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Centre for Academic Innovation

Annual report 2019/20

Mission Statement

CAI aims to become a world-leading centre of pedagogic and academic innovation and excellence, with a focus on enhancing and disrupting the learning and teaching experience.

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Foreword - PVC Academic

I am pleased to welcome you to the first Annual Report for the Centre for Academic Innovation (CAI). Founded in 2018 and launched by its Director Dr Momodou Sallah in November 2019, CAI has quickly established itself as an essential part of DMU's teaching excellence environment. While I originally envisaged CAI as a hub for innovation across DMU, and a place for information-sharing and community learning, under Momodou's leadership it has become much more than this. As this report shows, CAI has not only provided a jumping-off spot for discussion and debate around established DMU priorities like Universal Design for Learning (UDL); it is also leading the way in providing a focal point for advice and guidance relating to our blended teaching environment for the 2020/21 academic year. It is giving interested colleagues the opportunity to share ideas and best practice, and it is engaging with students to ensure that academic innovation keeps their needs in mind and incorporates their energy and enthusiasm to great advantage. The CAI Sabbatical Fellowships have proved a great success and we hope to be able to do more with this initiative in the coming year. And the work that Momodou is undertaking with institutions in The Gambia paves the way for some real influencing in the Global South. As you read through this report, I am sure you will agree that CAI's first year has been a very successful one, and I look forward to seeing how Momodou and colleagues build on this in year two.

Professor Jackie Labbe
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Introduction – CAI Director

This report catalogues the Centre for Academic Innovation's activities from September 2019 to September 2020; and will detail the range of activities initiated and implemented in pursuit of its cardinal mandate of improving teaching and learning across De Montfort University (DMU) and beyond, as per DMU's Learning and Teaching strategy.

Whilst CAI had been conceptualised a couple of years ago, it was only in May 2019 that a director for CAI was appointed on a part-time basis, which became full-time in September 2019. From just being a concept and having only a webpage before the director's appointment, CAI has made significant strides to establish its brand, developing a broad offer across DMU and also engaging staff and students across DMU. In our embryonic stage, we have focused over the last year on developing a clear operational and strategic direction, creating a distinct and disruptive branding, and negotiating an offer with relevant stakeholders throughout the university (through a range of consultative approaches) to promote academic innovation, pedagogic disruption, and provide a space for inspiring and showcasing best practice.

Drawing from two independent consultative processes, one led by PVC (Academic) across 14 of the 16 Schools within DMU, and the other by the CAI Director, involving over 30 members of staff representing the different strata across DMU, our operational plan has, over the last year, sought to build structures (CAI Advisory Board, Student Action Committee, and National Teaching Fellow/Teacher Fellow/CATE committee); build on existing events (Learning and Teaching Conference, Writing Circle and Festival of Teaching); and initiate new events (CAI Masterclass and Seminar Series). We have also sought to stretch the boundaries of innovation, for example through our CAI Sabbatical Fellowship and developing a Covid-19 Response Toolkit; housing DMU's remote teaching resources on the CAI website; conducting research to capture DMU staff's perception in relation to Covid-19, and other similar initiatives. Our focus this year has been on developing our offer, brand and structures in which to anchor our work.

Over the next year, we will focus on stretching these further, appointing faculty pedagogic champions to support academic innovation and pedagogic disruption within faculties, launching two academic journals to support pedagogic research, as well as improving our existing offer.

Dr Momodou Sallah
Director, Centre for Academic Innovation

CAI launch

The Centre for Academic Innovation was officially launched by Professor Jackie Labbe (PVC Academic) at a ceremony held on 20 November 2019 where 85 people attended – including the interim Vice-Chancellor, interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor and a cross-section of DMU staff and students – to learn about and support our vision.

Prior to the launch, it was imperative to establish a brand for CAI and produce marketing collateral to build our presence both physically and virtually – including print materials, a website and social media channels.

The director recruited a personal assistant and a co-ordinator, and CAI has operated as a team of three this year, working with numerous parties internally and externally.

Events

In November and December 2019, CAI launched its masterclass and seminar series scheduled termly, which has since been hosted more regularly. The seminar series focuses on providing a space for academics, students and practitioners to engage in deep conversations about a topic in critical ways over two hours. The masterclasses are spaces for experts to showcase examples of great practice, and transfer skills, knowledge and values to other lecturers. Both focus on academic and pedagogic innovation and disruption with internal and externally invited speakers.

'I can't do UDL because...' seminar

The first seminar (on 27 November 2019) entitled 'I can't do UDL because...' explored the barriers to implementing UDL principles across DMU. Thirteen members of staff attended. Our first masterclass in December 2019 focused on Creating Universal, Teaching, Learning, Assessment Strategies (CUTLAS).

Virtual teaching best practice masterclass

Due to the advent of Covid-19 in early March 2020, scheduled masterclasses and seminars (incorporated into the Teaching and Learning Festival) were cancelled. On 19 June, we held our first online masterclass, adapting to the remote environment DMU was working to due to social distancing measures. This seminar focused on sharing teaching and learning best practice when teaching in an online environment and attracted 127 attendees. Feedback was positive, as illustrated by the quotes from three attendees below:

"I liked the showcasing of good practice – it made me feel I am not alone in grappling with new technologies and showed how these technologies can be used creatively. I liked the fact that there were people who teach from across the university; not just academic staff but support staff like myself."

"The session was really good in that it shed a light on resources that are available out there and touched a bit on strategies that can be employed. I found this so helpful in easing my anxieties on the transition."

"It was so helpful, and it pointed me towards so many useful resources. I appreciate it very much."

Sustainable development and programme design masterclass

On 8 July, CAI held a masterclass in collaboration with Andrew Reeves, Senior Lecturer in Energy and Sustainable Development on service-learning. The session featured presentations and a Q&A on DMU taught programmes seeking innovative ways to embed learning related to sustainability and the UN SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) with 27 members of staff in attendance.

Practices shared included making block-modifications to programmes across a whole school and adopting service-learning approaches that link community volunteering to taught courses.

Learning and Teaching Conference (2019)

DMU's annual Learning and Teaching Conference co-hosted by CAI and People and Organisational Development (POD) took place on 11 September with a focus on 'Student engagement and student disengagement: reasons, explanations and a way forward'. Professor Jackie Labbe (PVC Academic) gave the welcome address, and Dr Alex Buckley, Senior Learning Enhancement Adviser, University of Strathclyde, gave the keynote speech: 'Why there is confusion about the concept of student engagement, and why that's a problem for practice as well as policy'. There were 207 participants from across DMU; DMU staff also ran 16 workshops, and 20 posters were also on display. The conference was organised with the active participation of representatives from all faculties who were involved from the very start. In the conference evaluation, just over 30% of participants rated the conference 'very good' and 65% as 'good'.

Festival of Teaching (March 2020)

The Festival of Teaching (FOT) is an annual celebration of teaching excellence and pedagogical innovation at DMU. It brings together the very best of DMU's most forward-thinking practitioners of teaching, learning and student support.

The festival showcases DMU's diverse and wide-ranging teaching and learning talents, methods and approaches to staff, students, and members of the public. It aims to communicate and connect, promote equality, inclusion, diversity and sustainability, foster curiosity, and share ideas. It is also an opportunity for members of the public to learn new skills in a fun and enjoyable environment.

In this 150th anniversary year of the founding of our institution, we had also hoped that the festival would celebrate the contribution of DMU to the city as a place of learning. CAI had worked with Library and Learning Services, Marketing and Communications and the Events team to organise and run this festival: together, we arranged speakers, timings, promotion, partnerships and much more. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 lockdown, we had to cancel the festival the week before it was scheduled.

The Writing Circle

Library and Learning Services (LLS) previously ran a regular Writing Circle session offering DMU staff, researchers and students at postgraduate and final year undergraduate levels the time and space to write independently alongside others in the CAI room. This year, CAI worked with LLS and the Doctoral College to enrich these sessions and advertise them more widely. The first 'revamped' session was due to take place shortly after lockdown was instated. We therefore transitioned the sessions to an online environment, and the first one went ahead week commencing 15 June with nine attendees. Five more sessions took place throughout the summer, and due to the positive feedback from participants, we are continuing the sessions until the end of 2020, with a plan to review them again in the new year.

