

Professional Portfolio 1

UNHE7007: Effective Teaching and Assessment in Higher Education

Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching for Higher Education (PGCert tHE)

Dr Fatma Layas

Student No: 2320958

Table of Contents

General Teaching Statement	3
Reflection on Feedback Received on the Micro-Teaching Session.....	5
Reflective Report on Teaching Intervention for User Experience Bootcamp.....	6
Introduction	6
Teaching Approach:	7
Conclusions:	11
Reflection on Three Teaching Observations	12
Teaching Observation (1): Reflective Evaluation on Dr Zhang's Feedback.....	12
Teaching Observation (2): Reflective Evaluation on Dr Ben Khaial's Feedback	12
Teaching Observation (3): Reflective Evaluation of the Teaching Practices of Dr. Yajie Zhang	13
Reflective Evaluation of CPD Events	15
CPD Event (1): Students' Mental Health and Wellbeing.....	15
CPD Event (2): The Use of Generative AI in Teaching and Research	16
CPD Event (3): Enhancing Student Engagement Through Vevox.....	17
References	19
Appendix A: Teaching Hours Log	22
Appendix B: Observation Forms	23
Appendix C: Micro-Teaching Session	34

General Teaching Statement

My role at University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) as an Assistive Technologies Innovation Centre (ATiC) Innovation Fellow is predominantly research-based, in the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). My research focuses on the inclusive design of technologies, assessing the usability, accessibility and User Experience (UX) of health products. I have experience in collecting, analysing, and synthesising research using a wide variety of research methods, to inform the architectural design process [K1]. I also supervise two distance PhD students, conducting all our supervisory meetings via Teams to discuss progress, challenges, and next steps [A2]. In addition, I collaborate with colleagues to deliver workshops with The Mullany Fund, to provide young people from Welsh minority communities with researcher working experiences [A4, V2, V4].

Furthermore, I am an Associate Lecturer at the University of the West of England (UWE), Bristol, since 2020. My academic responsibilities include:

1. Supervising and assessing undergraduate and MSc students' final year projects, guiding and advising them in their research projects. This involves discussing progress, suggesting ideas to address problems, and helping them manage their research projects.
2. Being the Module Leader of the MSc module Designing the User Experience (DUE) [K2]. This involves designing the content and its structure [A1], ensuring alignment with the overall curriculum and learning outcomes of the programme. I develop assessments that align with learning outcomes and are fair (e.g., the assessment goes through a review process to ensure that it is in the same level as the last three years. This is done with an internal and external reviewers). I evaluate students' assignments and exams, and provide constructive formative and summative feedback [A3]. I also manage administrative tasks related to the module.
3. Co-teaching the MSc Module Innovative Technology in Healthcare, working closely with colleagues to refine and adapt teaching materials to be aligned with the goals and objectives of this module [A1, A2].
4. Serving as the Course Leader for the User Experience Bootcamp for students with disabilities. My responsibilities mirror those of the DUE module, with a focus on creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment. Adaptations are made to teaching materials to accommodate diverse learning needs, ensuring equal opportunities for all students [A2, V1, V2]. For example, I ensure that electronic documents and online resources are compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies [K1, K2]. Alternative assessment methods are offered to cater to different abilities, and regular one-to-one meetings are held with students about their specific needs and progress [A2, V1]. Work closely with disability support specialists to support students throughout the course [A2, K2].

My academic responsibilities extend to providing pastoral care and support to all students, offering guidance on coursework, study skills, and career development [V1].

I am passionate about integrating research into teaching, emphasising a meaningful link between course material and current challenges within the discipline. Consequently, examples and case studies presented to students are primarily drawn from projects on which I have worked [K1]. This approach stimulates curiosity, connecting theoretical concepts to practical applications, and imparts insights and lessons I gained from these projects [V3]. The exam assessment component is also designed based on research projects, similar to those discussed in class. Linking research projects to curriculum content has been shown to significantly enhance student engagement and practical understanding of

complex concepts (Marley, Siani & Sims, 2022), mirroring my efforts to connect theoretical concepts with practical applications through examples and case studies from my projects.

