

Medway Learning & Teaching Conference 2025

24 June 2025 Online via MSTeams

*Coming together to promote greater
collaboration on education enhancement*



Medway Learning & Teaching Conference is a collaborative conference from Canterbury Christ Church University, University of Greenwich, University of Kent, who all share the Medway Campus.

University of
Kent



**UNIVERSITY OF
GREENWICH**



**Canterbury
Christ Church
University**

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COMMITTEE'S INTRODUCTION

Welcome and thank you for joining us for the Universities at Medway Learning and Teaching Conference 2025. The conference is jointly organised by the Universities of Kent and Greenwich and Canterbury Christ Church University, drawing on presenters and participants from any of our campuses. The three institutions take turns to lead on organisation, and this year it is the University of Kent's turn.

We explore the theme **Working Together: Advancing Collaboration and Partnership to Educate our Communities**. In these challenging times, collaboration and partnerships are increasingly important to ensuring higher education serves our students and society. UK universities are facing significant challenges including financial sustainability, rapidly evolving skills needs, widening participation and rapid technological change. The shared campus at Medway affords unique opportunities to work together to serve the local and regional community and share good practices.

We have a set of interesting presentations with a mixture of lightning talks and longer discussion papers and case studies. We start and end the day focusing on collaboration with students. Given the high levels of interest in the Student Panel last year, we feature a panel of students from across the three universities in a kick-off plenary. We conclude with considering different examples of co-creation with students and hearing about a call for papers on the topic.

In the morning, we explore collaboration among professional services staff, academic staff and students to promote technology-enhanced education. We also discuss ways to collaborate to support students' employability. After lunch, we break out for smaller group discussions, in which you can explore examples of practice in a related discipline and consider implications of the morning plenaries for your own fields.

We encourage you to reflect on different models and processes for effective collaboration, how to overcome challenges, and how your School, Department,

programme or campus might better serve its aims through enhanced collaboration. We invite you to connect with colleagues and take inspiration from innovations happening at one of the other Medway universities.

Thank you to all those presenting on the day and to the members of the organising committee for devoting their time, ideas, and enthusiasm to help make this happen: Angeliki Voskou and Peter Brown from Greenwich; Julie Taylor, Claire Loffman and Jack Charter from Canterbury Christchurch University.

We hope you enjoy the day!

Kathleen M. Quinlan, PhD PFHEA and Gemma Blackman
Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Kent



CONFERENCE THEME

Working Together: Advancing Collaboration and Partnership to Educate our Communities

In these challenging times, collaboration and partnerships are increasingly important to ensuring higher education serves our students and society. UK universities are facing significant challenges. Pressing issues such as financial sustainability, rapidly evolving skills needs, and widening participation can all benefit from stakeholders working together to address them. The shared campus at Medway affords unique opportunities to work together to serve the local community.

This conference showcases examples of ways that university staff collaborate within subject teams, across disciplines, across different staff categories (e.g. academic and professional services staff), and between staff and students to promote educational excellence. Examples of external partnerships that support more innovative or effective learning experiences for students will also be highlighted. Such collaborations may be with other universities, with business or industry partners, with practitioners, service user groups, with schools/colleges, or others.

Collaboration may occur across a range of educational practices in higher education, such as:

- Course design or development processes
- Curricular content
- Technological developments
- Place-based or work-based learning
- Assessment and/or feedback
- Equity
- Employability
- Sustainability

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

24 JUNE 2025 - ONLINE

Each conference session will be held in an online “room”. Teams links to the appropriate rooms are included in the schedule below. At the designated time, just click on the link to join the session.