CAI Sabbatical Fellowships

CAI worked with representatives across DMU to initiate and support fellowships that give staff the freedom to explore pedagogy in a deeper, more critical way and to develop tools in response by using greater space (both literally and metaphorically).

CAI Fellowships grant DMU staff a two-week period to engage in developing a learning and teaching project. The objectives of the scheme are as follows:

1. Enable space for pedagogic champions to engage in developing teaching and learning projects that advance DMU's objectives

2. Create the space – supported by the required resources – for individual DMU staff to pursue pedagogic projects, activities, resource development and research that advance their interests and careers

3. Develop a supportive community of practice that supports and nurtures pedagogic champions.

Based on consultations with 14 of DMU's 16 Schools by the PVC Academic in the first half of 2019 and followed by conversations with 30 key players (ranging from Associate Deans Academic to lecturers) by the Director of CAI in the same period, a key message reverberating through both exercises, as identified by staff, is the need to generate 'headspace' where they can engage in pedagogic disruption and academic innovation. This need to enhance the teaching and learning experience by generating spaces for teachers to innovate and disrupt is reflected in DMU's Teaching and Learning strategy. The promulgation of this CAI Fellowship through the granting of a short pedagogic sabbatical is a step in this direction.

This year, having received 11 applications and following a very competitive process, five Sabbatical Fellowships were granted:

Abdul Hye Miah
Lecturer in Policing and Investigations
Abdul explored how motivational interviewing techniques could be used by tutors to enhance student engagement. Abdul proposes that by refining the skills tutors already possess, using this methodology, we can inspire further change in our students' behaviour, motivation and growth.

Bernadette Gregory
Senior Lecturer, Midwifery and Child Division
Bernadette spent her sabbatical working on a collaborative project that aimed to develop the small collection of materials used in one 1st year module into more effective, scenario-based, high-quality teaching and learning materials for use across the three-year undergraduate Midwifery BSc programme.

Jo Rushworth
Associate Professor, Biomedical
Inspired by the amazing work of her late colleague and very dear friend Dr Jane Sherwood who taught both Biomedical Science and Suzuki cello, Jo used her sabbatical to try to encapsulate Jane's ideas in a proposed 'Sherwood-Suzuki' pedagogic framework. This proposed methodology could radically enhance bioscience teaching by adapting the pillars of the Suzuki method of music education, such that all students will be encouraged to be able to master their subject.

The Sherwood-Suzuki Project
A framework to enhance undergraduate science teaching using music pedagogy

Julia Reeve
Graduate School ELT Project Officer, Library and Learning Services
Julia used her sabbatical to create a virtual playful teaching and positive mental health art installation, allowing her to further explore multi-sensory learning, compassionate pedagogy and mental wellbeing. This involved an exploration of the theories underpinning her work, including constructionism, flow theory and compassionate pedagogy.

Nick Rowan
Senior Lecturer, Product Design, School of Art, Design and Architecture
Nick spent his sabbatical creating an online resource that covers the eight major aspects of being a product designer, which will be accessible to all. This will enable aspirational students to learn additional skills and improve their employability, and support students who could benefit from access to additional exercises and digital tutorials to practice their core skills and achieve a better grade.

CAI Sabbatical Fellowship feedback

CAI asked the five fellows to complete an evaluation on how they found the experience and prompted them to think about the next steps for their projects. Here is some of the feedback received:

"Thank you for the opportunity. 'Adequate' does not quite describe the support I received from CAI, my line manager and my colleagues. It's been exceptional support and I am really looking forward to how I can develop my project."

"I found it excellent, the time to really focus on a single task was invaluable and although because of COVID I did not get completely uninterrupted time, the ability to prioritise the work allowed me to complete something valuable… Thank you for this excellent opportunity, it has been an amazing experience and please keep up the great work!"

"It was incredibly useful to have 'official' thinking time away from emails and daily distractions. It allowed me to get deeper into research and to actively engage with scholarship in a way that I struggled to find time for before."

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) project – microsite and research

CAI is the new home of UDL: "UDL is a pedagogical framework that aims to provide an equal and inclusive learning experience for students and cater for difference of learning styles amongst them. It is centred on three core principles" (Maguire and Hall, 2018:2). CAI has led on two of the three workstreams in the UDL project Mark II.

Microsite
CAI launched a brand new webpage for all UDL materials to be housed in July 2020. We recruited a website developer via Unitemps and worked with the UDL Project Board to provide them with a brief. At the start of the project, a variety of UDL materials existed in various locations and CAI sought to bring it all together in one place to make access easier for staff.
The CAI coordinator has completed SharePoint training to regularly update the site.
https://demontfortuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/DMUHome/prog/UDL

UDL research
CAI recruited a researcher via Unitemps to review the extent to which the UDL principles are embedded across DMU.

The researcher interviewed 16 staff members across the university about UDL at DMU, capturing an understanding of UDL and how it has been implemented in practice. He identified perceived benefits of using the practice at DMU, which included the promotion of inclusion and a positive impact on students, staff and the university. He also identified several challenges in further implementing UDL at DMU: limited funding, technology, institutional memory loss, time, part-time staff and staff resistance.

The researcher also interviewed six students to understand how UDL impacts them.
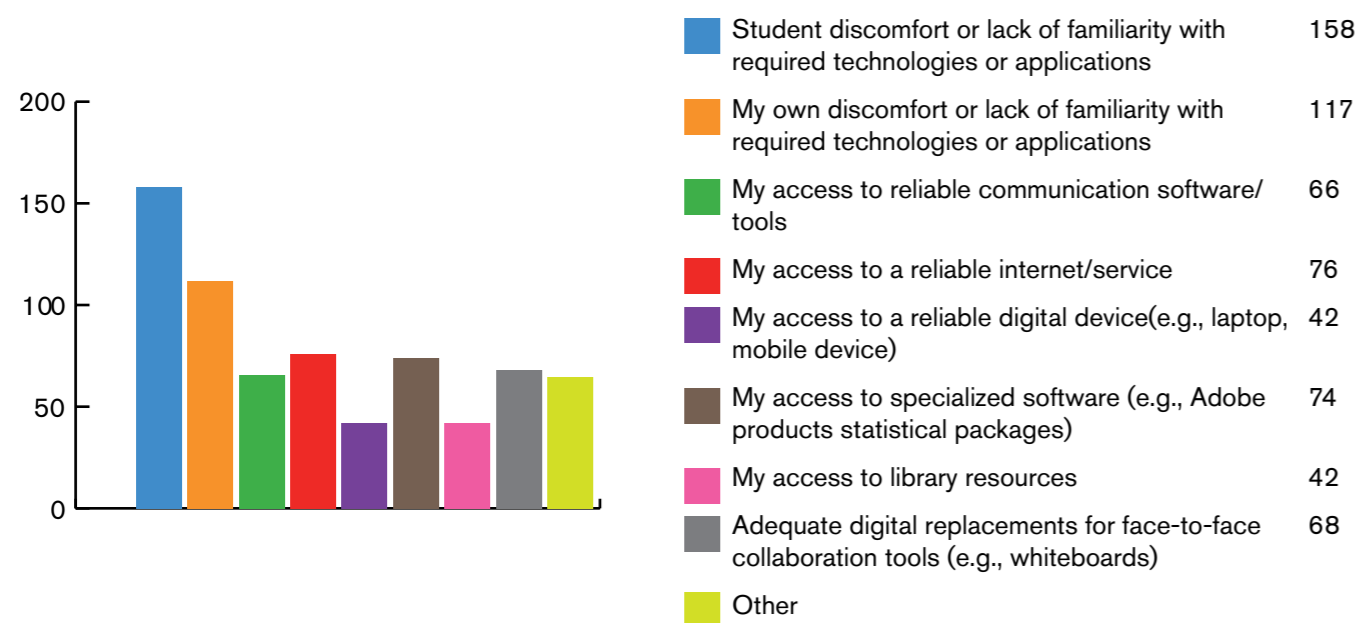
Research on virtual teaching in the era of Covid-19

