify strengths and weaknesses (RQ1) and measure improvements (RQ2) in students' therapy competencies. Each study focused on either broader ('generic/systemic') or EMDR-specific ('technical') therapy competencies. Both studies featured inductive and deductive approaches. Findings revealed substantial improvements in both EMDR-specific and generic therapy competencies, with students demonstrating enhanced case conceptualization, clinical application, treatment fidelity, communication, and collaboration. Some competency areas were underrepresented in feedback – while the course effectively assessed core EMDR skills, the findings point to opportunities for strengthening assessment of the generic/systemic skills necessary for culturally responsive therapeutic practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. These complementary studies highlight the value of reflexive feedback systems in developing adaptive and inclusive educational approaches.



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Power Dynamics in International Education Funding

Madeleine Johnson¹

¹Waimea College

Poster

This presentation aims to challenge and extend our understanding of indigeneity in education. A review of a non-profit student initiative at Waimea College to support education in South Sudan forms the basis for a critical discussion of opportunities and risks when developed countries become involved in emerging education systems in developing, previously colonised, countries. The evolution of the South Sudan student initiative is described to its present status, and future directions explored. This discussion challenges us to consider education as central to decolonisation and demands critical appraisal and acknowledgement of inherent biases in our involvement. Rather than seeing indigeneity in education as a discreet socio-political state or goal, it redefines indigeneity as a relational process contributing to mutually affirming learning experiences. In conclusion the presentation will invite discussion of its future directions to align with these values.

Designing for Innovation in Psychological Science: A Technology-Enhanced Learning Pathway

Ashley Kerr and Nijel Ratone¹

¹Torrens University Australia

Poster

This poster will showcase the transformative curriculum design in Torrens University's Bachelor of Psychological Science, where extended reality (XR) and artificial intelligence (AI) technologies create a cohesive, scaffolded learning pathway. The program addresses challenges in engagement, retention, and comprehension by embedding interconnected technological experiences that promote deeper learning, critical thinking, and real-world application.

Key innovations include the HealthSync VR Clinic, offering collaborative healthcare simulations; the Virtual Brain Control Room, bridging theory and practice with interactive neural visualisations; and Neuropathways Extended Reality, enhancing understanding through multisensory exploration. Bespoke AI tools, such as the AI Human Resource Manager, provide authentic, practice-aligned assessments.

This holistic approach ensures each technology builds upon prior experiences, forming a unified educational strategy. Empirical evidence demonstrates significant improvements in student outcomes. Aligned with ICDE's themes of Innovation, Inclusivity, and Scalability, the project highlights how technology-driven design fosters lifelong learning and prepares students for global challenges.

Keeping Up with the Times: The Role of Interactive Training Manuals in Learning Design

Jennifer Kirby¹ and Andrea Holland²

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Poster

Learning designers working in the rapidly evolving landscape of ODL (Open Distance Learning) have complex training needs, which formal qualifications may struggle to meet (Abblitt et al., 2023; Olney et al., 2024). In response to this challenge, interactive training manuals emerge as an innovative tool for organisations seeking to provide scalable, sustainable and cost-effective training opportunities. This poster presents a case study of an interactive training manual, 'Designing to Connect', created at Open Polytechnic of New Zealand to support learning designers in developing constructively aligned courseware and assessments, delivered via the iQualify platform. We outline its features, such as reusable multimedia elements, immediate feedback, collaborative discussions and adaptive learning pathways. We then highlight its advantages over traditional training pathways, such as the opportunity to address contemporary developments in learning design, including generative AI, model constructivist pedagogies (Olney et al., 2024) and incorporate responses from early participants into later iterations.

Abblitt, S., Davis, S., D'Rozario, T., Ho, T., Pariah, Y., & Rasouli, R. (2023). How to build a learning designer: Co-designing a training program for/with/as novice learning designers. *Ascilite Publications*, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.14742/apubs.2023.617>

Olney, T., Chang, D., & Lin, L. (2024). Implementing distance learning design approaches: Lessons from six impact narratives. *Distance Education*, 45(2), 229–243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2024.2338719>



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The Current Practices and Challenges of the Early Childhood Teacher Certificate Program at Korea National Open University

Young Ae Lee¹

¹ Korea National Open University

Poster

Korea National Open University (KNOU) provides the nationally accredited kindergarten teacher certificate. However, training teachers primarily through online courses presents opportunities and challenges. This study investigated the current practices and issues of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program at KNOU, focusing on student surveys. Over the past five years, the average number of new entrants has been 2,686. At present 14,902 students are enrolled, with approximately 2,000 on academic leave. The students in the ECE department come from diverse backgrounds, with a high proportion in their 30s and 40s, many of whom are already teachers within those age and career groups. The majority of students hold bachelor's degrees. The strongest motivation for enrolment is the desire to advance their careers. While overall satisfaction with the program is high, students expressed a need for stronger interaction and easier access to consultation services.