There is also an unstaffed virtual “corridor” and virtual “café” where you can pop in to chat informally with colleagues anytime during the day. Feel free to pop in to chat informally with colleagues anytime during the day. At the end of each plenary, you can either shift to the café or corridor to continue exploring that topic or stay in the plenary room for the next presentation:

Virtual Corridor

Virtual Café

09:30-09:45	WELCOME Join the Plenary Room on Teams
09:45-10:30	KEYNOTE STUDENT PANEL: LISTENING TO AND COLLABORATING WITH STUDENTS Student representatives from each of the universities will share their thoughts, experiences, and advice. Join the Plenary Room on Teams
10:30-10:35	BREAK
10:35-11:30	SESSION 1 - COLLABORATING TO ENHANCE LEARNING WITH TECHNOLOGY Session Chair: Julie Taylor – <i>Deputy Director of Learning and Teaching, Canterbury Christ Church University</i> Join the Plenary Room on Teams The LEGO Initiative: Enabling TEL in engineering and science education (Presentation) Michael Okereke, Bally Khela – <i>University of Greenwich</i> Active Blended Learning at Kent: Reflections on developing collaborative culture and educational transformation (Presentation) Gemma Witts, Samuel D’Elia, Chris Cook - <i>University of Kent</i>

11:30-11:40	BREAK Virtual Corridor Virtual Café			
11:40-13:00	SESSION 2 - COLLABORATING TO PROMOTE EMPLOYABILITY Session Chair: Vanessa Lem – <i>DVC, University of Greenwich</i> Join the Plenary Room on Teams Enabling career discovery: A collaborative model for inclusive research and practice in employability (Presentation) Sinead Grimes, Savannah Garcia – <i>University of Greenwich</i> ; Claire Toogood - AGCAS Bridging the gap: collaborating across academic skills and careers services to empower students in an increasingly competitive jobs market (Lightning talk) Carla Morris – <i>University of Kent</i> STAART & Evenbreak - supporting disabled students from outreach through to employment (Lightning talk) Melanie Thorley – <i>University of Greenwich</i> STAART & Employability: Joint campaign to encourage disabled students to engage with employability in the first term of their first year (Presentation) Melanie Thorley, Jessica Keeling – <i>University of Greenwich</i>			
13:00-14:00	LUNCH Virtual Corridor Virtual Café			
	SESSION 3 - INDUSTRY AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE PROFESSIONS (Parallel Sessions) We envisioned these sessions as a chance to break out to talk with colleagues in related disciplines, but you are free to join any session that interests you.			
14:00-14:30	COUNSELLING AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION Chair: Edd Pitt – <i>University of Kent</i> Join Room 2 on Teams 'Group Processing' as a model for evaluating learning in professional education (Presentation) Natalia Gheorghiu – <i>University of Greenwich</i>	SCIENCES Chair: Kathleen M Quinlan – <i>University of Kent</i> Join Room 3 on Teams From webinars to policy; a collaborative model for enhancing forensic	ARTS Chair: Claire Loffman – <i>Canterbury Christ Church University</i> Join Room 4 on Teams From Practice Rooms to Production Suites: The role of industry collaboration in	TEACHER EDUCATION AND PRACTICE-BASED COURSES Chair: Angeliki Voskou – <i>University of Greenwich</i> Join Room 5 on Teams Collaborative Enquiry in Initial Teacher Education: Insights from a student-led model

		science education in India (Presentation) Robert Green – <i>University of Kent</i>	shaping music education for the real world (Presentation) Darren Taggart - <i>Canterbury Christ Church University</i>	in further education (Lightning talk) Michelle Best, Lorraine Smith – <i>University of Greenwich</i> Working collaboratively to explore distance learning pedagogy in teacher training in HEI: A focus on its prospects and lessons learned (Lightning talk) Ade Magaji, Michael Adjani, Samuel Coombes, Jessica Holland – <i>University of Greenwich</i>
14:30-15:40	SESSION 4 - CO-CREATION WITH STUDENTS Session Chair: Gurprit Lall – <i>Associate PVC, University of Kent</i> Join the Plenary Room on Teams Compass Journal edited collection: Student co-creation with internal and external partners (Lightning talk) Silvia Colaiacomo, Sara Gorgoni, Angeliki Voskou, Rachel George – <i>University of Greenwich</i> Teaming Up to Publish: Collaborative journal writing with undergrad health students (Presentation) Nicole Holt (Authors: Maile Lewer, Dhong-Mui Mudhar, Callum Penfold, Lillie Rose Taphouse) - <i>Canterbury Christ Church University</i> Assessment literacy and its impact on trainee teachers' assessment practices in a teacher education programme in HE: a co-creative process (Presentation) Ade Magaji - <i>University of Greenwich</i>			
15:40-15:45	CONFERENCE CLOSES Stay in the Plenary Room on Teams			



ABSTRACTS

STUDENT PANEL

This session will bring together students from Canterbury Christ Church University, University of Greenwich and University of Kent to discuss their viewpoints on Higher Education as well as their perspectives on the conference theme. It is important to hear about students' experience of Higher Education and how it should evolve.