Due to social distancing measures as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, a seismic shift in human interaction has taken place. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have had to reconfigure how they position, imagine and effectively deliver their core mandate through blended approaches, and especially virtually, since the lockdown began. CAI and Library and Learning Services conducted research from 13–20 May 2020 and produced a report exploring the remote working and learning experiences of 253 DMU module leaders, based on a 28% response rate for all module leaders across DMU. The report can be accessed here: https://library.dmu.ac.uk//ld.php?content_id=33076537
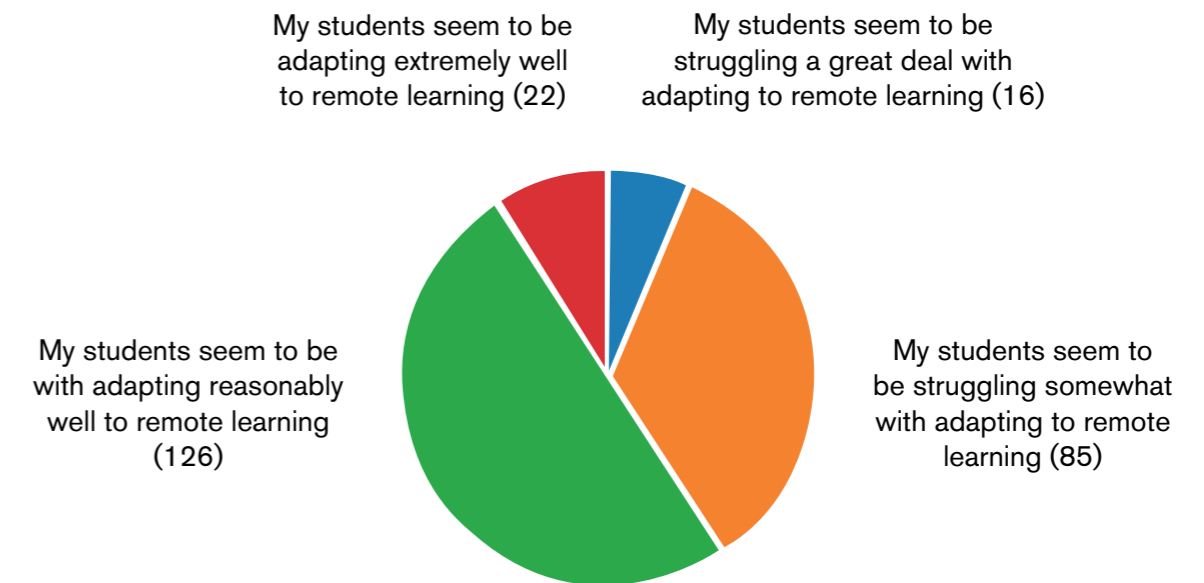
Highlights can be found below, and the full report can be found in the appendix.

Challenging technological issues since the transition to remote learning

Student discomfort or lack of familiarity with required technologies or applications	158
My own discomfort or lack of familiarity with required technologies or applications	117
My access to reliable communication software/tools	66
My access to a reliable internet/service	76
My access to a reliable digital device(e.g., laptop, mobile device)	42
My access to specialized software (e.g., Adobe products statistical packages)	74
My access to library resources	42
Adequate digital replacements for face-to-face collaboration tools (e.g., whiteboards)	68
Other	

The main issue identified around the technology staff are required to use when working remotely is the discomfort students have when engaging with the required technologies and applications (158). This is echoed in staff comfort levels with technology, which is the second highest challenge. The training resources readily available on the CELT website, Remote Teaching webpage, and CAI Toolkit, to support staff and students with technology, could be more widely disseminated.

Staff perception of how students have adapted to remote learning

My students seem to be adapting extremely well to remote learning (22)

My students seem to be struggling a great deal with adapting to remote learning (16)

My students seem to be with adapting reasonably well to remote learning (126)

My students seem to be struggling somewhat with adapting to remote learning (85)

Out of the responses received for this question, 60% perceive students to be positively adapting to remote learning, whereas 40% believe students are facing some element of difficulty, with 85 respondents stating that their students are somewhat struggling to adapt to remote learning.

Some respondents also reported that staff are concerned about work goals and timelines. Additionally, the numbers reporting concerns around reliable internet and difficulties with downloading software seem quite significant at that time, which also required urgent redress. The data was largely gathered before many remote working and teaching interventions were instigated at DMU, with some points having already been addressed in various workstreams.

Virtual/remote teaching toolkit

The staff support for remote teaching website is housed within CAI's external webpages, which was an eagerly anticipated resource to help staff transition to blended teaching, that is, a combination of virtual and face-to-face teaching. Between 8 June – 8 September, the site received 7,681 visits.

Prior to the launch of this site, CAI created a Teaching and Learning Toolkit to provide a 'one-stop-shop' for all virtual teaching-related content already available internally and externally to help staff teach throughout the strict lockdown period – including recorded webinars, articles, training guides and signposts for upcoming events, divided into three categories: remote teaching, remote assessment and remote student support. The site has received approximately 1400 visits since it launched in late April.

https://library.dmu.ac.uk/teachingandlearning

CAI Advisory Committee

CAI brought together a group of 15 stakeholders with a key stake in teaching and learning at DMU and beyond to act as critical friends of CAI. Their knowledge and experience as main influencers in education at DMU is invaluable in supporting CAI to become a world-leading centre of pedagogic and academic innovation and excellence, with a focus on enhancing and disrupting the learning and teaching experience.

The board meets on a termly basis to critique and support the work of CAI, having most recently provided feedback and input into our operational plan.

National Teaching Fellow/Teacher Fellow/CATE committee
CAI has set up a National Teaching Fellow/Teacher Fellow and CATE winner community of practice, headed by an elected committee (following a general meeting of members) with two elected co-chairs, Professor Angela O'Sullivan and Julia Reeve. The aims of this community are:

- Advise on and influence policy, process and practice (in relation to learning and teaching)
- Identify, develop, share and disseminate good practice and connect across DMU
- Consultancy, sharing expertise and mentoring
- Peer support
- Co-ordination across disciplines (e.g. conference attendance) and communications across DMU.

The committee held an AGM on 6 July, attended by 21 members of the community, and also delivered a presentation at the CAI Virtual Learning best practice seminar on 19 June: 'Reflections on the switch to remote learning and teaching from the DMU NTF/TF/CATE community'.

Student Action Committee

Working in collaboration with Laura Flowers (DSU Academic Executive), CAI brought together a number of passionate students who wanted a say in teaching and learning at DMU, to form the Student Action Committee.
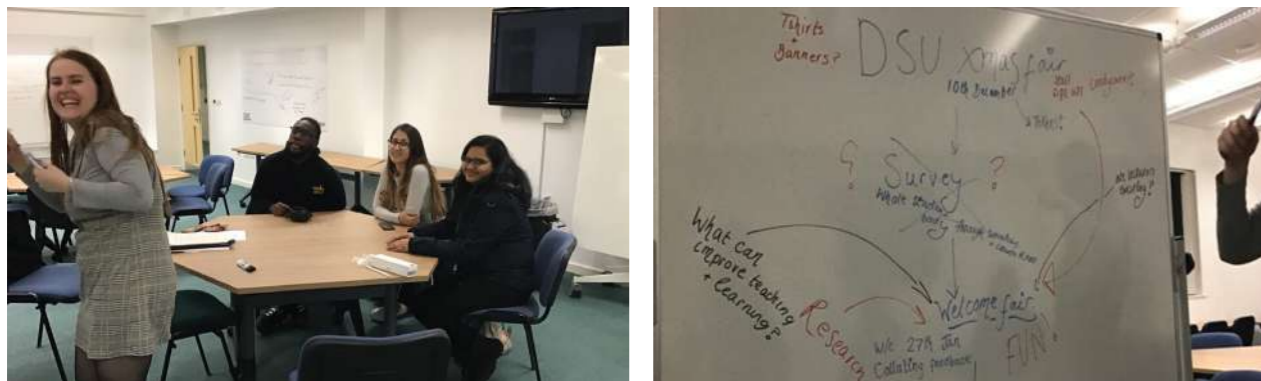
We established a committee of eight students who voted in a Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Social Media Manager, meeting approximately once a fortnight, with a total of six meetings.

Their main focus at the start of 2020 was to explore how the student voice can be infused in the transformation of the student learning experience. They planned events for the Festival of Teaching which was due to run in March 2020 (the event was subsequently cancelled due to the Covid-19 lockdown), to show examples of a positive learning environment in a lecture theatre vs a negative learning environment. They planned creative promotional activity to encourage lecturers and students to attend and participate in the event.