Flexible Education in Nursing: Insights from a Pilot Program in Denmark

Robin Leutert¹

¹University College Capital

Poster

This poster presents findings from a study evaluating a flexible nursing education program in Denmark, where students can freely choose between attending classroom sessions or participating online.

Key Insights:

1. Online Learning Quality: 84% of students rated online materials as effective, though 33% noted inconsistencies in quality.
2. Inclusivity: Students with long commutes, work obligations, or family responsibilities benefited significantly from the flexible participation options.
3. Academic Performance: Students relying on online learning performed as well in exams as those attending in person.
4. Retention and Engagement: 90% of students felt the flexibility improved their ability to complete the program, with many using online materials for revision and exams.

Attendees will discover how flexible education models support diverse learners without compromising academic performance. The study highlights the importance of consistent material quality, accessible participation options, and robust feedback mechanisms for successful implementation in nursing education.

Scaffolding Generative AI Literacies for Diverse Learners in a Tertiary Context

Simin Littschwager¹ and Graeme Sequeira¹

¹Massey University

Poster

With the rapid rise of generative AI, tertiary educators find themselves at varying levels of readiness and proficiency, ranging from AI averse to proficient users. This poster explores the learning design process behind an AI workshop series using flipped classroom, active, and scenario-based learning, along with hands-on practice, tailored to a diverse group of staff.

Leveraging current understandings of AI literacy and scaffolding strategies, the workshops are grounded in the human element, addressing both technical skills and emotional readiness. Embodying Ako, the approach fosters an open and collaborative environment, caters to different levels of knowledge and AI skills, and flexibly accommodates workload pressures. Aligned with the theme of innovation and openness, this poster provides actionable insights and pedagogically sound practices for educators seeking to equip themselves and learners with AI competencies and understanding AI's role within their professional context.

A Re-Imagined Taxonomy for Learning and Assessment in an AI World

Jane Mair¹

¹Open Polytechnic of New Zealand | Te Pūkenga

Poster

We'd like to present the collated output of our ako experience in which groups of staff from Learning Design and Development at the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand worked together to re-imagine scalable and sustainable new taxonomies for learning and assessment in the world of artificial intelligence (AI).

We explored:

- examples of assessment design incorporating AI
- the groups' views about the impact of AI on academic integrity and deep cognitive engagement
- the relevance of cognitive verbs and hierarchies as used in traditional taxonomies.

Using the above for inspiration, seven groups designed new taxonomies.

Three common themes emerged:

- the need for a greater range of high-level cognitive verbs
- a preference for circular- or spiral-shaped taxonomies
- two distinct stages – of AI inputs and outputs.

The poster will demonstrate:

- the results of polls within our groups
- assessment strategies embracing AI
- the collated output.

Partnering With Community Stakeholders to Co-Design Outcome Evaluation for Hybrid In-Person and Distance Delivered University Training in EMDR Therapy

Zara Mansoor¹, Susanna Every-Palmer¹, Tom Flewett¹, Ben Daniel^{1,2},
and Elliot Bell^{1,3}

¹University of Otago, ²University of Northern British Columbia, ³Massey University

Poster

A mixed-methods evaluation of a new university-based Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapy course included partnering with a group of community stakeholders to ensure relevance of outcomes to the community. This was guided by co-design philosophy and informed by a Hautū Waka methodology*. The process included the formation of a stakeholder advisory group (Whakariterite, preparing the waka), drawing on collective expertise (Te Paunga), looking for key areas to explore (Te Kitenga), deciding direction (Te Whāinga), and exploring how to include priority areas in the evaluation (Te Whiwhinga). Results from this process included outcome measures assessing support and barriers to learning and practice for trainees. These results have informed course development and ongoing evaluation.

