**Supporting Student Success:**

**Fulfilling the potential of Online and Distance**

**Education**

**Friday, January 22nd 2022, 10:00-13:15 GMT**

**Online**

**Session 1: 10:15-11:30**

**Strand A: From Students to Professionals**

**Liz Wilkinson and Laura Brammar, University of London Careers Service**

*Career Stage Framework: Supporting students where they are in their employability journey*

Whilst many HE careers and employability services are geared towards students with limited amounts of work experience, in reality, many distance learning students already have extensive workplace experience when they start their degree.

The 45,000 distance and flexible learning students of the University of London are not only based globally in 180 different countries, but also represent a diverse range of workplace experience. Indeed many are choosing their mode of study to facilitate their continued career development.

Extensive work with this cohort has led the development of the Career Stage Framework, which segments the students into three distinct groups each at different stages of career journey:

* Career Starters – limited work experience, using their studies to launch their career
* Career Developers – extensive work experience, using their studies to enhance their career
* Career Changers – substantial work experience, using their studies to pivot their career

This presentation will outline how we have used this Career Stage Framework to design, deliver and evaluate careers and employability support to each of the three groups, in addition to providing opportunities for the different career stage groups to learn from and support one another.

**Laura Brammar** and **Liz Wilkinson** are award-winning Senior Careers Consultants who work in the University of London Careers Service to design, develop and deliver a range of live and asynchronous careers development support to undergraduates and postgraduates within the UoL Distance and Flexible Learning programmes. In 2020 they won the University of London Roger Mills Prize for Innovation and Learning for this work. Laura and Liz bring deep expertise to careers delivery in the ODeL environment.

In 2014, **Laura** was an instructor of the world’s first careers and employability MOOC, Enhance Your Career and Employability Skills, which went on to win the 2015 AGCAS Excellence Award for use of Technology. Laura’s work has been published in a range of professional and academic journals, including the *Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling* and *Australian Journal of Career Development*.

**Liz** is a former Director of Careers and Employability at Royal Holloway (2003-2018), where she led a multidisciplinary team of 18 staff to empower 10,000 students to launch themselves into graduate and professional careers. Her professional work has been recognised by an AGR national award for Best Preparation for Work in Higher Education for her innovative micro-placement model in 2015 and two University Teaching Prizes for delivery of employability in the curriculum in 2012 and 2015.

**Luke Woodham, St George’s, University of London**

*From students to professionals: the opportunities and challenges of delivering ODeL in medicine and healthcare education*

Medicine and healthcare education has a long and well documented track record of both developing and utilising creative pedagogical approaches to deliver effective and engaging learning. Approaches such as Problem-Based Learning and the OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) are examples of innovations that have become well-established and widely adopted in mainstream medicine and healthcare education. The same applies to the use of technology within the field, with approaches such as high-fidelity simulation and low fidelity virtual patients being familiar to educators, and student-led initiatives in incorporating technology into their own learning being praised and encouraged.

The delivery of online and distance e-learning (ODeL) within the fields of medicine and healthcare education brings both sizeable opportunity and unique challenges. The pace of change in the field and the need for lifelong learning and continuous professional development makes ODeL an incredibly important tool for providing high quality learning to trainees and professionals, with the Topol review of 2019 identifying a need for upskilling the workforce to meet the needs of the ‘digital future’. However, the central importance of developing practical physical skills, patient relationships and the need for learning to take place on clinical sites around professional commitments poses questions for educators as to how they can deliver these in an online setting.

This presentation will use the work being done at St George’s, University of London to illustrate our approaches to this area, how we are broadening our definition of a learner in medicine and healthcare, and what we hope to achieve in future using ODeL to support our medicine and healthcare workforce.

**Luke Woodham** is Head of the eLearning Unit in the Centre for Technology in Education at St George’s, University of London, supporting the delivery of blended and distance education in the health professions. His work includes collaborative projects around virtual patients and data standards in education.

Luke is a CDE Fellow.

**Strand B: Designing Assessment**

**Stylianos Hatzipanagos and Alan Tait, Centre for Distance Education**

*Designing plagiarism out of assessment*

The pandemic-related shift to online assessment has generated changes in institutional assessment strategies and debates on academic integrity. The issue of academic integrity has been an important concern for higher education providers both in 2020 and 2021. There seem to be two dominant threads in such debates: one provides technological and practical safeguards to protect academic integrity; the other one involves promoting creative design of authentic assessment and complementary guidelines to students about institutional expectations concerning academic offences. In this presentation, our focus is academic integrity in distance learning environments, and we report on the outcomes of a project that evaluated the pivot to online assessment by exploring the key themes of student and staff perceptions and related pedagogical issues. We propose a set of measures that can enhance students’ perception of academic integrity and institutional approaches to mitigate against academic offences. Finally, we highlight the need to redesign assessment to address pedagogical as well as academic integrity issues and how professional development in assessment design can promote good academic practice.

**Stylianos Hatzipanagos** is Executive Co-lead for Research and Dissemination for the CDE. His expertise is in technology enhanced learning, research informed innovation of academic practice, and doctoral/postgraduate education management. He has been the recipient of four CDE Teaching and Research awards and has been a member of the University of London Learning, Teaching, Assessment Strategy committee.

**Alan Tait** is Emeritus Professor of Distance Education and Development at the Open University UK. From 2013-2015 Alan was Director of International Development and Teacher Education, and before that was Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) at the Open University UK 2007-2012, and from 2004-2007 Dean of the Faculty of Education and Language Studies. He is Executive Co-lead for Research and Dissemination at the CDE with Stylianos.