Service-learning module in collaboration with the Sustainable Development Network (SDN) and Public Engagement team

CAI has worked with Andrew Reeves (Sustainable Development Network) and Mark Charlton (Public Engagement) over the last 12 months to look at how we can embed service-learning in modules and how we standardise and promote this.

Based on the concept paper and meeting materials, CAI, SDN and Public Engagement jointly agreed on the following focus:

DMU students increasingly want to see their course address contemporary social challenges to help them develop the confidence and skills to make a positive difference in their future lives and careers. In parallel, the university's commitment to the issues highlighted by the Sustainable Development Goals, such as poverty reduction, gender equality and clean energy, invites courses to address these issues in ways which are relevant and engaging for students.

Over the past year, many innovative practices have been developed by DMU staff to rise to this challenge, addressing programme design at the level of individual courses, schools, or faculties. This project formally brings this work together.

Together, we have held several roundtable meetings and a masterclass (with 21 attendees) with staff who already incorporate an element of service-learning within their programme designs, or who are interested in doing so. The aim of these meetings was to agree a standard definition of what it means to incorporate service-learning in a course.

We will use this informal research to create a standard framework for service-learning at DMU.

New University of Science, Engineering and Technology in The Gambia

As part of the World Banks' African Centres of Excellence programme, DMU has been working with the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI) and the Kwame Nkrumah Institute of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana to engage in setting up a university of Science and Technology. In this light, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed with GTTI, witnessed by KNUST and has become the basis of our working relationship. CAI, working with DMU Enterprise, is responsible for delivering the entrepreneurial and quality assurance components, over a three-year period worth $1.5 million. Alongside CAI's Director, Dr Momodou Sallah, Professor David Mba is the co-principal investigator (PI) on this project.

Future events and plans

CAI's work over the next 12 months will be guided by the following strategic objectives:

1. Development of CAI as a teaching and learning centre of excellence, with a focus on pedagogic disruption and academic innovation

2. Via CAI, maintain and service CAI related structures (TF/NTF/CATE, SAC, CAI Advisory Board), systems and processes that engender diverse and creative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

3. Develop the CAI brand and market its presence and services

4. Operationalise and strengthen the CAI Sabbatical Fellowship

5. Expand, consolidate and run a regular series of events to promote the teaching and learning agenda (L&T conference, FOT, seminar and masterclass series)

6. In collaboration with Public Engagement and DMU Sustainable Development Network, operationalise a proposal for a DMU-wide service-learning module for consideration

7. Revamp and relaunch Gateway Papers and Journal of Critical Southern Studies (JCSS) as pedagogic research outlets and counter-orthodoxy spaces

8. Lead the $1.5 million Gambia Centre of excellence project for the new University of Science, Engineering and Technology.

We have a range of plans in the pipeline and these include seeking pedagogic champions within each faculty; setting up a disruptive lab to support academic innovation; organising teaching and learning conferences; Festival of Teaching; CAI Sabbatical Fellowships; masterclasses and seminars; expanding the Student Action Committee; and supporting learning and teaching across DMU. It is especially noteworthy to mention that plans are afoot to set up two academic journals:

Gateway Papers
CAI has worked with Professor Richard Hall, Dr Alan Brine and Alan Cope to relaunch Gateway Papers which has the following scope:

Gateway Papers is a peer-reviewed journal that reflects critically on learning and teaching in the changing contexts of education. These contexts include, but are not limited to, HE, colleges, prisons, community settings and schools. We are interested in developing work that is both critical in analysis and practitioner-focused, developmental and co-operative. The journal offers space to reconsider issues of professional, lifelong and workplace learning, including critiques and theoretical analyses.

The journal invites students, staff and practitioners to explore their pedagogic and education practices in the light of changes in their institutions, national education policies, the strategies of international agencies and developments associated with the 'knowledge economy'. The Gateway Papers will be launched in February 2021 at the forthcoming Learning and Teaching Conference. Work is currently being done to reconstitute the Editorial Board and relaunch the journal.

Journal of Critical Southern Studies

CAI has also been working to relaunch the Journal of Critical Southern Studies (JCSS), as a pedagogic research, decoloniality and critical Southern voices outlet. This is also expected to launch in February 2021 at the Teaching and Learning conference. The scope of the Journal is as follows:

The Journal of Critical Southern Studies was recently founded as part of efforts to provide an authentic outlet for the promotion and representation of 'otherness' through the lenses of Southern voices. The Journal's foundational premise is anchored on Boaventura de Sousa Santos' departure point that 'throughout the world there are practical alternatives to the current status quo of which, however, we rarely take notice, simply because such alternatives are not visible or credible to our ways of thinking.' Part of the inability to 'take notice' has been the fact that the Global South remains, to borrow from Santos, 'constituted as an intrinsically disqualified being.' And so long as this continues, there will be dominance and suppression, the result of which would expand and consolidate what Upendra Baxi calls 'geographies of injustices.'

The focus and particularities of the JCSS imply that it serves to not only challenge hegemony of whatever form, but also seeks to critically interrogate the means and methods of knowledge-production and its transmission. To effectively fulfil this, there is a need to broaden access to the Journal to expand its natural outreach and constituencies. To this end, this dedicated web platform serves to host as well as facilitate free and easy access to the Journal. The JCSS is a fully peer-reviewed academic journal produced by Global Hands three times a year. It is interdisciplinary and welcomes and encourages high-quality papers from scholars and researchers around the globe.

Conclusion

We remain grateful to all our colleagues across DMU, and especially for the unflinching support we have received from Professor Jackie Labbe in supporting our development during our embryonic stages. We have tried over the last year to develop the CAI structures, brand and offer, and we hope, going forward, to build on this and ultimately demonstrate impact that transforms the learning and teaching experience across DMU and beyond.

References

Maguire, F., and Hall, R. (2018). A Literature Review of Universal Design for Learning. De Montfort University Working Paper.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – CAI Operational Plan 2019-2020
Appendix 2 - Remote working report

Appendix 1

Centre for Academic Innovation - Action Plan 2019-20

The Centre for Academic Innovation (CAI) is DMU's hub for developments in pedagogic praxis and associated practical research. It sits within the PVC Academic's office, and supports and disseminates teaching and learning good practice across the university. CAI envisions itself as a world-leading centre of pedagogic and academic innovation and excellence with a focus on enhancing and disrupting the learning and teaching experience within DMU and beyond.

CAI promotes academic innovation projects and provides information, advice, and guidance for this and other forms of pedagogical support. CAI explores, supports and facilitates best and next practice in the transformation of assessment, learning and curriculum development. It encourages and facilitates enhancement, engagement, and transformational thinking and activities within the teaching and learning experience, supporting pedagogic innovation and providing leadership.

Objectives	Activities	Outcomes and measurement	Time-frame	Resources, stakeholders and dependencies
Work towards establishing CAI (and brand) as a teaching/ learning centre of excellence, with a focus on pedagogic disruption and academic innovation, supporting teaching and learning at DMU and beyond	Develop a CAI concept paper that clearly articulates the vision, mission, strategy and operations of CAI	Provide a clear direction for CAI	Complete by Sep 2020	Input from faculties
	Launch CAI	Formally introduce CAI to the university, making connections and gaining support Event attendees, connections/ promise of support	Dec 2019	Budget, event support, marketing support
	Share and showcase pedagogic tools, strategies and practises that improve teaching, learning and assessment at DMU and beyond	Students benefit from improved teaching, learning and assessment Higher staff satisfaction *Student feedback (annual surveys, SAC), staff feedback, recognition*	Ongoing	Require tools and innovative research/ practises (internally and externally) to be able to share them
	Inspire DMU staff and students to embed UDL across DMU and beyond: -Evaluate UDL project -Use conclusion of evaluation to further embed aims of UDL	Inclusive and flexible learning environment for students All staff using relevant aspects on UDL *Student feedback, staff feedback, uptake in use of UDL resources*	Evaluation: Jun 2020 Embedding: post evaluation	Project support, staff support
	Develop a well-resourced physical space for the purposes of engendering a more innovative pedagogy and academic innovation	Space used for sharing/ showcasing innovative pedagogy and enhancing students' learning environments Resources are used to enhanced learning environment *Uptake of resources, room usage, number of visitors, number of event attendees, feedback*	Ongoing	Innovative resources that improve teaching and learning Budget Estate Services Channels to promote room, events and resources internally