* Developed and shared by the Auckland Co-Design Lab <https://www.aucklandco-lab.nz/>

Leveraging Institutional Strengths for Research Training Success: The UTS x UP Open Doctoral Collaboration Model

Diego Maranan¹, Charisse Reyes¹, and Anna Pertierra²

¹University of the Philippines - Open University, ²University of Technology Sydney

Poster

The UTS x UP Open Doctoral Collaboration is a novel model for distance doctoral education, jointly developed by the University of the Philippines (UP) Open University and the University of Technology Sydney (UTS). This initiative provides UP faculty with access to a fully supported PhD pathway while mitigating common barriers such as isolation, limited in-person peer support, and financial constraints. To enhance retention and completion rates, participants receive benefits from both institutions, including travel support, funding, and access to remote and physical facilities via doctoral learning hubs which will be established in-country. In addition, strong outcomes are anticipated due to the alignment between institutional priorities and individual incentives—UTS benefits from high PhD completion rates, while UP's employment policies reinforce timely completion by structuring return-service obligations for faculty, resulting in a dual incentive system. This poster outlines the program's structure, anticipated benefits, and a potential framework for measuring its success.

Pandemic-Proof Teaching: How Pre-COVID Blended Learning Design Ensured Resilience and Sustainability of Introductory Statistics at Massey University

Debbie Leader¹, Melody Whitehead¹, Matthieu Vignes¹, Katharina Parry, and Anne Lawrence

¹Massey University

Poster

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, Massey University (Aotearoa-New Zealand) implemented a comprehensive redesign of its introductory statistics course (161.111 Applied Statistics) to enhance equity and accessibility. This blended learning model supported diverse students across multiple locations through pre-recorded lectures, interactive workshops, and inclusive design elements—closed captioning, transcripts, and downloadable materials. Along with flexible engagement options, including time zone-friendly Zoom sessions and bookable consultations, these helped students with minimal statistical background gain confidence in applying statistical concepts to real-world data.

Here, we analyse the course's effectiveness across pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic environments. We present robust quantitative metrics (including detailed demographic analysis, retention patterns, and performance outcomes) complemented by rich qualitative insights from students and instructors across these distinct periods. By showcasing authentic student contributions, we provide concrete strategies for educators seeking to develop resilient, accessible, and pedagogically sound blended learning environments that withstand unexpected disruptions while maintaining educational quality.

International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning: 25 years Celebration

Rory McGreal¹

¹Athabasca University

Poster

Since its founding in 2000 by Athabasca University, the International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning (IRRODL) is a leading platform for the dissemination of scholarly work in open and distributed learning. This poster highlights IRRODL's goals, the support that facilitated its creation, and its evolution over 25 years. The poster celebrates the journal's achievements as a freely accessible repository of information for practitioners and researchers. IRRODL is a leading voice in the field of open and distributed learning, helping shape the discourse on open education and online learning theory and practice. With its commitment to open access, IRRODL provides a platform for researchers worldwide to share research results. Topics covered include open practices, pedagogical innovations and emerging, revealing evidence-based insights, best practices and strategies. By bridging theoretical advancements with practical insights, IRRODL has become a force and resource—helping shape the future of open, distributed learning.

Teachers' Impact on Students Academic Behaviour at Primary Level: A Machine Learning Analysis

Muhammad Amin Nadim¹

¹University of Telepegaso

Poster

Artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming education by providing advanced tools to examine and enhance student development. This study leverages AI and machine learning to analyse the critical role teachers play in influencing primary students' academic and personal growth. Focusing on attributes such as study skills, motivation, and self-regulation, and drawing from data on 81,400 students and 2,760 teachers, this research combines quantitative insights with predictive AI models to investigate students' academic behaviour at the primary level and the role of teachers in shaping that behaviour. To examine students' academic behaviour, the Random Forest Regressor achieved a Mean Absolute Error (MAE) of 0.309801 and an R^2 score of 0.427517, identifying study skills and organizational skills as key factors in student motivation. For assessing teachers' influence on students' academic behaviour, Elastic Net proved most effective, with an MAE of 0.363695, effectively handling multicollinearity among teacher attributes, including feedback and mentorship.