In my teaching sessions, I incorporate various techniques, with a lectorial format being most effective for my modules. This format combines a formal lecture, used for delivering content, with an interactive seminar where students work on activities individually or in groups. Allowing me to address different learning styles which can enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning experiences [K3]. Adopting a lectorial format aligns with recent findings by Thalluri and Penman (2020), which suggest students appreciate the lectorial approach, finding it beneficial for enhancing their comprehension and engagement with the course material. This style of teaching facilitated connections, relevance, and opportunities for active participation in the learning process. Interactive activities such as group discussions, case studies, and hands-on design projects are used to engage students actively. Previous studies (Areepattamannil et al, [2011](#); Ferreira & Morais, [2020](#); Freedman, [1997](#); Hofstein & Lunetta, [2004](#); Millar & Abrahams, [2009](#); Tobin, [1990](#) as cited by Marley, Siani & Sims (2022)) have shown that these activities present a chance to cultivate conceptual understanding, technical abilities, and broad scientific knowledge. As students work together, I provide personalised feedback, highlighting strengths and suggesting areas for improvement [A3]. I provide students with past exam questions and offer constructive guidance on areas where they can improve to get higher mark in their exam. I also encourage students to seek feedback from me on their assessment project component, promoting creative thinking and deeper engagement with their projects.

To evaluate the effectiveness of my teaching style, I gather feedback from students through a survey a few weeks after the term begins. This enables them to share their opinions on teaching methods, the clarity of instruction, and overall course satisfaction [K5]. Research has shown that early feedback mechanisms significantly contribute to enhancing teaching methods and students' learning experience. This can also help establish a positive rapport between myself and students, fostering a supportive learning environment where students feel valued and heard (Mamoon-Al-Bashir, Kabir, Rahman, 2016).

Reflection on Feedback Received on the Micro-Teaching Session

This reflective evaluation maps the feedback received on my microteaching session¹ against the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education.

The observer Mrs. Rendón Guerrero highlighted several strengths in my teaching approach that align with the UKPSF. The feedback noted that the session objectives were presented clearly, and the content was logically structured. This demonstrates effective preparation and organisation of the learning materials [A1]. She commented positively on my clear and comfortable delivery [K1, A2], indicating effective communication and rapport-building with the students. The inclusion of a personal introduction also aligns with promoting participation and an inclusive learning environment [V2]. In addition, Mrs. Rendón Guerrero appreciated the inclusion of a list of further reading at the end of the slides, which shows employing evidence-informed approaches to teaching and learning [V3].

Mrs. Rendón Guerrero's suggestions for improvement focus on strengthening the link between the visual aids and the verbal explanations when introducing the UX term, as well as providing more explicit guidance on the final activity, as it was only verbally introduced rather than explicitly shown on a slide [K2]. These are valuable comments, as combining words and pictures can significantly enhance understanding (Mayer, 2009) and displaying the activity on a slide while explaining it aloud helps students process the information through both auditory and visual channels, enhancing comprehension (Paivio, 1979; Clark & Paivio, 1991) [A4].

Overall, the feedback is very positive and constructive, highlighting my strengths in areas such as lesson planning, delivery, and fostering an engaging learning environment. The suggestions for refinement will help me further develop my teaching practice in alignment with the UKPSF, as I progress in my academic career.

¹ The session's slides and the feedback received can be found in Appendix C

Reflective Report on Teaching Intervention for User Experience Bootcamp

Introduction

In my role as course leader for the User Experience (UX) Bootcamp course at UWE, Bristol, I had responsibility for curriculum design, teaching, assessment, and creating an inclusive learning environment for students with disabilities. This aligns with the dimensions outlined in the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF). In this reflective report, I will critically evaluate my teaching intervention within the UX Bootcamp using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988), a structured model that promotes in-depth reflection and continuous personal development. The cycle consists of six stages: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, and Action Plan. This framework has helped me to systematically reflect on my experience, explore thoughts, emotions, and actions, and to consider how these insights can influence my future teaching practices.