Objectives	Activities	Outcomes and measurement	Time-frame	Resources, stakeholders and dependencies
Work towards establishing CAI (and brand) as a teaching/learning centre of excellence, with a focus on pedagogic disruption and academic innovation, supporting teaching and learning at DMU and beyond	Develop a well-resourced and interactive website for the purposes of engendering a more innovative pedagogy and academic innovation	Website used for sharing/showcasing innovative pedagogy; for advertising events; for showcasing CAI activity and DMU activity *Website stats, staff feedback, uptake in events*	Refreshed website finished by end of 2020	Website design expertise Content for website
	Establish effective CAI social media presence to gain support and promote activity	Following supportive of CAI's work Event attendance increase Increased network and boost brand reputation *Interactions, event numbers, connections made*	Ongoing	Use of DMU Youtube channel
	Comprehensively capture the work of CAI annually for transparency and accountability purposes Utilise the annual report to disseminate CAI's impact	CAI reputation boosted as a result of report Checkpoint to guide CAI strategy *Support gained (e.g. more activities, speakers at events, etc.)*	Summer 2020	Measurement from various activities
Develop structures, systems and processes that engender diverse and creative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.	Set up CAI advisory committee for the purpose of acting as critical friends of CAI, reviewing, critiquing and support its work	Friendly advice and support on CAI activity	Meet once per term	

Objectives	Activities	Outcomes and measurement	Time-frame	Resources, stakeholders and dependencies
Develop structures, systems and processes that engender diverse and creative approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.	Set up student consultative committee for the purpose of gaining feedback from students on their learning experiences and producing student-led improvements/advancements	Student-led activity which improves the learning environment *Measurement depends on activity*	Dec 2019 – Apr 2020 Oct 2020 – Apr 2021	Dependant Student Action Committee (SAC) actions
	Institute/restore TF/NTF committee and community of practice to provide a conduit for the diffusion of TF/NTF pedagogic knowledge, skills and values…	Establish and develop a vibrant community of that supports dissemination of best-practice across DMU to improve teaching, learning and assessment	Nov 2019 – Jun 2020 Sep 2020 – Jun 2021	
Offer sabbatical focusing on pedagogic study/improvement.	Create a clearly articulated paper that puts forward a rationale, strategy, operational tactic and benefits of a pedagogical sabbatical Call for applications; review and make final decision Consider how to share findings widely and promote outcomes of research	Improved teaching/learning assessment techniques at DMU Staff satisfaction *Specific measurements dependant on research*		Budget and specific resources

Objectives	Activities	Outcomes and measurement	Time-frame	Resources, stakeholders and dependencies
Develop a programme of events to share pedagogic knowledge and improve practice at DMU	Hold a masterclass session and a seminar per term relevant to pedagogy at DMU	Share innovation pedagogy and best practice across DMU Information used to enhance learning environment *Attendance, information put into practice, staff feedback, student feedback*	One per term	Topics, speakers, promotion
Support/lead established DMU events with showcasing teaching and learning practices	Co-lead Festival of Teaching: work with LLS director to deliver successful festival Successfully lead the annual learning and teaching conference in collaboration with L&OD	Promote teaching and learning at DMU internally and externally	Mar 2020 Sep 2020	Budget, partnerships, events support, applications
Implement a DMU-wide service learning module	Work with DMU Public Engagement and Sustainable Development to develop a DMU-wide module	Students' community/ service work recognised formally *New badge, student feedback, staff feedback*	2020-2021	Support from wider university, marketing support
Review teaching and learning best practices external to DMU	Learn about best practice from other UK universities and beyond Develop contacts, establish a network and seek potential collaboration with a range of partners to support teaching and learning advancements at DMU	Implement/share learnings across DMU Build network *Specific measurement dependant on activity*	Ongoing	Budget for travel Specific resources to implement best practise

Objectives	Activities	Outcomes and measurement	Time-frame	Resources, stakeholders and dependencies
Be at the forefront of developing research-informed teaching	Take the lead in developing guidelines for research-informed teaching Run a number of forums to promote and support research-informed teaching	Increased recognition for research-informed teaching at DMU	Ongoing	
Support DMUglobal trip leads and relevant staff in reflecting on the use of experiential learning and related pedagogy	Develop a number of spaces to support trip leads and associated staff to think differently about pedagogic approaches to deconstructing and reconstructing learning spaces	Improved learning environments on global trips *Student feedback, student achievements, staff feedback*	Event – summer term	Budget Expertise (share at events)
Develop DMU's mentoring role with the proposed University of Science and Technology, The Gambia Government's Ministry of Higher Education, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and demonstrate educational leadership.	In line with educational leadership, support the establishment of a range of courses in the Gambia's (new) university of science and technology. Support the development of teaching and learning as well as quality assurances. Support DMU's sustainability goals.	Add to DMU's global reputation Income generation for DMU *Feedback from university, recognition*	2020-2021	Meeting group to review and support with resources

Appendix 2

DMU Remote Work and Learning Experiences Survey
Released on 22 June 2020
Authors: Momodou Sallah (CAI), David Parkes (LLS) and Demi Middleton (CAI)

1. Introduction

As a consequence of the rapid escalation of Covid-19, starting in China in January 2020, morphing into a global pandemic, recording a first encounter in Britain in late January 2020, and a shutdown by the middle of March, a seismic shift in human interaction has taken place. Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) have had to reconfigure how they reposition, reimagine and effectively deliver their core mandate, through blended approaches, and especially virtually, since the lockdown began.

At the centre of this reimagination is how, in the era of strict social distancing, and at a critical juncture in the academic calendar (March to July), core educational objectives are being delivered, and will be delivered in the future. Virtual and distance learning pedagogic approaches have been in existence for 25 years since the first web-based course at Penn State, and there is significant literature in this light (Shubham & Piroska 2019). However, the scale and magnitude of recalibration of delivery imposed by the Covid-19 conundrum is unprecedented, and there is as yet very limited research into the impacts of the lockdown and moves towards more virtual teaching and learning solutions.

This report brings together the findings of a snapshot survey exploring the remote working and learning experiences of DMU module leaders conducted between the 13th and 21st May 2020. The report has been developed in the context of remote working and learning heralded by Covid-19; it will briefly highlight the data collection approach, and then present the findings. Within the time-frame snapshot, the findings will present the self-reported remote working and teaching/learning experiences of 253 module leaders across all the four faculties of DMU, providing invaluable data into how they are experiencing and responding in the current situation.

1.1 Research objective

To gain an understanding of DMU staff's remote working and teaching/learning experiences in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.2 Data collection method/approach