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Community Stakeholder and Trainee Patients' Perspectives on Hybrid In-Person and Distance- Delivered EMDR Training in Aotearoa New Zealand

Jaime Rendell¹, Zara Mansoor², Tom Flewett², Susanna Every-Palmer²,
Ben Daniel^{2,3}, and Elliot Bell^{1,2}

¹ Massey University, ² University of Otago, ³ University of Northern British Columbia

Poster

Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) psychological therapy training has remained largely unchanged since its inception, prompting concerns about its rigour and cultural suitability for Aotearoa New Zealand. This qualitative study aimed to enhance a novel hybrid in-person and distance-delivered university EMDR training program and gauge its efficacy utilising community input. Feedback from clients of EMDR trainees and insights from community stakeholders was gathered through semi-structured interviews and a focus group and analysed using general inductive thematic analysis. Stakeholder data produced five themes: relationships, cultural relevance, growth, perpetual improvement and confidence. Client interviews revealed themes of confident guidance, therapeutic relationship, preparation, trust and EMDR works. Findings highlighted the importance of relational foundations, the inclusion of diverse cultural perspectives and ongoing community input to ensure the continued suitability and evolution of the training program. This reciprocal, culturally responsive approach will support sustainable, accessible, and effective EMDR training and treatment in Aotearoa.



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Planning for Engagement in Asynchronous Online Learning

Leanne Reynolds¹ and Simin Littschwager¹

¹Massey University

Poster

Engaging students in online, asynchronous learning environments is a key focus for our university, which attracts mostly distance and part time learners. To ensure quality student-teacher and student-student interactions in online courses, these interactions must be thoughtfully designed in advance. While course design is one responsibility of academic staff, planning their online presence and fostering meaningful interactions throughout the semester is another crucial aspect. As learning designers, we have supported academic staff by co-developing custom 'facilitation and engagement plans over the past several years. Connected to the theme of context and quality, this poster will explore the success and challenges of using these plans to foster engagement in asynchronous online course designs. By showcasing examples and investigating the perceptions and realities of engagement planning among academic staff and learning designers, this poster aims to shed light on effective future approaches.



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Post-Course Uptake and Client Clinical Outcomes for Graduates of a Hybrid In-Person and Distance-Delivered University EMDR Training Course: Study Protocol

Jacky Siu¹, Zara Mansoor², Susanna Every-Palmer², Tom Flewett², Ben
Daniel^{2,3}, Ian de Terte¹, and Elliot Bell^{1,2}

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Poster

In 2023, the University of Otago, Wellington (UOW) introduced two hybrid in-person and distance-delivered papers comprising the first university-based Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) psychological therapy training program in New Zealand. This poster presents a protocol for a project aiming to evaluate the program's efficacy. Study One will survey graduates on their EMDR use post-training and examining the extent to which various factors are barriers to and facilitators of using EMDR. In study Two, clients receiving EMDR therapy from graduates will have their clinical outcomes (e.g., anxiety) routinely measured before, during, and after EMDR therapy using a single-case design. By combining graduates' knowledge and clients' clinical outcomes to gain new insights, this study fosters ako (reciprocal teaching). Additionally, evidence for the UOW's EMDR training program's efficacy could prompt overseas universities to cite this research as evidence for developing their own EMDR training, thus increasing rigorous training internationally.

Enhancing Accessibility and Engagement Through Virtual Field Trips

Mark Antony Steelsmith¹

¹ **Massey University**

Poster

Virtual Field Trips (VFTs) provide an innovative, accessible, and immersive complement to traditional field-based learning. Using a farm-based case study, this poster visually illustrates how VFTs enhance student experiences through removing physical and financial barriers, support contextual learning, and enhancing engagement through high-quality media and interactive elements.

Along with illustrations, the poster uses QR codes, allowing attendees to access and experience select VFT components firsthand, gaining insight into how students navigate and interact with these virtual environments via onsite videos, 360° media, aerial footage, and interactive elements.

Aligned with the ICDE conference themes of Accessibility and Resilience, this poster highlights the potential of VFTs to create equitable and flexible learning opportunities. It explores the technology, techniques and student focus that shape these experiences to show how VFTs enrich teaching and learning.

Scalable Support for Course Design: An Innovative Approach to Quality Standards

Catherine Stevens¹

¹ **Massey University**

Poster

In 2019, Massey University's small Digital Innovation team sought to provide sustainable online course design support across the University. Although conventional, resource-intensive approaches conducted in collaboration with teaching staff were well-embedded, more scalable ways of providing teachers with rapid feedback, recommendations, and support resources were needed. The development of an innovative desktop review process based on well-researched learning and assessment principles, led to an effective approach that Curriculum Designers could use to meaningfully evaluate a course in a single day of work.