The UX Bootcamp is a new intensive 16-week course offered as a free course for students with disabilities from different disciplines with a keen interest in the field of UX. The course focused on understanding and improving the UX of digital applications and products through considering usability, information architecture, and interaction design. The content of the course was underpinned by research and practise in the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). HCI draws on many disciplines such as psychology, sociology, computer science, and graphic design, to enable a holistic analysis of the interaction from different perspectives. The learning outcomes of the course focused on applying UX research methods and design thinking to create prototypes through an iterative user design process. The motivations behind creating this UX Bootcamp are twofold:

Firstly, there is a recognised need to improve the representation and inclusion of people with disabilities in the tech industry. Matthew Bellringer, Chair of the BCS' Neurodiversity Specialist Group, said: "We have a severe skills gap in tech, which is a massive societal cost. Helping disabled people to utilise their expertise by providing the support they need is essential to boosting the talent pipeline in tech and other sectors" (BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, 2024). Disabled individuals often have unique insights and perspectives that can greatly enhance the user-centred design process, yet they remain underrepresented in these fields (Treviranus, 2018). The UX Bootcamp aimed to empower students with disabilities with the practical skills and knowledge to pursue careers in UX design, thereby increasing diversity and inclusion in this growing industry.

Secondly, the course content is grounded in the principles of HCI and accessibility, with a strong emphasis on designing digital products and experiences that are usable and meaningful for all users, including those with disabilities (Shneiderman et al., 2017; Croghan, 2022; Henry, 2023). By equipping students with UX research methods, design thinking, and prototyping skills, the Bootcamp prepares them to create technology that is truly inclusive and responsive to the needs of diverse user populations. This aligns with the core values of universal design and the recognition that accessible, user-friendly design benefits everyone (Persson, et al., 2015; Burgstahler, 2015; Burgstahler, 2009).

I designed the entire UX Bootcamp content, including the pre-session tasks, in-session exercises, readings list, additional learning resources, assessments, and the assessments criteria. I was the primary lecturer for the intensive 15-week delivery (one career week was delivered by the University career team), assessing assignments and providing feedback. In addition, I liaised with external speakers and mentors. Adjustments were made throughout the course to create an inclusive environment and to enable participation of students with disabilities.

Teaching Approach

My approach was to use active learning strategies over traditional lectures, with hands-on activities, collaborative group projects, and individual assignments. The delivery of the course content involved lecturing, facilitating discussions/activities and providing one-to-one support. The decision to adopt active learning strategies over conventional lectures was informed by the pedagogical insights presented by Davis and Arend (2013), emphasising the significance of fostering engaging and effective learning environments through diverse teaching methodologies [A1, K2]. Regular one-to-one scheduled meetings with students provided opportunities to discuss additional needs and progress [A4, K3]. Bryan and Cynthia (2019) argue that inclusivity is not just about active learning strategies but involves integrating students' voices into the learning process and making pedagogical decisions that reflect and respect the diversity of student backgrounds [V1, V2]. This approach supports students in developing a strong science identity alongside mastering content. I collaborated with disability advisors throughout the course to offer pastoral support and to discuss any accommodations needed to support students' participation [A2, V1]. Only two students (both were international students, English was not their first language) weren't registered as disabled, so to maintain fairness those students were offered the same adaptations to any student who required them (i.e. not only to those with a registered disability). This inclusive pedagogy aimed to remove potential barriers and enable all students to engage equally with the learning process (Florian & Linklater, 2010; Biggs & Tang, 2011) [A2, V2].

Designing and delivering this course for the first time was a valuable learning experience, both for myself and for the University. Prior to this course, we had not designed nor delivered a course specifically tailored for students with disabilities. Therefore, my aim with the University support was to maintain flexibility and responsiveness to students' needs throughout the duration of the course. This flexibility and the student-centred approach applied helped with removing unnecessary barriers for the students [A3, V2]. Biggs & Tang's (2011) constructivist approach to teaching for quality learning at university was instrumental in shaping the course's educational philosophy, emphasising the importance of active learning and student-centred teaching strategies [A1, K3]. This approach emphasises the need for learners to construct their understanding through engaging activities and reflections, rather than passive absorption of information [K2, V3].

