

University of
Worcester Teaching
Award Scheme
2020/21

Vignettes of Practice



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Realising teaching excellence at the University of Worcester blog
<https://rteworcester.wp.worc.ac.uk>

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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 yet another successful year, even whilst colleagues have been navigating the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic with submissions in each category (Teaching Award, Team Teaching Award and Leading Teaching Award) and from several Schools. Submissions 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 innovation in response to the pandemic, with focus upon learning technologies and online teaching. Other themes of innovation and inspiration are in the areas of; inclusive practice; authentic learning; applied learning practices and employability. Furthermore, Leading Teaching Award submissions have demonstrated successful co-ordination, support, supervision and mentoring of others in relation to teaching and learning innovation and excellence.

Successes of and from the Scheme have been disseminated national and internationally including at:

HEA Annual Conference (July 2017) Beijing Sports University (May 2017) Palma EDULEARN Conference (July 2018).

The [2017](#), [2018](#), [2019](#) and [2020](#) Vignettes of Practice booklets appear on the Realising Teaching Excellence at University of Worcester blog <https://rteworcester.wp.worc.ac.uk>

We look forward to building upon 2019/20 successes into 2020/21, the sixth year of the Scheme. We welcome enquiries and submissions for this next round of the Scheme.

Dr Kerry Whitehouse & Dr Peter Gossman
UW Teaching Award Scheme Co-director 2021

Embedding applied learning through innovative course design on the MSc Sport (Applied Performance Analysis). - John Francis, Lecturer & Course Leader, Michael Bateman, Lecturer, and Jamie Kyte, Technical Demonstrator School of Sport and Exercise Science

This case study demonstrates the innovative approach to course design used throughout the MSc Sport (Applied Performance Analysis) course to maximise applied learning. We highlight the positive impact on students' professional practice and the course team's ability to continually reflect and develop subject knowledge.

To maximise the applied learning, we work collaboratively with sports organisations to provide funded season-long placements. These allow students to engage with employability skills from the outset, through formal applications and an interview process that replicates industry practice (A1, K2). Additionally, the value clubs place on student placements has enabled a year-on-year increase in the number of funded opportunities available (V2). For 2019/2020, 14 funded positions across eight sports organisations were offered, an increase of four from 2018/2019. Furthermore, in 2020/2021 two new organisations recruited students.

The course team engage in continual dialogue with sports organisations to further our understanding of the complexities of working in sport alongside post-graduate learning. Intensive weeks and weekly synchronous online learning sessions are aligned to fixture breaks and accessible to all learners (V1). We fully embed Vygotsky's (1987) view of learning, ensuring our teaching is research informed. We focus on increasing interaction and participation through tasks and scenario-based activities in dedicated group study spaces (A1, A4, K3). Changes to the course have been positively received by students, reporting 100% satisfaction on core modules (MERF) and 83% satisfaction on overall course structure (PTES).

When making revisions, we recognised the opportunity to align our module content and assessment types to similar industry workflows and offer autonomy and flexibility to specific analysis roles (first team, youth, recruitment etc.). For example, students on MSPO4252 now evaluate the processes regarding validity and reliability between theory and applied settings to identify 'best practice' (A3). With this assessment occurring early in the year, students found this provided a good opportunity to reinforce their knowledge of *"the why behind what we do as analysts, ensuring our data throughout the season is accurate"*. Subsequently, students apply their theoretical subject knowledge into practice over a longer duration (A1, A4, K1).

We embedded key technical and employability skills within students' individual development through 'Job Club' and 'The Skills Passport' (V1). Students work with the technical demonstrator to improve skills through access to the best industry software, displaying their progress through summative and formative assessments, and building a portfolio that can be presented at interviews (A2, A3, K2). The content and assessments now acknowledge key criteria and competencies identified on jobs and within professional accreditation frameworks.

