

University of Worcester  
Teaching Award Scheme  
2018/19

**Vignettes of Practice**



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Realising teaching excellence at the University of Worcester blog

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## Foreword from the Editor

The University of Worcester Teaching Award Scheme (UWTAS) invites applicants from University of Worcester staff and associates to demonstrate evidence of impact of their innovative, inspiring and excellent practice to enhance student learning. The UWTAS aligns with the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF).

The Scheme has seen a third very successful year with submissions from each category (Teaching Award, Team Teaching Award and Leading Teaching Award). These have evidenced a wide range of innovative, inspiring and excellent practice that has led to positive impact upon student engagement, outcomes and experience. Case study themes have demonstrated innovative approaches to the use of technology, innovative assessment, active learning strategies and developing employability skills. Furthermore, the Leading Teaching Award has demonstrated successful co-ordination, support, supervision and mentoring of others in relation to teaching and learning innovation and excellence.

The Scheme has been disseminated national and internationally at;

HEA Annual Conference (July 2017)

Beijing Sports University (May 2017)

Palma EDULEARN Conference (July 2018)

The 2017 and [2018](#) 'Vignettes of Practice' booklets appear on Realising Teaching Excellence at University of Worcester Blog <https://rteworcester.wordpress.com/>

We look forward to building upon 2018/2019 successes into 2019/2020, the fourth year of the Scheme. We welcome enquiries and submissions for this next round of the Scheme.

Dr Kerry Whitehouse  
UW Teaching Award Scheme Director (and Editor)

May 2019

## The use of OneNote to develop feedback by Karen Broughton; School of Sport & Exercise Science



This case study demonstrates the inspirational and innovative development of technology to enhance teaching, learning and assessment within a level 5 module for Sport & Business Management degree pathway, and its positive impact upon student learning. This was inspired by the learning and teaching strategy (University of Worcester, 2015) that identified the innovative use of technology to support effective feedback which enhances learning. This case study links to the UK Professional Standards Framework (2011) and focuses on design and support for learning activities (A1), assessing and giving feedback to learners (A3), appropriate methods for teaching, learning, and assessing (K2) and the use of appropriate learning technologies (K4).

Prior to the module starting I reviewed the module outline and created weekly directed study tasks that were uploaded onto OneNote. These aimed to extend learning from the lectures and provided clear links to summative assessments, in the form of appendices or reflections based upon reflective models (A1). Weekly lectures were then redeveloped, giving students dedicated improvement reflection time focused upon the individualised feedback provided through OneNote in their previous week's directed study task (K2). Tutorials were structured around the OneNote feedback to enable focused and relevant discussions that linked clearly to the module outcomes and summative assessments (A3) allowing students to see the connectivity and relevance of the formative assessment.

Students engaged with OneNote well beyond expectations, with 88% (21 students, from a cohort of 24 students), using the platform on a weekly to fortnightly regular basis. The use of technology enhanced learning was consistently well received by the students, who at the early module feedback point, commented that the formative comments were effective and had enhanced their learning and their student experience (K4). Thus, impacting upon their experience in accessing and engaging with the range of learning platforms (V4). Students valued the ongoing, personalised feedback provided through OneNote and the use of the dedicated improvement reflection time at the start of each lecture. This is highlighted in the feedback from one student who stated that:

*I believe it has been a time efficient and effective way to communicate ... on my progress, regarding tasks that can help me structure my assignments. My personal opinion on the use of OneNote is that it can help students like myself gain a better understanding on what needs to be done in assignments, without physically seeing the module tutor or to wait on emails.*

The impact of this innovative use of technology on student's learning is also evident in the summative assessment outcomes with a 3% increase in the number of students achieving A grades and a 7% increase in high C and B grades compared to the previous academic year.