As I was designing the course and preparing the teaching materials, I kept reminding myself of Reece and Walker's (2007, p33) advice on the importance of making the learning experience for my students "as easy and as enjoyable as possible". Their approach emphasises the significance of creating a learning environment that not only facilitates the comprehension of content but also makes the process engaging and pleasant for students [A1, K3, V1]. This aligned with our vision for this course, which was to prioritise student-centred learning environments, where the focus extends beyond mere content delivery to creating a holistic and positive educational experience [A4, V1, V3].

Recognising the diversity of learning styles and preferences among students in this course (Florian & Linklater, 2010), such as visual, auditory, reading/writing or kinesthetic methods (Fleming and Baume, 2006), a variety of teaching strategies were incorporated into the course design [A1, K2, V1]. This, as previously mentioned, included a blend of lectures, hands-on workshops, collaborative group projects, and individual assignments. In addition, the inclusion of flipped classroom models (Ozdamli and Asiksoy, 2016; Bergmann & Sams, 2012), allowed students to engage with lecture material at their own pace before applying concepts in a supportive, interactive classroom environment [A2, K3]. This strategy was aimed at maximising face-to-face time for deeper exploration of UX design principles and practices [A4, V2].

Prior to the commencement of the course, students were required to request any necessary adaptations to access the teaching materials. Consequently, all adjustments to the teaching materials were made in advance to accommodate diverse learning needs, thus ensuring equal opportunities for all students [A2, V1, V2]. For example, I ensured electronic materials were screen reader compatible, non-decorative images had alternative descriptions and videos had captions [A1, K1]. As the inclusive pedagogy followed require incorporating principles of universal design for learning (UDL), which involves designing teaching materials that is accessible to all students from the outset (Florian & Linklater, 2010). A sample of the teaching materials was then reviewed by the disability advisory team.

When the course started, I aimed to create an accessible learning environment by releasing lecture slides in advance (usually one week in advance) of scheduled sessions, allowing students enough time to review and prepare. In addition, all the teaching sessions were recorded and shared with the students immediately at the end of each session [A1, A2, K2]. These considerations were made based on Seale's (2013) recommendations for promoting accessibility and preparedness through strategic e-learning practices in higher education [V1, V2, K4]. However, to create a more dynamic and interactive learning experience for all students, I made the decision to not record the Q&A slot and students' interactivity in class activities and discussions. The aim was to create a safe space where students can feel less self-conscious and more focused on actively participating in class activities and discussions [V1, V2]. On student perspectives on safe learning environments, Holly and Steiner's (2005, p61) research findings suggested that "the vast majority of students consider the creation of a safe space to be very or extremely important and that the majority of students perceive that they learn more in such a classroom" [V1, V2]. The emphasis on safe spaces is crucial as it supports the foundational aspects of creating supportive educational environments that enhance student learning and well-being [A4]. This decision was also informed by my observations during the COVID-19 lockdown when all lectures transitioned online, as well as discussions with colleagues who shared similar insights. Throughout the course, and without the pressure of being recorded, I believe the students felt more comfortable and at ease expressing themselves openly during class discussions. Nonetheless, it's important to acknowledge that accommodating all students' preferences can be challenging. As some students who were unable to attend sessions have expressed a desire for recording in class activities and discussions [A4, K3].