Given the novelty of the HEIs' encounter with Covid-19, and the immediacy to locate DMU staff's encounters with the reconfigured ways of knowing and being in an exclusively online environment, this research was initiated by the PVC Academic and operationalised by the Directors of CAI, and LLS. This report summarises the key findings from the virtual survey based on the objective that was sketched out at the beginning. The data collection approach was to invite all module leaders across DMU to complete a structured online survey based on a sample developed by the EDUCAUSE team of researchers and data experts. There are about 889 module leaders across DMU and through the four Associate Deans (Academic) and faculty managers (HLS, ADH, CEM, BAL), an invitation was extended by email to all module leaders and a window was opened for 8 days from the 13-21st May to accommodate this task. From those we invited, 253 responded, representing a 28% response rate. The questions asked in the survey were predetermined with closed responses, respondents had the choice of choosing multiple responses in answering the same question.
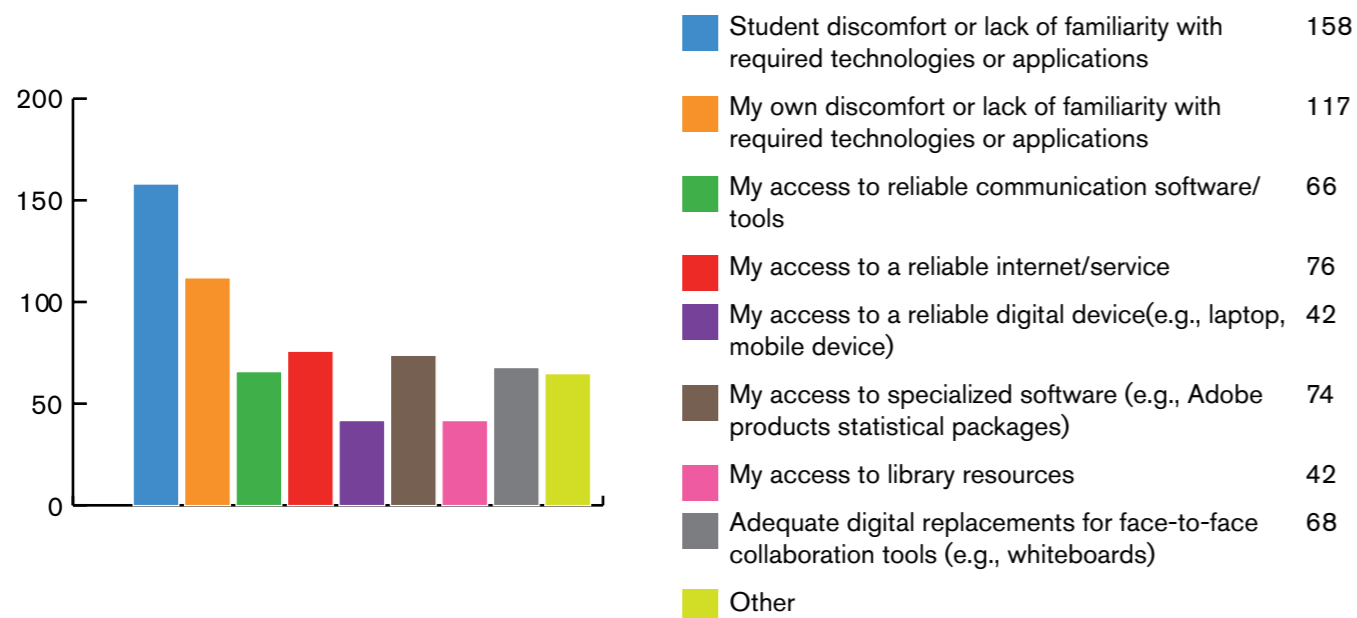
1.3 Demographics
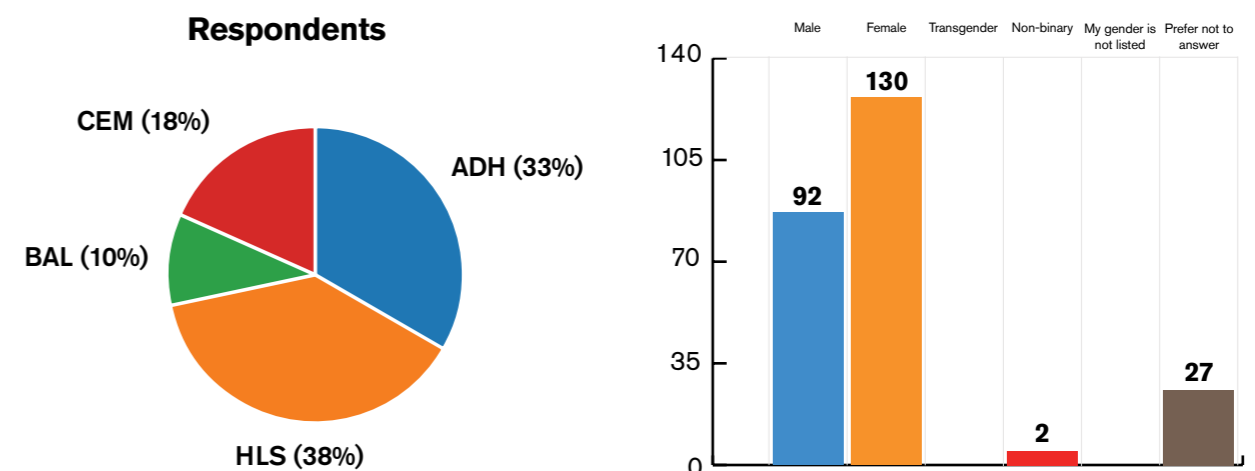
It must be noted that the four faculties are not equally represented in the response rate, with Art, Design and Humanities (ADH), and Health and Life Sciences (HLS) making up over 70% of the 253 respondents. However, we can confirm that the data suggests that there was representation across most Schools and departments in DMU.
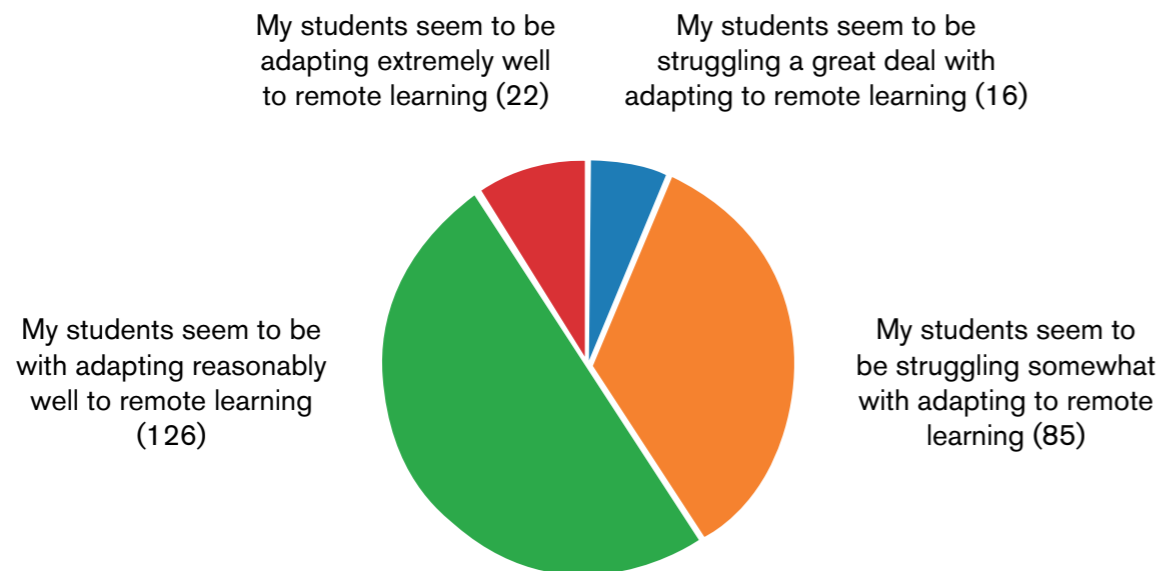
2. Findings and analyses