This project further developed into an action research project that I presented at the annual University of Worcester Learning and Teaching Conference in June 2018. I also shared it with

colleagues from the School of Sport and Exercise Science via a Peer Supported Review of Teaching presentation. This has influenced the work of a colleague who is now using OneNote to support HND students via the PAT system when transitioning onto the degree programme. Furthermore, another senior colleague is implementing OneNote to support students within a Sports Studies module. This innovative use of technology to support student learning has given me greater confidence in using technology in my teaching and I now actively seek out TEL opportunities to encourage collaborative learning and ongoing feedback on learning and progress.

### References

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# **Design and delivery of a new Module - GEOG1123 Climate Change People Policy and Action.**

**by Dr Sian Evans and Dr Matthew Smith; School of Science and the  
Environment**



This case study demonstrates how we designed and delivered a new 15 credit L4 geography module 'GEOG1123: Climate Change: People, Policy and Action', with a specific focus on constructive alignment (Biggs, 2003), student engagement (Coates, 2006 p. 17, Kahu, 2013, Bryson, 2014 p.3), and active learning (Prince, 2004, Michael, 2006). The module was developed in line with UW's Policy & Regulatory Framework, Learning and Teaching Strategy 2015 – 2018 and Technology Enhanced Learning Strategy 2015 – 2019.

Our goal was to take the students on a journey of discovery of the topic as well as themselves by developing their personal reflective practice and enhancing their ability to become independent learners. Critical to our design process was our desire to incorporate innovative, imaginative, challenging and engaging assessments. We also wanted to scaffold student learning (Schmidt et al., 2011) and ensure summative assessments were fully integrated in course content, so that weekly learning and formative tasks built knowledge and helped students develop, apply and rehearse key skills.

Summative Assessment 1: Students were required to write an essay reflecting on their participation in a mock UN Climate Change Conference ([climateinteractive.org](http://climateinteractive.org), n.d.). In this role play scenario, students act out the positions of different stakeholders (i.e. different countries and lobbyists) and debate their contributions to reducing carbon emissions and other mitigation activities. The goal was for participants to achieve a consensus and keep global temperatures from rising above 2°C, which was tested using the C-ROADS Climate Change Policy Simulator (Rooney-Varga et al., 2018).

Summative Assessment 2: Students worked in groups to create a 10-minute video podcast for a public audience, exploring the impacts and response to climate change for a country of their choice. They were free to choose the country, the climate impacts and the scale of the response they focused on. There was considerable flexibility in how they undertook this, ranging from a simple recorded PowerPoint presentation with voiceover to short choreographed films. The podcasts were marked on content and how well the materials had been translated for a public audience.

Impact of the new module and student reaction to our efforts to foster constructive alignment was explored in several ways. These included focus groups for a Students as Academic Partners project report, informal feedback, personal reflections and the module evaluation.

In this first year, 100% of students felt engaged with the module and were satisfied with the quality of the module overall. In particular, feedback on the module evaluation stated the climate change debate was “a fun way to consolidate what we have learnt”. We are revising the module based on students’ comments, and reflecting on how to deliver the assessments to increased class sizes following proposed changes to Level 4 structure. This experience will have considerable impact on our future practice, and we are now eager to implement the improvements and to develop the module further for the next (2018/19) academic year.

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# The Goldilocks theory for quantitative research methods by Miranda Harris; School of Allied Health and Community



Teaching is a set of activities, carefully fashioned to facilitate learning (HEA, 2018b) with success typically measured by Student Satisfaction (Office for Students, 2018). By responding directly to student feedback three years ago, on how students engaged with quantitative methodology in Research Methods, I was presented with an opportunity for innovation and transformation using a more student-centred approach in order to prepare students effectively for their dissertations.

## **Interactive workshop approach:**

Drawbacks of the traditional lecture may be lack of active participation, a potential obstacle to deeper learning (Tofade et al. 2013), and from the Higher Education Provider's (HEP's) perspective, difficulty in ascertaining student comprehension, as students may be reluctant to voice queries or areas of misunderstanding. Through evidence-informed approaches I have moved away from the dry and uninspiring lecture to a more interactive, workshop approach using an example of an on-line health and behaviour questionnaire, which has led to greater engagement and equality of opportunity for students.