In the introductory session, I provided a comprehensive overview of the course, covering its objectives, structure, and learning outcomes [A1]. In addition, I introduced essential details such as the course schedule, format, assessment methods, and criteria, along with the use of the Blackboard platform to access course materials [A1, K2]. We also addressed housekeeping matters, including University attendance policies and expectations for student participation. To foster a sense of community, we engaged in an icebreaker activity, allowing students to introduce themselves to one another [V1, V2]. Overall, the atmosphere was vibrant, with students showing enthusiasm and eagerness to start their journey. One thing I noted in the session was a number of students did not have access to the Blackboard platform, and for some, this persisted for a couple of weeks. As a result, I had to individually email any announcements, teaching materials and additional resources to these students to ensure they were not disadvantaged [A4, V2]. Moving forward, it is important to take proactive steps to address this issue. Therefore, in any future courses, it will be essential to liaise with the IT department and students' admission team ahead of time to facilitate a smooth registration process and ensure all students can activate their student accounts without delay [A1, A4]. By doing so, we can mitigate disruptions to learning and ensure all students have equal access to course materials and resources from the outset [V1, V2].

However, as the sessions progressed, inquiries regarding the final assessment began to emerge through emails and during the one-to-one meetings. It became evident to me that several students were concerned about presenting their work in front of their peers and a panel of lecturers and mentors at the end of the course. Initially, I tried to reassure the students, asking them not to be too concerned about their final presentation. I assured them their confidence in their abilities would increase as we advanced through the course, and they would be offered opportunities within the sessions to practise presenting their work to stakeholders and partners, as this was an integral component of the course content [A1, K2]. In response to the growing concerns of students, with some of them declaring they have social anxiety, and after discussing the situation with the disability advisory team, a decision was made to change the final assessment format from a presentation in front of peers and lecturers to a one-to-one presentation (between me and a student) [A4, V1]. This adaptation aimed at fostering an inclusive learning environment by reducing students' anxiety levels, enabling them to present their work in a setting where they felt more comfortable and focused [V4]. It also enhanced the opportunity for me to offer personalised feedback on the content presented [A3, K3]. This adjustment echoes the assessment strategies discussed by Biggs & Tang (2011), who emphasise the importance of aligning assessment methods with learning outcomes and student needs [V3, K5]. The students were comfortable asking questions and seeking clarification in the one-to-one setting. However, this change also has its potential drawbacks, such as missing out on the opportunity to learn from their peers' presentations, where students benefit from witnessing diverse perspectives and approaches (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 2001; Topping, 2005) [K3, V3]. In addition, it limits students' exposure to public speaking, a critical skill they need in real-world career roles [V2]. It also limits the opportunity to receive feedback from other lecturers and mentors, which can be valuable in understanding the impact of their presentation skills (Hattie & Timperley, 2007) [V2, V3].

Throughout the course, regular one-to-one weekly meetings were scheduled with students to discuss their progress and any concerns or challenges they were facing. This alongside with my observation of the students' performance in the class allowed me to provide students with tailored support [A2, V1]. For example, I noticed that one student who was on the autism spectrum struggled with group activities; the one-to-one meetings revealed that she found it difficult to concentrate and contribute effectively to group discussions or tasks. Another student who had a learning disability found it challenging to process information quickly or stay focused during the class activities. This impacted his ability to contribute to group work and to complete tasks within an allocated time during sessions. Different students performed well with different types of activities. Therefore, I decided to employ different strategies to determine what would work best for each student. For example, for those who struggled with group activities, I began by asking them to assign specific roles within their groups that leveraged each student's strengths, such as researching, taking written notes, sketching a design, or verbally communicating the group's key discussion points (Tomlinson, 2001; Heacox, 2012) [A4, V2]. No notable changes were observed in students' performance after applying this strategy. Another strategy I employed was, instead of randomly assigning students to groups, I encouraged them to decide whom they wished to work with. With this strategy, I encouraged them to consider the different sets of skills each member of the group would bring to the team. While students performed much better with this strategy, I noticed that, instead of focusing on the different sets of skills each member might be able to bring to the team, students ended up working with peers whom they perceived as academically strong, resulting in groups with uneven distributions of abilities (Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Cohen, 1994) [K3, V3]. Another limitation I noted was that students may have missed out on valuable learning opportunities that arise from collaborating with a diverse range of peers when they consistently work with the same group members. This can limit their ability to develop essential teamwork and communication skills needed for real-world scenarios [V2]. Interestingly, I

noticed that students performed better when working in smaller groups (pairs) rather than groups of four [K3].