The assessment changes now provide organisations with richer evidence to evaluate their provisions. This aids our understanding and reinforces the importance of the mutually beneficial relationships between the university, student and organisation, with assessment findings acting as a conversation starter when engaging in the next recruitment cycle (V3, V4).

Through these relationships, placement providers are invited to deliver industry and employability content during the intensive weeks (K3, V2, V3). These opportunities provide a different voice and translate the theoretical learning into applied context. Furthermore, it identifies areas and topics for us to explore for CPD (A5, V3), ensuring we can continuously aid students' learning and provides a valuable networking opportunity for the students.

By emphasising placement learning and individual development within the course design, the number of students obtaining full-time employment or promotion is above the national average. Despite the global pandemic, 12 students in the 2019/20 cohort have been offered full-time roles at organisations growing to our increasing alumni (see Figure 1).

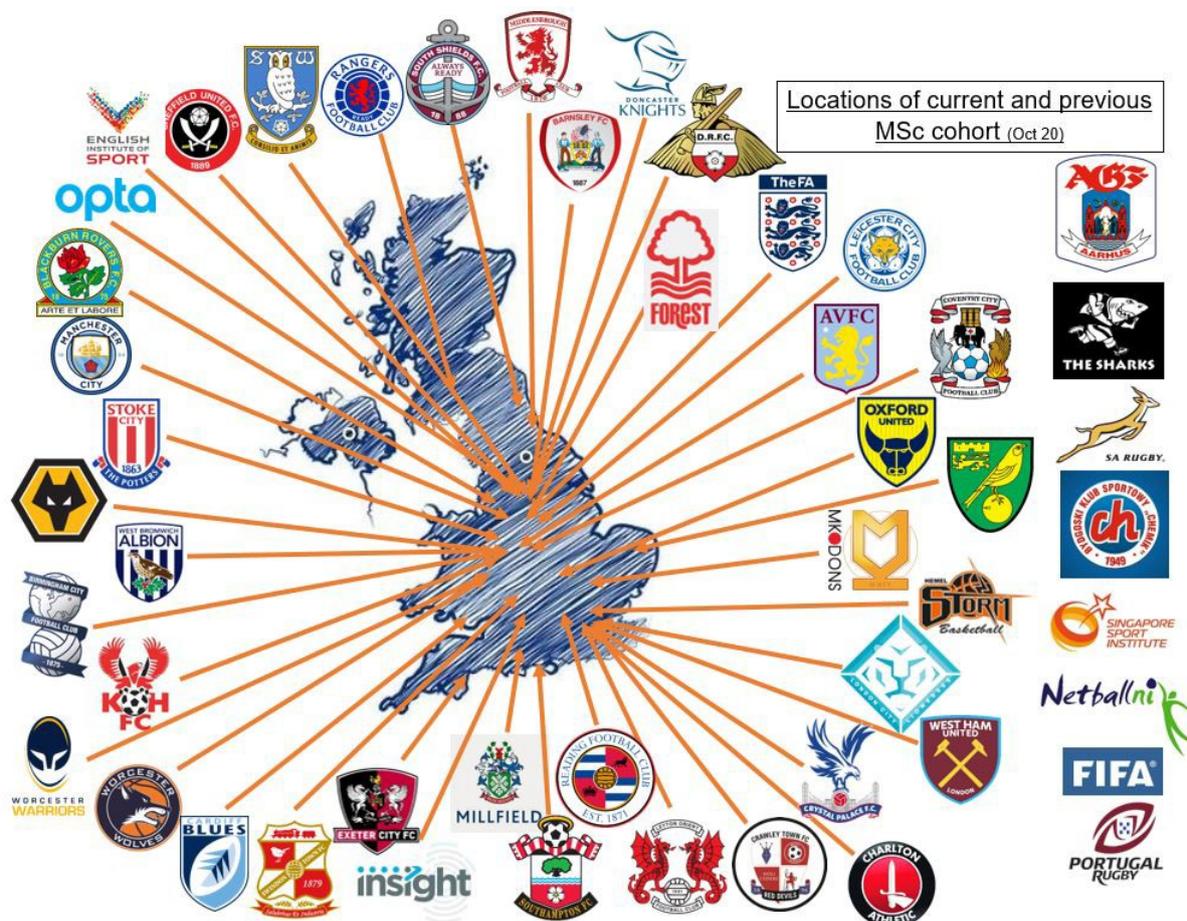


Figure 1: MSc Sport (Applied Performance Analysis) current and alumni employment locations.