SESSION 1 – COLLABORATING TO ENHANCE LEARNING WITH TECHNOLOGY

The LEGO Initiative: Enabling TEL in engineering and science education

Michael Okereke, Bally Khella – *University of Greenwich*

This presentation introduces LEGO, a strategic Technology-Enhanced Learning (TEL) initiative within the Faculty of Engineering and Science at the University of Greenwich. Developed as a collaborative working group, LEGO exemplifies the power of partnership and co-creation in shaping digitally enriched learning environments. Aligned with the conference theme—“Working Together: Advancing Collaboration and Partnership to Educate our Communities”—LEGO represents a faculty-wide model of innovation through collective ownership, cross-disciplinary engagement, and professional-technological collaboration.

Co-chaired by Dr. Michael Okereke and Bally Khella, LEGO comprises over 30 members including academic staff, technicians, and professional service leads across the Faculty. The group's purpose is to actively encourage and support the use of technology to enhance learning and teaching practice in curriculum development and delivery. Through joint development and peer learning, LEGO has fostered an inclusive community of practice (Wenger, 1998), where staff co-develop teaching tools that respond to the diverse needs of STEM learners.

Key initiatives include the Rubric Revolution AI Tool, Learning Technology Podcast, and Virtual Laboratory Project—all designed and implemented through multi-role partnerships. These initiatives not only promote TEL adoption but also democratise educational innovation by engaging staff at all levels (Laurillard, 2012). Emerging projects in video feedback, originality checking, and pedagogical research further solidify the group's commitment to advancing digital education in partnership with stakeholders across and beyond the faculty.

In line with recent scholarship (Bond et al., 2021), LEGO's impact is evident in its ability to transform individual practice into collective progress. This presentation will demonstrate how sustained collaboration across disciplinary and operational boundaries can create a robust ecosystem for educating our STEM communities—blending innovation, research, and practical delivery to meet the future of higher education.

Active Blended Learning at Kent: Reflections of developing collaborative culture and educational transformation

Gemma Witts, Samuel D'Elia, Chris Cook - *University of Kent*

Designing for Active Blended Learning (DABL) is an evolving support service being developed by the Learning Design Team (LD) at the University of Kent. It is a response to the university's ambitious student-centric Education Modernisation strategy (EM2025) that includes a redesigned and refocused curriculum, changes to assessment, reading list integration, and changes to the Moodle virtual learning environment (VLE). The LD team at Kent was created to support transition to 'Moodle2025'. Due to changes in the VLE, previous learning materials cannot not be automatically rolled over to Moodle2025, marking the first significant interaction between LD and academic colleagues. This interruption offers an opportunity to reflect on Moodle's optimal use in the evolving learning contexts at Kent.

Central to DABL is an Active Blended Learning (ABL) framework adopted and developed by the LD at Kent. It is an organic and flexible pedagogical framework evolving in Higher Education, advocating a collaboration in optimising learning contexts. LD work closely with academic schools as well as professional service departments such as Library, Careers and Employability Service, the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, Accessibility, and other e-learning support.

ABL informs the design of support resources and establishes a 'LD-as-facilitator' identity for DABL, enhancing interaction with academics and embedding ABL principles in Moodle and learning design.

Support includes:

- One to one and small group sessions tailored to academics' need
- A Moodle module which guides staff through designing learning for Moodle2025 from an ABL perspective
- A Ticket System for all things Moodle2025
- A LD blog with news, updates and opinion pieces on ABL topics
- A practical f2f 'activity and module design' workshop
- SharePoint content

We aim to create change at Kent through collaboration that embeds ABL in the learning culture at Kent. Our proposal is to provide a reflective account of the journey so far.