Providing timely and constructive feedback was a priority throughout the course. During in-class activities, I gave verbal feedback to reinforce positive learning and correct misunderstandings (Bergmann & Sams, 2012), and this was done individually or in small groups [A3, V2]. Detailed feedback was provided on assignment drafts highlighting areas for improvement. This approach aimed not only to assess students' performance but also to facilitate continuous learning [A3, K3]. The assessment criteria were shared with the assessment itself to support students in meeting expectations [A3, K5, V3].

Reflecting on my experiences across various courses, I've noted a distinctive aspect of the UX Bootcamp course related to peer feedback opportunities compared to other courses I've taught. Traditionally, I have valued and incorporated structured peer feedback processes, where students first work within their groups to refine their projects or ideas. Following this internal review, they engage in cross-group discussions, sharing insights and receiving feedback from their peers. This collaborative process culminates in a comprehensive class discussion, synthesising the feedback and insights gathered during the smaller group interactions (Johnson & Johnson, 2009). This approach not only enriches the learning experience but also fosters a sense of community and collaborative learning among students (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 2002) [A3, A4, V1, V2].

However, the UX Bootcamp presented unique challenges that affected the implementation of this peer feedback model I tend to apply. One primary factor was the relatively small size of the class, which limited the diversity of perspectives that could be shared among groups. Moreover, the diverse needs of the students within the course added another layer of complexity to facilitating group feedback sessions. In such a setting, traditional models of peer feedback needed adaptation to ensure that all students could participate fully and benefit from the process (Johnson & Johnson, 2009) [A4, V1, V2]. In response to these challenges, in future iterations of the UX Bootcamp and similar courses I will explore alternative methods to incorporate peer feedback effectively, even within small or diverse groups. One potential strategy I could implement involves utilising digital platforms that allow for anonymous peer reviews, enabling students to give and receive feedback in a manner that is both inclusive and conducive to honest, constructive critiques [A2, A3, K4, V2].

To ensure continuous improvement and responsiveness to student feedback, two sets of online anonymised questionnaires were distributed. The aim of the first questionnaire was to collect feedback on the course content, delivery approach, and clarity regarding the assessment process and format. This questionnaire was distributed a few weeks after the course commenced, aimed at identifying any challenges students might be facing that they were not comfortable sharing in the one-to-one meetings [A5, V3]. The second questionnaire was conducted at the end of the course, aimed at collecting feedback for future improvements [K5, V3]. The goal was for me to reflect on my teaching experience by carefully examining what happened, why it happened, and how it can inform future teaching practices. This reflective cycle allowed for the integration of new insights and feedback into the course design, ensuring that teaching strategies remained aligned with student needs and industry standards [A5, K5, V3]. This approach aligns with the reflective practices advocated by many researchers (e.g. Reece & Walker, 2007; Philpott, 2015; Ashwin & colleagues, 2020), emphasising the importance of reflective teaching as a mechanism for pedagogical refinement [V3, K5].

In addition to students' feedback, using inclusive pedagogy to enhance teaching and learning for all students requires ongoing professional development for me to stay updated on best practices in inclusive education and improve my teaching skills (Florian & Linklater, 2010) [V3, K5, A5].

Through these reflective practices and adjustments, the course not only addressed immediate student concerns but also laid the groundwork for an iterative, student-centred teaching philosophy. This philosophy underlines the importance of adaptability and responsiveness in higher education, ensuring that our teaching strategies remain aligned with the evolving needs of our students and the pedagogical standards outlined in the UKPSF [A5, V1, V2].

Conclusions

In conclusion, coordinating the UX Bootcamp course provided an enriching opportunity to apply and develop my teaching practice with students with disabilities. This journey evoked a mix of anticipation and responsibility. The challenge of meeting diverse needs while ensuring educational integrity was daunting. However, witnessing the engagement and progress of students fuelled my commitment to this inclusive educational model [A4, V1, V2]. The adaptation to student needs reflects an understanding of the UKPSF, emphasising inclusivity [V1, V2] and responsiveness to feedback [A5, V3]. However, it also highlights the balance required between accommodating individual needs and ensuring all students develop key skills, such as public speaking [V2] and teamwork [K3]. The feedback collection and response process are clear examples of my reflective practice, but I must acknowledge that there's still a need to consider how changes impact the broad learning objectives.