According to Macinnes (2012), quantitative methods can be made both rewarding and exciting, although it requires innovation and creation in teaching methods. Deeper learning is more likely to take place when students are actively engaged as identified by student feedback,

*Miranda's teaching made statistics simple, doable and even humorous at times, and I was able to easily translate what I had learnt from her statistic lectures into my dissertation study without a hitch.*

## **On-line questionnaire:**

The Knowledge, Attitude and Behaviour (KAB) questionnaire was based on a reliable and validated tool, which I adapted for my Nutritional Therapy (NT) dissertation (Harris 2012). Students have found questionnaire design challenging and time consuming, so offering this questionnaire, which can be used in any quantitative dissertation study, facilitates the understanding of research methods, reduces supervision time, produces higher module grades and enhances student satisfaction.

*Miranda has provided terrific support throughout, particularly during the stages I found most intellectually challenging of questionnaire re-design, mapping questionnaire questions to research questions and objectives, and designing and*



*enacting validation and verification activities.*

### **Contributing to Policy Change:**

Research into health behaviour is a popular subject for students. As identified by Public Health England (2018), contributions from health science research help to understand behaviour and the significant impact it has on the nation's health and well-being. Findings may contribute to policy change and Government Guideline updates as well as add value to NT.

On reflection, this significant change to my teaching style, arose from assessing methods to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and a deeper understanding of how students learn. Confidence in technology, as well as research methodology through continuing professional development, has led to live demonstrations of questionnaire design, data collection and statistical analysis, thus breathing life in to what was a dull subject;

*On reflection, she provided a 'goldilocks' level of encouragement to draw the best out of me, challenging me to do my best but, at every step, in a way I felt was achievable and not too daunting. I've thoroughly enjoyed the whole course, but had my best moment of 'flow' (immersion, absorption and focus - Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi) on a memorably rewarding day re-designing the questionnaire after guidance from Miranda.*

Evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of the initiative has been supported with improved module grades and positive feedback in the 2018 External Examiner's report.

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# **The implementation of weekly assessment related portfolio tasks to improve student engagement and achievement during a student's 1st semester at university**

**by Michelle Morgan; School of Sport and Exercise Science**

This case study demonstrates the innovative practice used in relation to the implementation of weekly assessment related portfolio tasks used within a 1st year module (K2). This had a positive impact on student engagement, achievement and attendance in lectures; and supported student transition to University (V4 A4). The reasons for adopting a portfolio approach, specifically for this cohort included; engaging students in a routine of attending classes on a regular basis (A1), building relationships with new peers and, encouraging the students to complete their assessments in smaller, bite-sized sections which would potentially be a more familiar approach to them (as closely aligned to BTEC course work approach) (K2 V1).

The portfolio tasks related to the topic of delivery which included; Personal Values and Beliefs, Working in a Community of Practice, Mental Health and Wellbeing (A1 A2). From this, students had to complete 35 individual tasks to submit as part of their final assessment (worth 50% of grade). The innovation with the use of the portfolio tasks was the opportunity it presented to produce useful resources that the student (and wider network of PAT's and academic staff) could utilise to access insightful and helpful information into the student's past experiences, future aspirations and potential support mechanisms that might need to be put in place to assist with their development. For example, within the Mental Health tasks students had to identify their own support network including university services. This enabled the ability to establish that they were aware of the support mechanisms available from the university (such as Firstpoint, Counselling Services, PATs) (V2) and knew how to access those services should they require them (A4).

The evidence of the impact of the weekly innovative portfolio tasks on attendance demonstrated that 75% of the group had an attendance percentage average of 80% or above for the semester. The feedback students provided reflected the positive impact of the portfolio tasks reporting "tasks each week", "better way than doing work in one go for assessment" and 'knowing others needed me in my group' (A1).