SESSION 2 – COLLABORATING TO PROMOTE EMPLOYABILITY

Enabling Career Discovery: A Collaborative Model for Inclusive Research and Practice in Employability

Sinead Grimes, Savannah Garcia – *University of Greenwich*; Claire Toogood - AGCAS

This case study showcases the University of Greenwich's contribution to the AGCAS-led rich picture research project, Capturing the Career Experiences of Neurodivergent Students in the Chemical Sciences, funded by the Royal Society of Chemistry's Inclusion and Diversity Fund.

Led by the Employability Skills team at the Medway campus, the initiative brought together colleagues from the School of Science and STAART (Support Through AccessAbility: Retention and Transition) to create a student-centred, collaborative experience for undergraduate and postgraduate participants. The team co-ordinated efforts to promote the opportunity, host an on-campus research event, and provide tailored, ongoing support to neurodivergent students. This holistic approach fostered inclusive career development, strengthened student engagement, and allowed the employability team to evolve their practice by embedding personalised career discovery into group workshop formats.

The session will explore how the session was co-designed, placing neurodivergent students, their voices and agency at the heart of the research. It will also examine the impact of cross-departmental collaboration in enhancing the effectiveness of employability support services. Particular focus will be given to the use of visual and narrative-based methods, which revealed rich insights often overlooked by traditional data collection techniques.

Drawing on the research of Patricia Parrott and Alison Gisby, Catharine Ross, Jan Francis-Smythe, Kazia Anderson, and Tom Lowe, with the inclusion of student voice, the presentation will offer practical takeaways. Attendees will gain strategies for building meaningful partnerships across academic, professional, and student communities; applying inclusive, student-led research methods; and developing employability interventions that reflect the living experiences and aspirations of neurodivergent learners.

Bridging the Gap: collaborating across academic skills and careers service to empower students in an increasingly competitive jobs market

Carla Morris – *University of Kent*

At a recent event called 'Life after Uni' staged by the Careers and Employment Service (CES) at the University of Kent, the Skills for Academic Success (SAS) team suggested promoting their session entitled 'From Academic Skills to Professional Skills: identifying key transferrable skills and how to apply them effectively in workplace settings.' A concern was flagged in the way the SAS team were promoting the event, on the basis that the language used was similar to that of a careers advice workshop, and hinted at finding work opportunities. Although the promotional leaflet clearly outlined the content of the session, the marketing of the event did indicate that it would help students to see how they might augment their competitive capabilities when seeking employment.

While it was appropriate to flag the potential for confusion, it suggests that students are not readily making a connection between the skills they are developing while studying, with employability skills that could enhance their career prospects. In other words, academic skills development is too often perceived as 'discrete', and only relevant as a means to complete assessments.

The move to embed skills development across the curriculum in higher education is timely, especially when over 80% of recruiters do not seek a discipline-specific degree (Isherwood 2025). In fact, a recent report from Deloitte (2025) explores the trend towards skills-based organizations, as companies seek graduates who can demonstrate 'agility, agency and equity', among other soft and hard skills.

The question explored in this lightening talk is how academic skills and employment services could collaborate more effectively to inculcate in students the value of developing their academic skills - not simply as a means to an end, but as professional skills that could improve their employment prospects, and their ultimate success in the workplace.

STAART & Evenbreak: Supporting disabled students from outreach through to employment

Melanie Thorley – *University of Greenwich*

STAART is an outreach activity which provides impartial information, advice and guidance for disabled people considering university located at the University of Greenwich. Evenbreak is global disability job board who connect inclusive employers with disabled candidates. STAART & Evenbreak are both disabled people-led organisations (DPLOs) who have formed a partnership to facilitate a holistic disabled student journey from outreach through to employment. Evenbreak attend open days; employability and careers fairs; and share available vacancies, information on access to work and supported employment with our disabled students and graduates. One of the (many) advantages for our disabled graduates is the dilemma of sharing their disability with future employers is negated.