Based on students' feedback, it is evident that the course effectively fostered an inclusive and responsive learning environment. Moving forward, here are some points I would consider for future iterations of the course:

- Exploring hybrid assessment formats that can accommodate individual needs while still offering opportunities for public speaking and peer feedback [A3, V2].
- Developing strategies for more diverse and balanced group work, possibly through structured roles or peer-assessment components [K3, V2].
- Enhancing the pre-course setup to ensure all students have access to necessary platforms and materials [A1, V1].
- Continuing to collect and respond to feedback while also setting clear expectations about the learning objectives and the importance of developing a broad range of skills [A5, K5, V3].

While rewarding, this journey also highlighted areas requiring further learning and experience as I progress in my academic career.

Reflection on Three Teaching Observations

Teaching Observation (1): Reflective Evaluation on Dr Zhang's Feedback

Reflecting on Dr Zhang's feedback on my teaching approach, I believe the assessment was generally positive and highlighted several strengths in my approach. Dr Zhang noted I had prepared the content well, demonstrating a strong grasp of the subject matter [A1, K1, V3]. She found the lecture to be logically structured, with a good balance of theoretical content and engaging activities [A1, K2]. The use of multimedia examples and visuals was praised for enhancing the efficiency of conveying information and maintaining student engagement [A2, K4]. She also observed that my teaching delivery was well-paced, clear, and respectful towards the students [V1]. In addition, Dr Zhang noted my effective encouragement of student participation and my provision of formative feedback during the activities [A4, V2].

A few areas for potential improvement were also identified. Dr Zhang commented one of my questions during the activities could have been phrased more clearly [A3]. This comment may have arisen as I referred to a specific software used for editing photos and videos. Considering my students come from diverse backgrounds and might not be familiar with this software, I find her comment to be valuable. In the future, when mentioning a tool or software, I should briefly describe its purpose, to ensure all students understand the question and can fully engage with it (Sanger, 2020) [A2, A3]. Dr Zhang also suggested when presenting a series of images, it may be more effective to reveal them one at a time rather than all at once. This is another valuable point I will address in future sessions, to better focus the students' attention (Kirschner, 2002) [A4].

Overall, the feedback was very positive and highlighted my strengths in areas such as content knowledge, lesson planning, teaching methods, and student engagement. The constructive suggestions for minor improvements are also valuable. This observation will be a useful addition to my teaching portfolio as I continue to develop my pedagogical skills, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to professional development [A5].

Teaching Observation (2): Reflective Evaluation on Dr Ben-Khaial's Feedback

The feedback received from Dr Ben-Khaial provides comprehensive insights into my teaching approach, highlighting several strengths and identifying areas for potential improvement. Below, I detail these points, link them to the UKPSF, and propose actionable steps for improvement.

Dr Ben-Khaial commended the well-prepared and thoroughly structured materials, which effectively covered the lecture topics [A1, A2]. He praised my integration of real-life examples, which enhanced the relevance and understanding of the material, reflecting deep subject knowledge [A1, A4, K3]. His feedback noted my consistently positive, engaging, and respectful interactions with students [V1, V2]. Dr Ben-Khaial also commented on my clear voice and regular checks for understanding [A2, A4]. My relaxed and confident style, along with my ability to engage students through critical questioning, were noted for fostering critical thinking and maintaining a cheerful and inclusive online environment [V1, V2, K2]. He praised the variety of delivery methods used to accommodate different learning styles [A1, A2, K2, V1]. He also appreciated the clever timing of some activities with break times to

accommodate students at different paces [K2, V1, A3]. Making the session's recordings available and emphasising key learning points, shows a commitment to accessibility and ongoing support [A4, V2].