The use of portfolio approach has impacted my own professional development due to the positive feedback and impact on lecture engagement. Subsequently, I have embedded the portfolio approach into a current 3rd year module (V3). A similar approach has been adopted with a separate topic being delivered each week, which is then applied in a seminar and practical session (A1); from which students complete a task that contributes to the portfolio. Resources, tools and time are embedded into the taught aspects of the module each week for the data collection (on topics such as Group Cohesion and Team Identity) that is essential for the final hardcopy portfolio submission (K1 A1).

Feedback from the students on the number of portfolio tasks was taken on board and is reflected in a streamlined approach for the Level 6 students where the number of tasks have been reduced and, academic writing alongside relevant group data has been included (V3).

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# Graduate Employment: Increasing student employability through Applied Lifelong Learning

## by David Mycock; School of Sport and Exercise Science



This case study demonstrates the innovative and inspiring work I have done as the SSES Course Leader for the BSc. Sports Coaching Science with Disability Sport. It summarises my attempts to increase practical teaching, learning and employment opportunities for students on this study pathway.

Graduate employment is one of the key Teaching Excellence Framework drivers for universities and this driver motivated me to more closely align my teaching activities and learning priorities with developing employability skills and opportunities. Additionally, I wanted to clearly articulate to inquiring students the answer to a question frequently asked; “What job will this course allow me to do”?

The University of Worcester Strategic Plan, Values and Vision, (2019) claims ‘we’ “should be preparing and inspiring students for life through, enriching the students learning experience”. I have found this is best facilitated via implementing, “fun, fairness, equity and inclusion. I do this through providing additional chances to practice what they love doing”. This ensures students become ‘professionalised’ and have the modern ‘currency’ to work in their chosen career as they complete their BSc. Course. To this end, I sought to engage with a number of partners to provide additional qualifications that would enhance student learning and their employability prospects. For example:

1. Great Britain Wheelchair Basketball, (Level 1 Wheelchair Basketball Award & Inclusive Zone Basketball Officiating Award).
2. Wheel Power UK, (Wheelchair Skills Workshop & Paralympic Boccia Level 2 Awards).
3. Goal Ball UK, (Visually Impaired Paralympic Sport)

Students, external verifiers and professors in the field have concurred that this is a positive step to develop and enhance the skills of my students. They have commented; “including industry specific additional qualifications is an innovative and a robust sustainable process for the modern-day student to benefit from”. The benefits, I feel are that students become more confident and better equipped for employability after completing these additional elements to their learning. The real-life learning experiences add purpose and value to their skill set and knowledge. Students claim this, ‘gives them a passport to volunteer and gain paid work in areas they wish to form a career in’.

I have found through these enrichment activities that students have developed in different ways, much more so than I had previously experienced in trying to do everything myself within modules. These opportunities have led to; students automatically stimulating engagement for themselves and others, which promotes their career specific skills and lived experiences. This has expanded career opportunities and students are beginning to develop national and international networks as they improve confidence and self-efficacy.

These mini motivational intra-semester 'wins' such as becoming empowered to take control of their own independent learning early, helps students shape and direct their knowledge and practice. The additional qualifications allow for greater ownership and promotes career aspirations and options. I believe this organically enhances their willingness to attend, engage and give extra efforts as a 'professional student' to make sure they are in a 'stronger' position to obtain their future goals.

Student feedback suggests embedding industry recognised qualifications helps them to keep their learning momentum, which ignites the modules as it enables clear and explicit links between theory and practice. The consensus appears to be that learning 'in action' or 'on the job' by gaining additional industry recognised qualifications supports students to better learn, succeed both in their studies and, as they prepare for employment. It has amazed me how engaged and stimulated students become when they receive for example; a free t-shirt, an extra industry recognised qualification or an opportunity to go on and 'actively trial' jobs they wish to do. Their motivation to learn is significantly increased.