Approaching the course recruitment, teaching/learning, and employability as inter-related has been instrumental in supporting our students. Through collaboration with organisations, we have continually developed our knowledge, ensuring our teaching is evidenced-informed. We continue to reflect as a team to identify areas for improvement in our current provision but also to introduce elements that organisations deem to be emerging topics.

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Going online in a pandemic: staff and student voices at the heart of inclusive teaching. - Jennifer Hatley, Course Leader Education Studies, School of Education



I am the Course Leader for Education Studies and like most courses at the University, myself and my team found ourselves moving to online teaching quickly in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. We were in a unique position. We were not just teaching any subject; we were teaching Education.

Pedagogy and andragogy are what we do all day, every day, so we knew that we couldn't simply put resources online and expect learning to happen as it does when face-to-face. Nonetheless, with the need to act quickly, that is in effect what we had to do. This constituted 'emergency remote teaching' (Hodges et al, 2020) arguably satisfactory for a limited time, but not for long.

As the weeks went on, I led the team through an evolution in our practice. The team shared advice from the HE sector that they had found (Hodges et al 2020, Salmon 2013, Stanford 2020, Veletsianos and Kimmons 2020) and we gathered feedback from our students about their experiences of learning online. Students shared the impact on their physical and mental health, the demands of home schooling, sharing devices and workspace with family and their experiences with unreliable, often rural, internet. Staff shared similar experiences. I led consultation meetings for my department where we explored this feedback, pooled our expertise, and raised any concerns. We also explored how our online spaces could be designed inclusively. All of this informed our values-based provision of online learning which I then wrote into a 'Guide to practice' (V1). To ensure our practice was research informed, I additionally sourced academic papers (De Jong et al 2018, Filius et al 2019, Hew 2016, Mayer 2017, McLaughlin and Yan 2017), and the university's own guidance (A5, V3, V4). I structured my guide into three sections to support all areas of our practice:

1. Online environment and delivery (A1, A2, A4, K2, K3)
2. Camera etiquette, tutor 'presence' and online engagement (V2,K4)
3. Online recordings and specific tools (K2,K4).

This provided a solid rationale and ensured our provision exemplifies excellent and innovative practice (A1, A4, V3, V4).

The impact of my guide, written by me but informed by colleagues and students, spread beyond Education Studies. It became department guidance for our undergraduate courses, and it was further taken up by the School as a whole. I led training for another department who were keen to create a sense of community online. It also became a recommended resource for the Head of Digital Teaching and Learning's online learning course for all staff and complemented the values and approach taken there. It also became required reading for the academic librarians across subject areas, university wide.

Through leading this, I will teach, support and lead with the increased confidence that comes from being research-informed and from listening to the voices of those affected. Having a basis in student and staff experiences is a real

strength of the guide. It means that as we move forwards, we are flexible enough and research-informed enough to respond with excellence, no matter what is asked of us in these challenging times.

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Authentic Learning and its benefits for employability. Helen Holmes, Course Leader, BA Hons Creative Media, Learning & Teaching and Quality Coordinator; School of Arts



I have taught at Worcester since 2005 and have been driven by an in-depth knowledge of working in the creative industries, ensuring graduates have optimum employability capability (K1). I am passionate about authentic learning, facilitating appropriate methods of teaching for our subject (K2). Authentic learning ensures student activities align to real-world tasks of professionals in practice, with the support of a learning environment.