STAART & Employability: Joint campaign to encourage disabled students to engage with employability in their first term of their first year

Melanie Thorley, Jessica Keeling – *University of Greenwich*

STAART & the Employability Team at the University of Greenwich have created a campaign to encourage disabled students to engage with employability in their first term, of their first year. A total of eight two-minute (subtitled) videos have been created by staff and students within both teams. The videos cover many different aspects of the services available to students, including workshops, supporting applications for placements and sandwich years; drop-ins and 1-2-1 meetings; practice interviews; etc. Whilst these videos were created for Greenwich students, the information will hopefully encourage disabled students at other institutions to engage with their own employability teams.

SESSION 3 – INDUSTRY AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS ACROSS THE PROFESSIONS

(Parallel Sessions)

COUNSELLING AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Group Processing as a model for evaluating learning in professional education

Natalia Gheorghiu – *University of Greenwich*

Group processing can serve as a critical yet often overlooked element in both evaluating and furthering learning within “case discussion groups” commonly used within helping professions.

The helping professions often present a unique challenge to both educators and learners, as the practitioner is both ‘the tool’ and ‘subject’ of learning. In such fields, students are expected to reflect critically on their responses, adapt interventions, interpret complex narratives, and collaborate meaningfully with peers and clients. However, this development often occurs under conditions of emotional vulnerability. Novice trainees frequently encounter internal tension as their emerging ‘self’ is exposed to scrutiny within peer discussions, prompting defensiveness or anxiety.

Group processing offers a structured space for students to reflect not only on clinical experiences but also on interpersonal dynamics and self-development—crucial in professions where developing professional identity formation is tightly interwoven with emotional self-awareness and interpersonal competence. When effectively facilitated, group processing enables trainees to examine behaviours that supported or hindered group cohesion and recognise how they navigated conflict, developed empathy, and responded to emotional demands inherent in any group. In effect harnessing the group itself as an additional learning resource.

Despite this value, group processing is frequently omitted due to time constraints, assumptions that reflection happens implicitly, or lack of initiative or experience on behalf of the facilitator.

I share my experiences as counselling trainer who utilises a dedicated and structured group processing session at the end of each module in the hope to both equip other educators with the tools and knowledge to utilise group processing, and to show this style of learning isn’t specific to just counselling training but can be an invaluable resource across the multiplicity of helping professions.

SCIENCES

From webinars to policy: a collaborative module for enhancing Forensic Science education in India

Robert Green – *University of Kent*

Despite facing challenges of geographic barriers and resource constraints, innovative outreach initiatives have significantly enhanced public understanding of forensic science. This case study summarises how these collaborative efforts have improved crime reporting and bolstered societal trust in forensic methodologies. What started as a series of online webinars, during the

Covid area has progressed to wide ranging engagement across several states in India, universities, and school engagements. Culminating with the drafting of standardised operating procedures for dealing with sexual and gender-based violence, all drawn from this engagement. To add a little context this journey of knowledge, commencing in 2019 has helped better understand how to engage in such activities – namely, what works best. The knowledge gained from these initiatives will inform future practices and collaborations in the field of forensic science outreach which we would like to share with you.