As a consequence of these enrichment activities, one of my graduates gained employment in full time coaching position with, 'The Albion Foundation' (TAF). TAF is the Community Programme from West Bromwich Albion Football Club and helps to support 2,000 people in the West Midlands every week. This work has had regional and national impact. Furthermore, this former student now hosts sessions, talks and workshops for current UW students. The benefit of this is that it facilitates continued generation of resources, such as workshops, student placements and paid part and full-time employment. Other students have secured opportunities at Wasps Rugby Club, England Boccia and GB Wheelchair Basketball.

This additional learning strand has promoted a new learning community and this is continually growing and now being facilitated by our ex-Graduates who have now become the next generation of development officers, coaches and teachers. This is a mutually beneficial and sustainable model of good practice now as we have 'fed the sector' with well-rounded professionals who return to provide further qualifications, paid and placement opportunities for us.

The holistic real-life learning and teaching approach, which includes employment enrichment activities, has been acknowledged by the Vice Chancellor of UW. Upon reading an article written by one of my students about their BSc. Sports Coaching Science with Disability Sport Course experience and related triumphs, claimed it was, "Simply Inspirational!"

## Reference

University of Worcester Strategic Plan, Values and Vision, (2019). Inspired for life, University of Worcester.

## Level 2+ Award Programme by Craig Williams; School of Sport and Exercise Science



This case study provides an overview of the rationale for, and impact of the ‘Level 2+ Award Programme’, an accredited Sports Coaching Award Programme at the University of Worcester (UW). Launched in 2011, the programme provided students with the opportunity to achieve recognised vocational qualifications within a mandatory first year coaching module (SPRT1024). The embedded Level 2 coaching award programme was designed to develop vocational coach education qualifications for UW students, which provided affordable and flexible vocational learning whilst also enhancing student employability and placement readiness.

The blended learning aspect of the program permitted students to accredit prior learning gained in the module towards the Nationally accredited 1st4sport Level 2 Award in The Principles of Coaching Sport (POCS L2) qualification and subsequently the ‘Level 2 + award’ in Multi-Skills (MS L2). At the outset of each 1st year cohort on SPRT1024 a student survey ascertains coaching qualifications and experience. On average under 5% of students on the module have the equivalent of a Level 2 coaching award.

The embedded ‘Level 2+ Award’ has proved an effective way to support the student’s professional development. Since 2011/12, 378 students out of 418 (90.4%) who commenced the POCS L2 award have successfully completed and 90 out of 96 (93.8%) students have successfully completed the MSL2 award. The MS L2 was embedded following discussions with local school teachers, coaching mentors as it was felt that to be a highly desirable qualification for students coaching in primary schools, after school clubs and grassroots sports clubs, the initial environments for the majority of student coaches.

To deliver the program I have directly supported eleven UW staff members to achieve nationally recognised tutoring and assessing qualifications. Delivery of the awards provides an excellent opportunity for these staff to maintain current professional practice and, regular peer observation provides an effective way to evaluate the effectiveness of the program (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Additionally, it significantly reduces the course cost to students. Student feedback has regularly commented about the “opportunity” to access courses, the “cost effectiveness” of the courses, the “convenience” of the courses and benefits to student “employability”.

Evidence of the impact of this work is demonstrated through our external verifiers who described the processes at UW as ‘innovative’, ‘transparent’ and ‘best practice’. One of the NGB’s involved in the program commented:

*We have been impressed with the flexibility and support offered to the learners*

*through your forward-thinking attitude and we are keen to develop this in the future. The courses being set up with Worcester will signal a real shift from the traditional delivery mode and we will look to replicate and role this out in other geographical places.*

The 'Level 2 + award' program was an excellent way to develop employability skills and enhance student's readiness for placement opportunities. This was clearly evidenced via student engagement within the courses, student satisfaction, student feedback, and Internal Verifier and External Verifier feedback.

### References

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