2.1 Challenging technological issues since the transition to remote learning

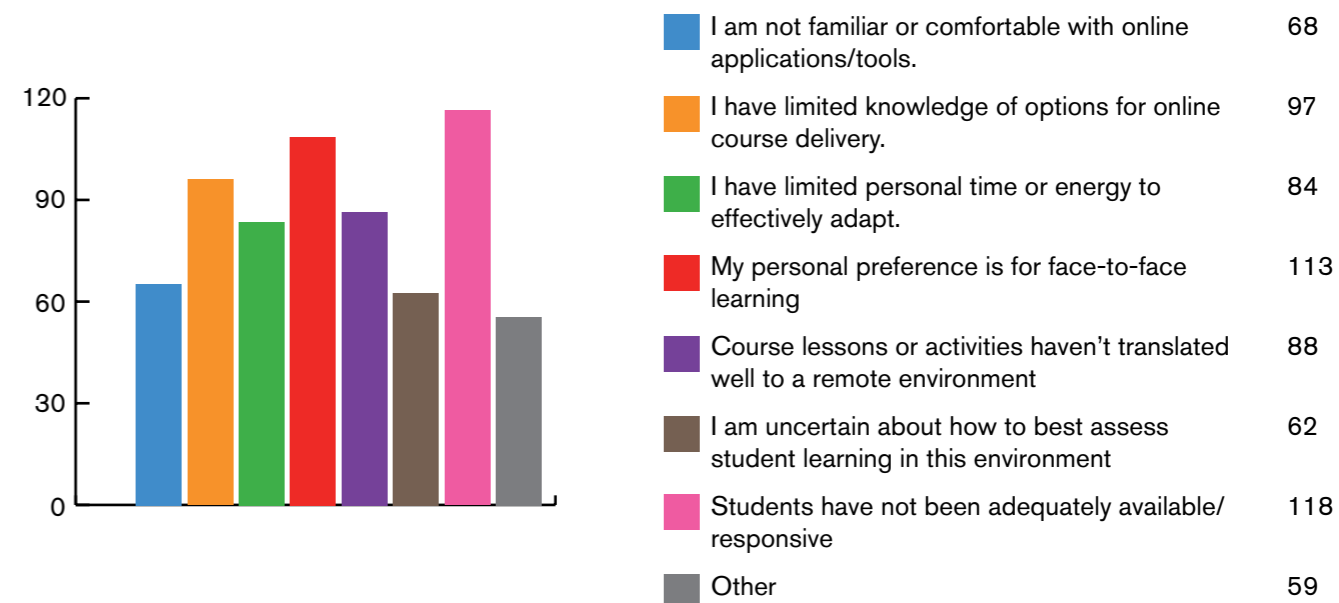|	
■ Student discomfort or lack of familiarity with required technologies or applications	158
■ My own discomfort or lack of familiarity with required technologies or applications	117
■ My access to reliable communication software/ tools	66
■ My access to a reliable internet/service	76
■ My access to a reliable digital device(e.g., laptop, mobile device)	42
■ My access to specialized software (e.g., Adobe products statistical packages)	74
■ My access to library resources	42
■ Adequate digital replacements for face-to-face collaboration tools (e.g., whiteboards)	68
■ Other	

The main issue identified around the technology staff are required to use when working remotely is the discomfort students have when engaging with the required technologies and applications (158). This is echoed in staff's own comfort levels with technology, which is the second highest challenge. With training resources readily available on the CELT website and CAI Toolkit to support staff and students with technology, perhaps more research should be conducted to establish the reasons behind this discomfort (for example, are the resources promoted adequately and do staff have time to engage with them?).

2.2 Staff perception of how students have adapted to remote learning

My students seem to be adapting extremely well to remote learning (22)

My students seem to be struggling a great deal with adapting to remote learning (16)

My students seem to be with adapting reasonably well to remote learning (126)

My students seem to be struggling somewhat with adapting to remote learning (85)

Out of the responses received for this question, 60% perceive students to be positively adapting to remote learning, whereas 40% believe students are facing some element of difficulty, with 85 re-spondents stating that their students are somewhat struggling to adapt to remote learning.
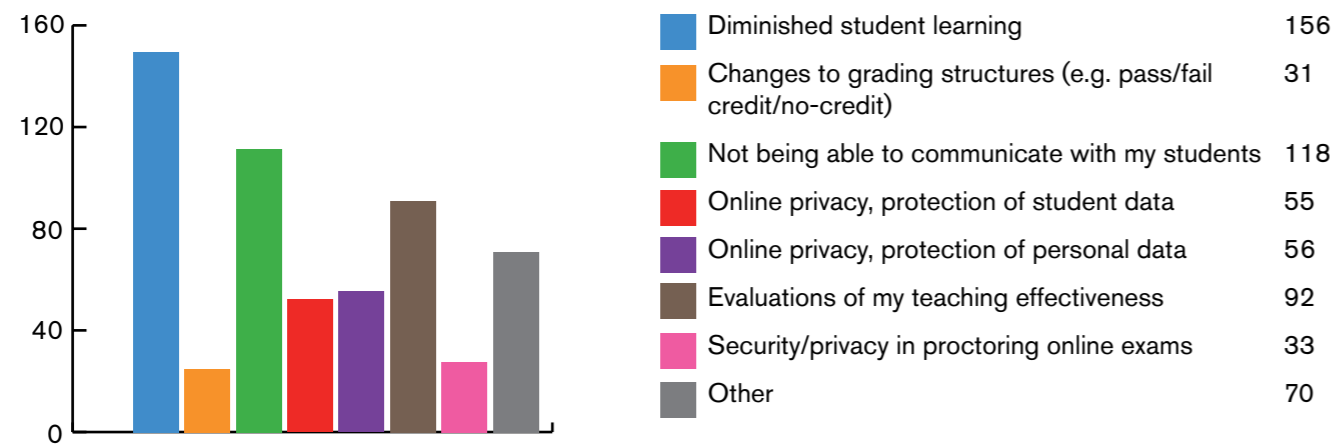
2.3 Challenges in adapting course design and/or assignments to remote learning

■ I am not familiar or comfortable with online applications/tools.	68
■ I have limited knowledge of options for online course delivery.	97
■ I have limited personal time or energy to effectively adapt.	84
■ My personal preference is for face-to-face learning	113
■ Course lessons or activities haven't translated well to a remote environment	88
■ I am uncertain about how to best assess student learning in this environment	62
■ Students have not been adequately available/ responsive	118
■ Other	59

When transitioning their teaching to a remote environment, respondents stated that the lack of responsiveness from students has been their main challenge (118). Further research would need to be carried out to establish the reasons behind this drop in engagement, but as this report shows, a lack of familiarity with technology is likely to be one factor.

This is closely followed by staff having a personal preference for face-to-face teaching over re-mote teaching (113), which might be linked to having "limited knowledge of options for online course delivery" (97), "not being familiar or comfortable with online applications/tools" (68) or not being sure of the best way of assessing students (62).

2.4 Biggest concerns with the transition to remote learning so far

■ Diminished student learning	156
■ Changes to grading structures (e.g. pass/fail credit/no-credit)	31
■ Not being able to communicate with my students	118
■ Online privacy, protection of student data	55
■ Online privacy, protection of personal data	56
■ Evaluations of my teaching effectiveness	92
■ Security/privacy in proctoring online exams	33
■ Other	70

The number one concern amongst respondents with the transition to remote learning is students' diminished learning (154). Their second highest concern is not being able to communicate with their students (118).

From their own perspectives, (92) respondents are worried about how their teaching effectiveness will be evaluated in this new environment. There is also concern about the online privacy of both student and staff personal data (55 and 56 respondents respectively).
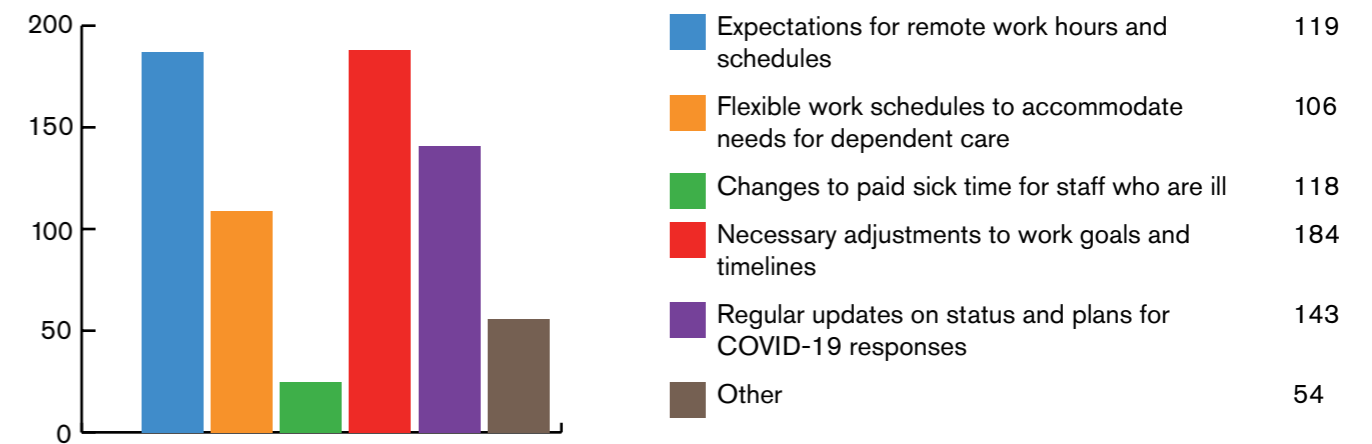
2.5 Supplies or services my institution can provide to allow me to carry out my work remotely
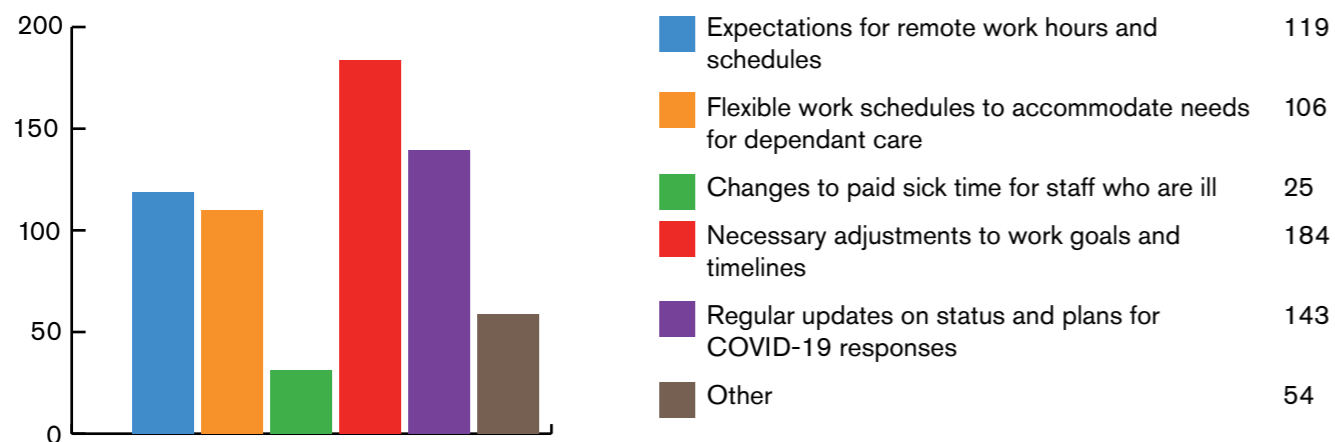
■ Expectations for remote work hours and schedules	119
■ Flexible work schedules to accommodate needs for dependant care	106
■ Changes to paid sick time for staff who are ill	25
■ Necessary adjustments to work goals and timelines	184
■ Regular updates on status and plans for COVID-19 responses	143
■ Other	54