1. **Introduction:** Forensic science plays a crucial role in India's judicial system, supporting the accurate administration of justice. The complexity and rapid advancement of forensic technologies, including DNA analysis and digital forensics, underscore the need for effective outreach programs that promote public awareness and understanding of these methods as well as promoting science, more generally. Engaging communities through informative initiatives enables citizens to appreciate the value of forensic science and its impact on legal processes (Bell et al., 2018). This article emphasises the significance of collaboration and community involvement in successful forensic science outreach within contemporary India.
2. **Challenges and Opportunities:** Forensic science outreach in India faces several challenges. Geographic disparities restrict access to forensic education, particularly in rural areas where awareness levels remain low (Cresswell & Loughlin, 2017). Additionally, the country's diverse linguistic landscape complicates communication, necessitating the development of localized materials (Jeyasekar & Saravanan, 2015). Societal perceptions of forensic science often lack nuance, leaving many individuals unaware of its relevance or practical implications. However, these obstacles present opportunities for innovative outreach strategies. By leveraging India's rich cultural diversity, community participation can be encouraged, and educational initiatives can be tailored to resonate with local populations (Wu et al., 2024).
3. **Collaborative Strategies:** Effective forensic science outreach depends on collaborative partnerships among various stakeholders, including universities, law enforcement agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). For example, universities play a pivotal role in integrating forensic science education into their curricula while also conducting community workshops (Jeyasekar & Saravanan, 2015). Law enforcement agencies contribute practical insights into the forensic process and help build trust within communities, thereby fostering dialogue about the importance of forensic science in solving crimes (Kobus et al., 2011). Collaborations also extend to local organizations that can tailor outreach efforts to meet the specific needs of individual communities, enhancing the efficacy of these initiatives (Ribaux & Wright, 2014).
4. **Community Engagement Approaches:** Methods of engagement have varied widely, incorporating interactive workshops, seminars, and school programs that utilize local dialects and culturally relevant contexts to explain complex forensic concepts (Wu et al., 2024). One notable initiative involved university students conducting awareness campaigns in rural schools, effectively demystifying forensic science and encouraging students to consider careers in the field (Preece, 2024). Successful outreach efforts have resulted in measurable impacts, such as increased crime reporting and improved cooperation from witnesses in legal proceedings, reflecting a positive shift in community attitudes toward forensic methods (Yadav, 2017).

5. **Effective Use of Forensic Science:** Outreach programs prioritize the practical application of forensic science by improving evidence collection and preservation techniques among law enforcement and community members (Jeyasekar & Saravanan, 2015). Building public trust in forensic methodologies is essential for effective collaboration in investigations and crime solving. By educating communities on the significance of forensics, outreach initiatives foster a proactive approach to crime reporting and engagement, ultimately enhancing the quality of justice within society (Bell et al., 2018).
6. **Impact and Evaluation:** The effectiveness of outreach programs can be assessed through pre- and post-intervention surveys that measure changes in awareness and attitudes toward forensic science (Sulley & Quansah, 2020). Evaluative measures also include community feedback, which informs future initiatives to ensure they remain relevant and impactful. Insights reveal that collaborative efforts enhance community trust and engagement with law enforcement, bridging gaps in understanding and participation in the justice system (Mahmood, 2020).
7. **Conclusion:** In conclusion, this analysis highlights the essential role of collaboration with HE and community engagement in the successful outreach of forensic science in India. As the field continues to evolve, sustained partnerships and localised educational strategies are crucial for fostering public awareness and trust. Future outreach initiatives should prioritize adaptive, culturally relevant programs that leverage local partnerships to effectively engage diverse communities (Jeyasekar & Saravanan, 2015). Ongoing collaboration is vital for the successful implementation of forensic science outreach programs and for cultivating an informed citizenry committed to justice.

ARTS

From Practice Rooms to Production Suites: The Role of Industry Collaboration in Shaping Music Education for the Real World

Darren Taggart - *Canterbury Christ Church University*

This project explores the role that industrial and educational partnerships play in shaping effective, relevant, and sustainable music education, with a particular focus on the commercial music sector in England. Drawing on doctoral research that includes twenty interviews with music educators and professionals, mini case studies of alumni and a comparative analysis of course structures at institutions such as Bath Spa University, LCCM, and Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the study reveals how collaborative engagement with industry practitioners enhances employability, identity formation, and graduate credibility in the performing arts.

Although traditional conservatoire pathways often favour classical mastery and one-to-one mentorship, contemporary programs embedded in industry contexts can show greater alignment with real-world professional demands. Institutions with embedded industry links, such as LCCM and BIMM facilitate student access to vocational briefs, networking opportunities, mentorships, and entrepreneurial development, fostering portfolio careers in an increasingly precarious cultural economy.

This project will present key findings on how collaborative practices ranging from curriculum co-design, with industry professionals to extracurricular mentorship schemes and professional placements enable students to navigate and shape their careers with greater agency and

adaptability. It will also reflect on how these strategies may inform pedagogical practice across other arts-based disciplines.

