Moodle wellbeing and the future of online learning

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Digital Competence Framework For Educators (DigCompEdu)

Area 3: Managing and orchestrating the use of digital tools in teaching and learning

- 3.1 Teaching, 3.2 Guidance, 3.3 Collaborative learning, 3.4 Self-regulated learning

Area 5: The use of digital tools to empower learners

- 5.1 Accessibility and inclusion, 5.2 Differentiation and personalisation, 5.3 Actively engaging learners

Digital wellbeing - So many definitions!

“The impact of technologies and digital services on people’s mental, physical and emotional health”

(JISC)

The enhancement and improvement of human well-being, in the intermediate and long term, through the use of digital media”

(Unesco)

The impact of digital technologies on health, relationships and society

(Uni of York at FutureLearn)
Discussions with Moodlers

Common themes and concerns from Ireland and UK
Worries about Teaching staff

Lecturers are having to *upskill quickly*, but with no time in between to *reflect*.

We know we *can’t* do everything, but we *must*, so how *can* we do everything?

No matter how prepared I am, I’m always having to *hit the ground running*, and that was *before* covid!

The bond between units is *stressed*.

Students (and staff) were *more forgiving* during the first lockdown. Not so much now!
Common themes

- Digital fatigue and exhaustion - ‘Zoom fatigue’
- Often accidentally increasing workload
- Feelings of inadequacy and that their content isn't good enough (it often is!)
- ‘Always on’ with no time to reflect and try new things
- Feeling isolated and that they’re not coping
- Concerns about ‘being human’ in front of students
- Irony of needing to use tech to promote Digital wellbeing!
Anecdotal student feedback

- **Overload**
  - Digital fatigue and exhaustion
  - Too many discussion activities across concurrent modules

- **Space**
  - Concerns about privacy of ‘home’
  - Sometimes having to share study spaces with siblings, parents, etc.

- **Community/cohort**
  - Finding it hard to make friends
  - Negative spiral from unfocussed discussions
  - Communicating with others feels like a bit of a chore
So how can we help?

Site level and course level ideas that may improve wellbeing online
Good Learning Design

Accessibility and Inclusion
Remove barriers to learning and participation

Universal Design for Learning
Offer choice and options to access and demonstrate learning

Active and Group Learning
Provide more engaging and immersive learning experiences
## Universal Design for Learning

The UDL Guidelines are a tool that can be used to design learning experiences that meet the needs of all learners. [https://udlguidelines.cast.org/](https://udlguidelines.cast.org/)

### Access
- **Recruiting Interest (7)**
  - Optimize individual choice and autonomy (7.1)
  - Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity (7.2)
  - Minimize threats and distractions (7.3)

### Build
- **Sustaining Effort & Persistence (8)**
  - Help learners to manage the challenge (8.1)
  - Foster collaboration and community (8.3)

### Internalize
- **Self Regulation (9)**
  - Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize learning (9.1)
  - Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies (9.2)
  - Develop self-assessment and reflection (9.3)

### Provide options for
- **Perception (1)**
  - Offer ways of customizing the display of information (1.1)
  - Offer alternatives for auditory information (1.2)
  - Offer alternatives for visual information (1.3)

- **Physical Action (4)**
  - Vary the methods for response and navigation (4.1)
  - Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies (4.2)

- **Language & Symbols (2)**
  - Clarify vocabulary and symbols (2.1)
  - Clarify syntax and structure (2.2)
  - Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols (2.3)
  - Promote understanding across languages (2.4)
  - Illustrate through multiple media (2.5)

- **Expression & Communication (5)**
  - Use multiple media for communication (5.1)
  - Use multiple tools for construction and composition (5.2)
  - Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance (5.3)

- **Comprehension (3)**
  - Activate or supply background knowledge (3.1)
  - Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships (3.2)
  - Guide information processing and visualization (3.3)
  - Maximize transfer and generalization (3.4)

- **Executive Functions (6)**
  - Guide appropriate goal-setting (6.1)
  - Support planning and strategy development (6.2)
  - Facilitate managing information and resources (6.3)
  - Enhance capacity for monitoring progress (6.4)
Provide multiple means of Engagement
Affective Networks
The "WHY" of learning

Provide multiple means of Representation
Recognition Networks
The "WHAT" of learning

Provide multiple means of Action & Expression
Strategic Networks
The "HOW" of learning

Provide options for Recruiting Interest (7)
- Optimize individual choice and autonomy (7.1)
- Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity (7.2)
- Minimize threats and distractions (7.3)

Provide options for Perception (1)
- Offer ways of customizing the display of information (1.1)
- Offer alternatives for auditory information (1.2)
- Offer alternatives for visual information (1.3)

Provide options for Physical Action (4)
- Vary the methods for response and navigation (4.1)
- Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies (4.2)

Provide options for Sustaining Effort & Persistence (8)
- Heighten salience of goals and objectives (8.1)
- Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge (8.2)
- Foster collaboration and community (8.3)
- Increase mastery-oriented feedback (8.4)