The service rapidly became popular with teaching staff, with 276 reviews completed in the first four years. Since then, it has continued to evolve and proved invaluable for a wide range of additional purposes, from supporting programmatic continuous improvement processes to facilitating highly contextualised teacher development.

Further refinements are currently focusing on Indigeneity, supporting Massey's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through authentic, practical design decisions.

Accessibility and Cost-Effectiveness may not be the Only Game-Changers in Distance Medical Education Courses: Learnings from a South Asian Study on Student Preferences

Sunitha Varghese¹, Martha Grace¹, Evangeline Grace¹,
and Jachin Velavan¹

¹Christian Medical College

Poster

Distance education has reshaped medical learning post-COVID. While research highlights a shift to online models, student preferences vary. Understanding these preferences helps institutions adapt to evolving needs.

A cross-sectional study at Christian Medical College examined the preferences of medical professionals in the Distance Education Postgraduate Diploma in Family Medicine. Results showed that while online courses are accessible and cost-effective, they lack hands-on training and direct teacher–student interaction. Despite online learning’s flexibility, many in-service medical professionals prefer offline education. A blended approach is essential, combining structured and interactive online learning with in-person and hands-on clinical training.

Incorporating peer support, real-time tutoring, and optimized class schedules can enhance distance education, ensuring a well-rounded experience for medical professionals.

Educator and Trainee (Clinician) Experiences of a Novel Hybrid In-Person and Distance-Delivered University EMDR Training Programme

Alexa Volkova¹, Zara Mansoor², Susanna Every-Palmer², Ben Daniel^{2,3},
and Elliot Bell^{1,2}

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Poster

This study explored an innovative, primarily distance-delivered training course offered by the University of Otago in Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) psychological therapy. Educators and Trainees were interviewed, with qualitative methods used to examine their key experiences, motivations, and recommendations for improvement. Data from trainees and educators were analysed using Thomas's (2006) general inductive approach. Themes followed a logical flow from participants' backgrounds and motivations through to how they engaged with the course, culminating in suggestions to refine delivery. Emerging insights highlight the importance of peer connection and thoughtful attention to psychological safety in experiential learning settings such as practicums. Overall, the research highlights the value of inclusive design, diverse representation across both teaching teams and trainee cohorts, and accessible support structures. Aligned with the conference themes of Ako, Accessibility, Indigeneity, and Innovation, this study offers early insight into sustainable, learner-centered approaches to distance-based clinical training.

Bridging the Gap: Motivations for Advancing Pedagogical Development in Higher Education

Dilmeire Vosgerau^{1,3}, Luis Pereira², Philip Powell³, and
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³ University of London

Poster

Before the mid-1980s, a bachelor's degree was the sole requirement for higher education instructors in Brazil. The 1990 Education Guidelines mandated that one-third of professors hold a master's or doctoral degree. Despite the 2004 establishment of the Brazilian National Higher Education Assessment System (SINAES), pedagogical training has been deprioritized, focusing on research credentials over teaching quality. Efforts to improve faculty training were limited until the early 2000s. In contrast, the UK introduced formal pedagogical training programs in the 1970s, leading to initiatives like SEDA in the 1990s and Advance HE in 2004. Drawing on this UK experience, a survey from March to June 2024 will investigate the motivations of academics regarding professional development in teaching in Brazil, Mozambique, and Mexico, where such developments are neither mandatory nor encouraged. Baume's framework will analyze various aspects of motivation and preferred training modalities.



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Development and Application of Discussion Program Using Generative AI

Hosung Woo¹, and Yong Kim¹

¹ Korea National Open University

Poster

Generative AI is a technology that creates new content based on input data, garnering attention for its potential to enhance creativity and problem-solving not only in business but also in the field of education. In this study, 25 graduate students at a distance-learning university in Seoul participated in a discussion class using generative AI, during which they developed and employed a survey instrument. Generative AI was actively utilized in the processes of preparing for the discussion, researching materials, and making statements, and the class also covered AI ethics principles. As a result, the learners' satisfaction, confidence, and expressive abilities were found to have improved. This study is significant in that it proposes practical ways to integrate generative AI into teaching and learning, along with key points to keep in mind.