Attendees will be invited to reflect on their own experience of collaboration before comparing cross-disciplinary models and considering how insights from the music sector might enable collaborative pedagogies elsewhere in the creative arts. The session will conclude with practical recommendations for building sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships between higher education providers and the wider creative industries, in line with recent government policy recommendations relating to education in the performing arts field.

TEACHER EDUCATION AND OTHER PRACTICE-BASED COURSES

Collaborative Enquiry in Initial Teacher Education: Insights from a Student-Led Model in Further Education

Michelle Best, Lorraine Smith – *University of Greenwich*

Teacher inquiry is a vital component of Initial Teacher Education (ITE), fostering reflective practice, knowledge generation, and professional growth (Sergis & Sampson, 2017). This presentation explores an inquiry-based model embedded in a Further Education (FE) teacher training programme, where collaboration between trainees, placement providers, and institutional stakeholders is central.

A structured research module empowers trainees to design and conduct practitioner research in their placement settings, supported by ethical protocols, mentors and university tutors. This culminates in a student-led research conference, co-attended by placement mentors, college leaders, and university staff, providing a platform for knowledge exchange, professional dialogue, and shared reflection.

The presentation will reflect on how this model has been received by partners and the value it brings to their professional settings. It also examines the practical and relational challenges of sustaining meaningful partnership within a research-led ITE framework. Drawing on emerging findings, we will discuss how this model can inform similar approaches across professional education sectors, particularly where inquiry-based practice and placement learning intersect.

Implications for practice will be offered for teacher educators and colleagues in allied professions seeking to deepen partnership-based approaches to professional learning and inquiry.

Working collaboratively to explore the distance learning pedagogy in teacher training in HEI: A focus on its prospects and lessons learned

Ade Magaji, Michael Adjani, Samuel Coombes, Jessica Holland – *University of Greenwich*

This research aimed to investigate the changes in practice that may have occurred in teacher training programmes in HEIs with the evolution of online learning, issues of equity and access, and can be applied to other disciplines.

Distance learning in teacher training in HEIs received more attention during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 as it became the means to train and support trainee teachers. This meant that the time spent at the placement was less than the required days to gain valuable teaching experience. Educators had to adapt teaching that would have been done face-to-face to fit into a virtual learning environment to develop trainee teachers' practice. This situation applies to other professional courses, such as those in health that rely on placement experience for students, and we believe that the outcome from this study can be transferable. Effective collaboration between placement providers and universities is important to explore the aspects of training that we provide to our students and how we can continue to improve. For example, what is the role of the university in facilitating learning between their students and the external partners in terms of the use of technology, and how do they account for any knowledge gap that may exist?

This research has become imminent as we reflect on the prospects, opportunities, and lessons learned from collaboratively developing and interrogating online teaching. This collaboration involves colleagues at the School of Education, University of Greenwich, and four other universities noted for quality teacher training.

This research is underpinned by two theoretical frameworks. The first is Connectivism by Siemens and Downes (2005), emphasising how technologies can be used and designed to create new learning opportunities and to promote effective learning. Secondly, van Dijk's (2005) Digital divide and Digital equity theory focuses on the disparities in access to technology and resources and their impact on educational outcomes, addressing equity and access to online learning. These frameworks are interdisciplinary, addressing issues that are pivotal to our research and would be valuable to other delegates at the conference. It can help them to explore similar issues and share knowledge and experience in their learning communities. Our presentation will further create opportunities for colleagues at the conference to share any experience they have in the focused area and could lead to other collaborative work in the future, especially from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Data was collected through interviews and questionnaires completed by teachers who finished their training during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data will be analysed following a thematic analysis. This study is relevant as it would serve as a model to other courses in HEIs to encourage educators to explore a similar methodological approach in their courses and reflect on the outcome to aid in curricular design. Therefore, the outcome would contribute to how distance learning can be developed not only in teacher education but other disciplines.