The information that staff would most like to receive from leadership to help them carry out their work is:

1. Necessary adjustments to work goals and timelines (184),
2. Regular updates on status and plans for Covid-19 responses (143) and
3. Expectations for remote work hours and schedules (119); flexible work schedules to accommodate needs for dependent care was also highlighted as significant (106).
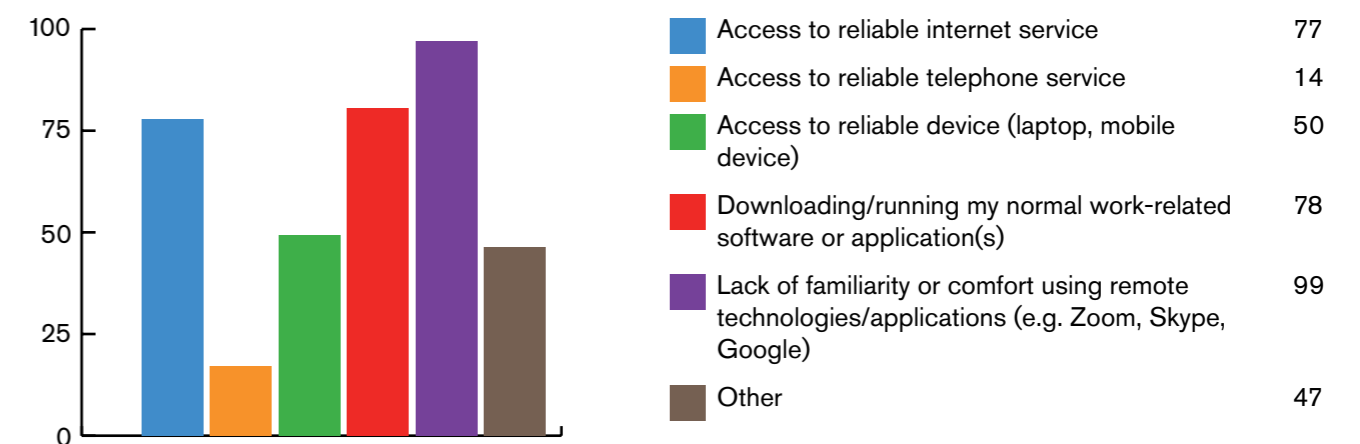
2.6 Information from leadership (e.g., system office, departmental, central administration) that would be most helpful to me in carrying out my work

■ Expectations for remote work hours and schedules	119
■ Flexible work schedules to accommodate needs for dependent care	106
■ Changes to paid sick time for staff who are ill	118
■ Necessary adjustments to work goals and timelines	184
■ Regular updates on status and plans for COVID-19 responses	143
■ Other	54

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3. Expectations for remote work hours and schedules (119); flexible work schedules to accommodate needs for dependent care was also highlighted as significant (106).

2.7 Challenging technological issues since the transition to remote work

■ Access to reliable internet service	77
■ Access to reliable telephone service	14
■ Access to reliable device (laptop, mobile device)	50
■ Downloading/running my normal work-related software or application(s)	78
■ Lack of familiarity or comfort using remote technologies/applications (e.g. Zoom, Skype, Google)	99
■ Other	47

The top technological challenges respondents have faced when transitioning to working remotely include:

1. Lack of familiarity or comfort using remote tech (99);
2. Downloading/running my normal work-related software (78);
3. Access to reliable internet service (77).

2.8 Are you able to maintain necessary connections with colleagues?

Yes	223
No	8
Other	30
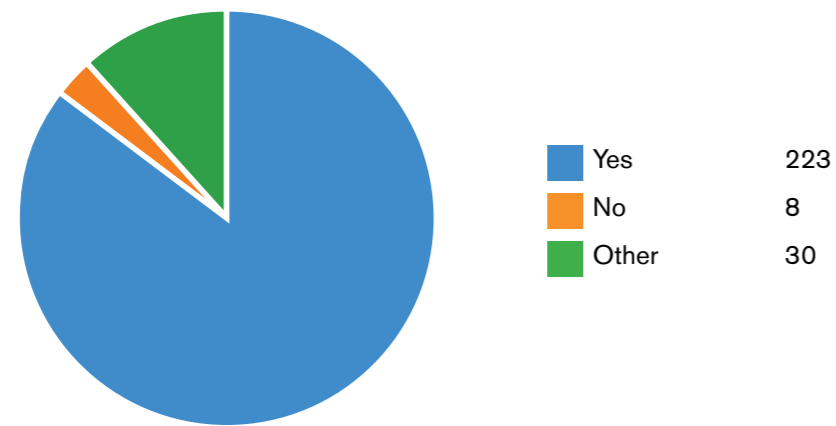
Eighty-six percent said that they are able to maintain the necessary connections with colleagues, however comments show that current methods are not as effective as face-to-face communication and the sociable element is lost.

3. Conclusion

This report hopefully provides a snapshot in this moment and time, of how a sample of DMU module leaders are experiencing remote working, teaching and learning in response to Covid-19. A significant minority have reported that their students are not adjusting as well as could have been anticipated. There are also large numbers of reports of staff and students being unfamiliar or un-comfortable with the required technological solutions. Concerns about communication with stu-dents and lack of responses from students, perhaps linked to the concern that student learning is diminished, needs further exploration. Respondents also reported that staff are concerned about work goals and timelines. Additionally, the numbers reporting con-cerns around reliable internet and difficulties with downloading software seem quite significant which also requires urgent redress.

As evidenced in this findings' section, this report provides invaluable data to inform planning and intervention, however the researchers plan to implement phase two of the project which will focus on gathering qualitative data to unravel and unpack some of the quantitative data presented here. The data was largely gathered before most of the interventions instigated by the PVC Academic, some of which have already been addressed in the various workstreams; the research team looks forward to studying the impact of these interventions on the teaching and learning experience as well as how remote working is being experienced by staff across DMU.

4. References

Shubham D. & Piroska, B. (2019) "Exploration of Factors Affecting Learners' Motivation in E-learning", International Journal of Scientific Research in Computer Science, Engineering and In-formation Technology (IJSRCSEIT), Volume5 Issue 2, pp. 1269-1275, March-April 2019.

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