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Instructional design

- **Structure** your module page so stuff is easy to locate

- Just as we do with learning design, include links back to digital wellbeing where appropriate, e.g.:
  - 'For activity X we are going to use Padlet to pool our ideas together **SO THAT** we can learn from each other by giving everyone an opportunity to participate in their own time **IN ORDER TO** foster a sense of community which is beneficial for your wellbeing'

- **Chunk up content** so that there’s a good mix of sync/async activities

- Use **colleagues** to experiment new tools with,
  - Review instructions - do they make sense?
  - Go for a low risk activity first time round with your learners (eg an ice breaker)

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Assessment

- Allow **flexibility** in assessment submission (UDL)
  - ‘But not too much flexibility’
- Give students **choices/options** on what they want to go deeper into
- Make assessments **authentic/meaningful** to them
- Incorporate **peer** and **self assessment** opportunities
- Also, do all assessments need a **grade**? Wouldn’t levels and/or feedback be just as effective? See [https://www.jessestommel.com/ungrading-an-faq/](https://www.jessestommel.com/ungrading-an-faq/)
Sketch your thoughts

When responding to a task you can ask your students to respond by drawing/sketching/mindmapping their thoughts on paper.

These can then be scanned and uploaded to your course or held up to a webcam.

According to Laura Busche "Cognitive psychologists have been studying the impact of sketching on brain functioning for years, and with good reason: Putting ideas to paper is a powerful way to extend one’s memory."

Hand Sketches – Things You Didn’t Know Your Doodles Could Accomplish
Accessibility and Inclusion

“Inclusive learning and teaching recognises all student’s entitlement to a learning experience that respects diversity, enables participation, removes barriers and anticipates and considers a variety of learning needs and preferences.”

Framework for student access, retention, attainment and progression in higher education

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/download/framework-student-access-retention-attainment-and-progression-higher-education
Inclusive Online Classroom

● Don’t get lost in the Digital Forest
  ○ consider positive use of technology outside of your Moodle site

● Establish and support a class climate that fosters a sense of belonging to all students

● Select course content that recognises diversity and acknowledge barriers to inclusion

● Design all course elements for accessibility
  ○ ‘Assume’ that your students have different learning preferences online whether they disclose a learning need or not

● Consider all OS and don’t discriminate students who may not have fast WIFI
  ○ Provide offline content and alternatives to media
Moodle, help me create Accessible content...

- Brickfield Accessibility Toolkit
  - New for Moodle 3.11

https://www.brickfield.ie/
Additional Accessibility tools for Moodle

Userway.org

What is UserWay widget?

**UserWay** was created to make accessibility accessible for business owners of any size and to help make the web accessible for all, regardless of ability. ... The **UserWay plugin** seamlessly integrates you to our AI service, with no coding needed.
Active/Engaged learning

• Produce podcasts that cover key points that can be listened to whilst out on a walk

• Design activities that involve some offline reflection/writing/doodling

• Make group work task orientated - ‘Keep groups together longer’

• For live sessions (e.g.: Zoom/BigBlueButton meetings) open the room early to allow people to talk if they want to. Same for the end - can you stay on a little longer for discussion?

• Ask students to suggest songs that can be played during webinars.
Active and Group Learning

- Multi platform app
- Collaborate on human connected online learning
- Embed game links within Moodle
- [https://www.gamoteca.com/](https://www.gamoteca.com/)
- Case studies: [https://www.catalyst-eu.net/blog/gamoteca](https://www.catalyst-eu.net/blog/gamoteca)
Other tips

- Incorporate elements of nature in your VLE page
  - Technobiophilia: [https://suethomasnet.wordpress.com/](https://suethomasnet.wordpress.com/)

- Provide opportunities to share advice and ideas

- Sign post support and social activities
  - involve student union and staff associations?

- Weave wellbeing and mindfulness into the course
  - Use Random glossary block, Bootstrap elements and labels to drop reminders and ideas [https://getbootstrap.com/docs/4.5/components/alerts/](https://getbootstrap.com/docs/4.5/components/alerts/)

See example course: [https://moodle.catalystdemo.co.uk/course/view.php?id=115](https://moodle.catalystdemo.co.uk/course/view.php?id=115)
Welcome to the module

This unit covers many aspects of dance injury, including the most common types of injury and how these can be prevented, as well as the psychology of injury.

How to work through this module:
The course is split into weekly topics, sandwiched between a Course Overview topic and an Assessment topic. Please participate as much as you can and try to keep to the release dates. Majority of content requires you to complete the preceding activity.
Any questions, please post in the forums provided.
All the best!

Sam Taylor
Module Leader

This book goes through how we have weaved ‘Wellbeing’ into this demo course and gives you ideas of how to add your own.
Read/Watch/Hear more!

- Our previous webinars on this subject:
  - Catalyst Community Webinar
    (With Aurelie Soulier)
  - HAQEF Wellbeing Colloquium Session 3
  - Virtual Bridge

- Recommended podcast:
  - Conversations on online learning. Episode 9. Aurelie Soulier

- MoodleMunch Webinar series:
  - S2 Webinar 03 Gamification and Moodle
    (Dr Mark Glynn)
Thank you!!!
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