SESSION 4 - CO-CREATION WITH STUDENTS

Compass Journal Edited Collection: Student co-creation with internal and external partners

Silvia Colaiacomo, Sara Gorgoni, Angeliki Voskou, Rachel George – *University of Greenwich*

In this session you will be informed about an edited collection on practice-based learning and student co-creation with internal and external partners, which we aim to publish at Compass, the University of Greenwich peer-reviewed journal on Higher Education teaching and learning. We will clarify the edited collection suggested themes, paper formats, deadlines and guidelines for submission, as suggested in the call for papers. The edited collection aims to showcase and share exemplary practices, experience and expertise developed to shape authentic learning

environments with and for our students. The case studies may include student, faculty and institutional partnerships with external organisations and community projects as well as other opportunities to enhance educational gains and transferable skills for students. We welcome contributions from all disciplines and areas of expertise, and we particularly encourage the submission of case studies authored by or co-authored with students.

The aspect of student co-creation is an integral part of this process; for example, we aim to include doctoral students as reviewers of some of the papers to enhance the element of co-creation with our students. It is not our intention to provide a clear-cut definition of co-creation, as this we would like to stress the dynamic element of this concept, which may take various expositions depending on the theme, context etc.

As this session will be led by both the editors of this edited collection and of the Compass Journal, you may ask any questions you may have around this special edition.

Teaming Up to Publish: Collaborative Journal Writing with Undergrad Health Students

Nicole Holt (Authors: Maile Lewer, Dhong-Mui Mudhar, Callum Penfold, Lillie Rose Taphouse) - *Canterbury Christ Church University*

This conference presentation reflects on the collaborative process of co-authoring a scoping review with five undergraduate health students, focused on the delivery of social prescribing and its associated health outcomes in the UK. The review aimed to map existing literature on how social prescribing is implemented across different settings and its effectiveness in improving physical, mental, and social health outcomes. Beyond the academic findings, this co-writing experience served as a pedagogical tool, enhancing students' skills in literature synthesis, critical thinking, and academic writing. The process fostered a sense of scholarly agency among the students and provided a unique opportunity for mentoring and reciprocal learning. This reflective account highlights both the challenges and rewards of engaging students as co-researchers in health scholarship, offering insights into the value of inclusive research practices within higher education.

Assessment literacy and its impact on trainee teachers' assessment practices in a teacher education programme in HE: a co-creative process

Ade Magaji - *University of Greenwich*

This study aimed to investigate the similarities and differences in trainee teachers' assessment practices and how they can develop these practices with other teachers.

Assessment is central to the quality of learning in the classroom and teachers use formative assessments to gather information about students' learning (DeLuca et al., 2019; Siarova et al., 2017). Formative assessment or assessment for learning as used interchangeably in this study is a priority for teachers, and their assessment literacy informs this. Pastore's (2023) comprehensive systematic review on assessment literacy revealed the need for cross-fertilisation by encouraging research between teacher education and educational assessment bridging the theory and practice gap. This becomes urgent for Higher Education educators in Initial Teacher Training to support trainee teachers in developing their pedagogical knowledge of

assessments, making this study crucial in the co-creation of an assessment framework with trainee teachers.

Schildkamp et al. (2020) argue that only when proper support is planned for, and the factors that enable the use of formative assessments are in place, can formative assessments improve students' learning and achievement. Therefore, in working with the trainee teachers to co-create an assessment framework, this study adopted Buck et al's (2010) theoretical framework on assessments to help them understand the purpose of formative assessment and relate it to students' conceptual development, use outcomes for instructional planning and demonstrate an understanding of relational processes inherent to formative assessments.

This study was inspired by a constructivist approach to learning and drew on the realities of trainee teachers' practices of assessments in everyday classrooms. Data was collected through interviews, focus groups and lesson observations. The data was analysed following an inductive thematic analysis.

The study revealed some interesting outcomes on assessments such as being a mastery teaching process and the dichotomisation of assessment strategies. The trainee teachers co-created an assessment framework that has been included in the course module. The study recommended coordinated collaborative professional development support for trainee teachers by the university and their school placements.

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