Alan and Stylianos are CDE Fellows.

**Leonard Houx, Bayes Business School, London**

*Test Drive: how automated questions can upgrade your module*

University staff often regard quizzes as childish and reductive. Yetresearch and experience have shown quizzes to be one of the best tools wehave for enhancing learning and engagement. This presentation makes the case for formative test questions and explains some basic ways to ensureour questions and feedback are well written. It first reviews the researchon the positive effects of quizzing and the psychological mechanisms behind it. Next and finally, it shows you how to write effective quiz questions,showing research findings, practical methods and the work we have done inBayes Business School’s distance learning courses.

**Leonard Houx** (SFHEA) is Senior Instructional Designer at Bayes Business School (City University). Leonard has been working in digital education for over 12 years and has written and presented on best practices extensively. Working with Google’s “squared” marketing course, his work won Silver for Best Distance Learning. He is also a former director at the eLearning Network. Currently he is in the final stages of designing an online MBA for Bayes.

Leonard is a CDE Fellow.

**Session 2: 11:45-13:15**

**Strand C: Responding to Learners’ Needs**

**Samantha Ahern, UCL**

*Keeping the dream alive: The case for Critical Digital Pedagogy*

Technologies are not apolitical. They are shaped by and shape our society. This is particularly the case when it comes to those deployed in teaching and learning environments. In this session we will discuss what we mean by Critical Digital Pedagogy and why it is an important tool in fulfilling the potential of digital and distance education and keeping our dreams alive.

**Samantha Ahern** is a Faculty LT Lead (Bartlett) at University College London. She is an educationalist and technologist, with experiences in both the secondary and higher education sectors, who best describes herself as an EdTech Womble. Professional and research interests include Critical Digital Pedagogy, Learning Analytics, ethics and the student experience. Samantha is a Fellow of the HEA.

Samantha is a CDE Fellow.

**Matthew Phillpott, Clare Sansom and Tiffany Tupper, Centre for Distance Education**

*An interactive study guide on postgraduate dissertation research and writing*

The dissertation, as a final project, is often the largest and most complicated assessment that a postgraduate student will undertake whilst in education. Yet, adequate support for students working on dissertations is often patchy. In response a CDE funded project sought to understand existing provision in the University of London Worldwide and develop a series of short online tutorials, PDF guidebooks, and suggestions for tutors, which could be made available as OCRs and be used by other institutions as additional support and training. In this talk we shall look at how the project developed and examine the modules themselves.

**Matthew Phillpott** is a writer, educator, and historian with expertise in online, face-to-face, and hybrid training solutions and digital teaching practices. He worked for the School of Advanced Study (SAS), University of London for over a decade and is now pursuing a freelance career.

**Clare Sansom** combines teaching postgraduate biomedical science, with a particular emphasis on distance education, with freelance science writing and editing. She regularly blogs conferences and other events for the CDE.

**Tiffany Tupper** is a communications manager working in international development with a background in foreign policy. She graduated from SOAS' M.Sc. program in Climate Change and Development in 2021 where her dissertation assessed climate change's impact on the Lebanon's ongoing food security crisis.

Matthew and Clare are CDE Fellows and Tiffany is a CDE Student Fellow.

**Strand D: Student Experiences Online**

**Jane Secker and Thomas Handley, City, University of London**

*Exploring the student experience of asynchronous individual and collaborative online learning in* *International Politics undergraduate and post-graduate programmes*

Jane and Thomas will report on a recent CDE funded project to explore student experiences of online learning in the Department of International Politics at City, University of London. They will share insights from the survey and focus groups which were conducted in spring 2021 with both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Students reported on the asynchronous individual and group activities they were asked to complete as well as their use of a range of online resources including recorded lectures.

**Jane Secker** is Senior Lecturer in Educational Technology at City, University of London where she leads the digital education modules. She is Deputy Programme Manager of the MA in Academic Practice. Her research interests include copyright and online learning, information and digital literacies and open educational practices.

**Thomas Hanley** is an Educational Technologist at City, University of London working across the School of Health Sciences and the School of Arts and Social Sciences. His interests include learning design, instructional design and learner experience design.

**Ellen Hauff and Hannah Dorothy Mary Shekhawat, Centre for Distance Education**

*Move to online assessment 2021: the distance learner student experience*

The coronavirus has had major consequences on all facets of life, and University life has been no exception. Distance learning students at the University of London have previously sat examinations in person. Social distancing measures, travel restrictions, and a general concern for health and safety meant that the University needed to reassess its examination settings. Students would, for the first time, sit online examinations.

It has been of the utmost importance and interest to gather and analyse student feedback on this experience. The CDE student fellows have taken on this work in 2020 and 2021. This presentation will focus on the work from 2021, drawing a comparison with the results of 2020.

Fourteen students, from seven different countries, were interviewed. They have diverse backgrounds with the pandemic affecting some more than others. The interviews covered topics including communication from UOL, problems surrounding the use of IT, the examination format, whether the students' performance was affected, and issues surrounding academic offenses.

These findings will be very useful in moving forward as the University of London continues to experience disruption from the pandemic, and in consideration to which examination formats are best moving forward - also, perhaps, during more normal times.

**Hannah Shekhawat** has a BA in Communication from Bournemouth University and is currently working on the final module of her MA Global Diplomacy via distance learning from SOAS. She has lived in South Asia for the last 10 years and has professional experience in education, publishing, and finance.

**Ellen Marie Hauff** is a University of London graduate, with a BSc (Hons) Sociology and an LLB (Hons). She also has a CertHE in Art History. She currently resides in Norway.

Ellen and Hannah are CDE Student Fellows.