This vignette will outline innovative and inspiring teaching and learning in BA Creative Media, working to the University's Strategic Plan (2019) commitments to:

- Create possibilities
- Develop potential
- Increase community engagement.

The development of live briefs is a prime example of the University's golden triangle of professional education in action, which interweaves expert knowledge and practical learning (2019) (V4).

As an undergraduate, working on a live project was invaluable to me. Throughout my industry career I reflected upon this, and when moving into education, used this as a springboard to learn more about teaching authentic learning experiences, relevant to employability (V3).

In 2016 live briefs were optional and only four students opted to take the module. I observed that the module was not aiding students to reach their potential. Briefs were not of a high enough caliber for Level 6, not effectively fitting skill sets nor pushing boundaries (K1).

In 2017 I innovatively re-designed the module (A1), seeing the excellent potential for students' authentic learning and impact on employability, extending the learning environment beyond the classroom, out into the community, to inspire and engage students. In order to promote equality of opportunities, a range of client briefs were sourced to ensure inclusivity, with a range of levels achievable (V2). Attainment showed a clear improvement.

By 2019 clients were contacting me to ask to work with BA Creative Media, such as the NHS, the Police and Wayland's Yard. This allowed me to become selective in who we work with, thus raising the quality and profile of outputs.

West Mercia and Warwickshire Police approached me to help them to highlight women's roles through a multimedia campaign, aiming for a national reach. I adopted a method of Inclusive pedagogy, working with the students to create a supportive professional environment. I learned that as the students' confidence grew, I could relax the amount of support required. Client satisfaction was evident.

"We were thrilled when Helen Holmes, of Creative Media agreed to work with us. Helen completely understood the aim of our campaign and their talent, enthusiasm and professionalism was second to none".

Warwickshire Police (2019)

The final campaign was extremely well-received with the video alone being viewed over 12,000 times with international reach and has been discussed at UN conferences in London and Washington DC. Dame Cressida Dick personally thanked our client, DI Liz Warner, who was interviewed on Radio 4 Woman's Hour about the project.

"The skills and confidence I acquired from working with the Police have directly impacted my success in employment following my studies at Worcester and I have landed my dream role as a Production Assistant shortly after graduating."

First Class Honours student, 2020.

Student

Outputs:

<https://youtu.be/d7YHxShUJmI>

<https://youtu.be/FAIsIOdgBTM>

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The use of learning technologies to increase student engagement and confidence - pandemic or no pandemic. - Josie Kemeys, Lecturer in Law School of Humanities



This case study highlighted the impact of using learning technologies in legal education. The focus was on using such approaches to improve student engagement through increased confidence. I began developing my approaches prior to the pandemic but have been pleased by the transferability of many activities to the online classroom, with similar effects on student engagement. The case study demonstrates a commitment to the UKPSF and, in particular, two areas of activity (A1:A4) and two areas of core knowledge (K2:K4). The case study also demonstrated a commitment to all four professional values (V1, V2, V3 and V4).

I have used a range of learning technologies for consolidation and revision (such as Kahoot or Blackboard quizzes), in whole group activities with the aim of including less confident students and in reflective exercises post-assessment to ascertain students' own thoughts on their achievement. In these latter instances, the use of Padlet and Microsoft Forms increased the number of contributions compared to a request for verbal answers and the reflections offered by students were then used to inform future teaching delivery. This format has given students the space to think both critically and independently while not feeling as though they are 'on their own' when doing so. The Padlet, for example, was structured around a debate about law reform with columns asking: 'Arguments in favour', 'Arguments against' and 'Wider commentary'. This produced both individual opinion and links to academic literature which could then be saved and shared with the whole group. A genuinely collaborative and inclusive exercise whether online or face to face.

A further tool I have used extensively in online delivery is the interactive whiteboard. Over the last months, I have worked with students to encourage them to take ownership of the teaching space – seeking a collaborative style of teaching and learning. This has engaged the students with material and with each other, boosting a sense of belonging when learning apart. Equally, I have seen a transfer from tutor-led, confidence-giving teaching to student-led, confident learning where students have presented ideas in response to practice questions, using their whiteboard skills. The time spent training them and encouraging in using the space is clear to see when this happens.

The transferability of my approaches is important and justifies the investment of time and training in making them work and this is something I would emphasise to colleagues in the development of their own teaching approaches – it *is* worth it and some small, meaningful uses of technology can have significant benefits. I am now looking ahead and how such activities and technologies will help us move back into an increasingly face to face mode of delivery. For this, I think it will be important to work *alongside* students in this transfer and look for ways to use technology meaningfully in any kind of classroom in order to engage, inspire and develop confidence. I also hope to work more frequently with colleagues in cross-school collaboration – such as developing resources or pedagogic models in which technology is used successfully to improve student confidence and engagement.

Developing an inclusive course curriculum. - Joanne Smith, Lecturer and Course-leader for BA Special Educational Needs, Disability, and Inclusion (SENDI) degree; School of Education.



After receiving low course satisfaction scores, I sought to understand the student experience in order to inform future practice. (Seale, 2010) (K5). An informal group discussion involving Level 6 students unpicked their perceptions of the curriculum and its delivery (V1&2). I then undertook more formal research for my PGCLTHE in the form of focus group discussions with the level 5 students (V3), (University of Worcester Strategic Plan, 2019). Key themes emerged from both sets of discussions: student/teacher relationships, motivation/engagement, being listened to/valued, improving the student experience, community, and course design (Smith, Clifford, and Coppin, 2021). Through unpicking these themes, I identified two focus areas to develop with the teaching team: 'assessment and feedback' and 'module content'.

I started with an overview of the assessment diet across the course (A1&K2), highlighting issues that students and the external examiner had identified: narrow assignment types, lack of content, assessment alignment with intended learning outcomes (ILOs), excessive wordcount and weighting (V3). I made minor modifications to several modules to ensure 'constructive alignment' with the ILOs (Wang et al, 2013), broader and deeper use of assignment types and reasonable wordcounts and weighting (UW Assessment policy, 2019)(V4). I addressed the use of formative feedback, clear assignment support and a consistent approach in terms of assessment feedback in line with department policy (UW, 2019) (K6). We now use an online journal tool for students to upload formative tasks for peer and tutor feedback (A3), reducing tutor's e-mails and making the process visible to external bodies (K4&A4). We also use 'assignment guidance' videos (A3) across the course after a positive trial run.

I have implemented a consistent approach for all our modules within Blackboard (A4) and encourage staff to demonstrate inclusive practice and strategies within the module delivery (V1). In response to student/staff discussions on developing health and social care topics to improve content currency, I introduced a new module in mental health needs at L6. I have incorporated graduate attributes and employability skills in another module by introducing students to different professional roles relevant to SENDI (Daniels and Brooker, 2014) (A2). A recruitment agency supports students with interviewing skills and encourages them to reflect on knowledge and skills learnt during their time at UW, applied to the workplace (A1/K3).

I have led a University 'Share and Inspire' session demonstrating flexible assessment and supported department staff (through an online development session) with a consistent approach to accessible learning materials (V3&4). This was pertinent as our online teaching delivery increased during the pandemic.

Since enhancing the curriculum content and delivery the percentage of students who are satisfied with the course has risen from 29% (2018), to 90% in 2020 (A1). The variety of graduate outcomes has increased, with a rise in students continuing with postgraduate study/ entering full time employment on completing their degree (A2). Retention and recruitment figures have increased from 26 students (2018) to 57 in 2020 (A2).

As I lead the course into revalidation, I will continue to revise content and processes in relation to student feedback and the broader social context of our subject.

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