The incorporation of activities with immediate feedback in breakout rooms and via chat for less vocal students was also observed [A3, K3]. Dr Ben-Khaial noted that further efforts could be made to actively engage some students during activities [A4, V1]. Reflecting on his comment, I realised the importance of engagement techniques suitable for an online environment. I have explored innovative techniques like 'Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce' - a questioning strategy to elicit deep thinking (Wiliam, 2009) [V3]. This method, involves posing a question, allowing time for thought, selecting a student for an initial response, and then passing that response to another student for further exploration [K3]. Despite the potential benefits, I have consistently refrained from directing specific questions to less engaged students. My concern has been to avoid making these students feel uncomfortable or singled out, which could counteract the inclusive atmosphere I strive to maintain. Moving forward, I can explicitly explain this questioning technique to my students. Clarify the purpose behind each step and how it will benefit their learning. When selecting a student, I could use random selection tools to ensure impartiality or choose someone I feel is ready to answer but has not been very active lately. At the end of the session, I collect feedback from the students about their experience and use it to refine the approach for next time [K5, K6].

Another technique I am exploring is the use of anonymous polling platforms. The anonymity provided by these platforms can encourage more open and honest responses, potentially increasing participation from students who may be reluctant to speak up in more visible settings. More details on the application of such platforms and their impact on engagement are included in the CPD event reflection report (See Page 17). [A4, A5].

He also suggested introducing questions before new concepts to help students better connect with the material and actively engage with the content. This is another valuable point that I will address in future sessions by asking questions which allows students to use previous knowledge to create new understanding (Sherrington, 2017) [A2, A4].

Overall, my teaching practice is well-regarded with a strong foundation in effective educational practices. By addressing the areas for improvement noted by Dr Ben-Khaial, I can further enhance my teaching effectiveness, promoting deeper engagement and supporting diverse learner needs more comprehensively.

Teaching Observation (3): Reflective Evaluation of the Teaching Practices of Dr. Yajie Zhang

I recently had the opportunity to observe an online lecture delivered by Dr Yajie Zhang on "Cognition and Human Factors". This observation, conducted via Microsoft Teams and lasted one hour, was aimed at mapping Dr Zhang's teaching practices against the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for teaching and supporting learning in higher education.

Dr Zhang demonstrated excellent preparation and organization in the design and planning of learning activities [A1]. She utilised diverse media, including videos, images, and graphs, to explain complex concepts, significantly enhancing the learning experience and ensuring the material was accessible and engaging for all students. Her introduction was clear, and she effectively connected her content with previous knowledge [A2]. Her presentation was clear, and she managed the pace effectively, it

was neither rushed nor too slow. Her interactions were respectful and encouraging, creating a positive atmosphere that promoted active engagement and learning. Throughout the session, Dr Zhang demonstrated respect for learners, promoted active participation, and employed evidence-informed teaching approaches [V1, V2, V3]. Her methods were not only informed by current research but also tailored to accommodate and respect the diverse needs of her students.

Dr. Zhang's ability to develop effective learning environments was evident [A4]. She created an inclusive and supportive atmosphere that fostered engagement and participation from most students. However, it was noted that not all students participated equally, with some shyer individuals remaining less active. This suggests a potential area for improvement in fostering a more universally engaging environment, encouraging quieter students to participate more actively. She used a range of formative assessment techniques, including question-and-answer sessions, which facilitated immediate feedback [A3]. This approach allowed for the identification and addressing of learning issues in real-time.

Prior research cited by Mustapha Abd Rahman & Yunus (2010) has identified that a variety of factors such as age, gender, individual willingness to communicate, course level, student preparation, and emotions like confidence or fear influence whether students participate in class activities. Developing strategies to engage less vocal students is important to ensure an inclusive and engaging learning environment. Reflecting on my teaching practice, I have valued and incorporated the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) active learning technique (Lyman, 1981), which can increase students' understanding in a safe environment before sharing their answers with others (Johnson & Johnson 1999). However, engaging students in online settings can be challenging. Moving forward, I plan to use anonymous polling tools like Vevox to engage all students. I also plan to explore how innovative techniques like 'Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce' could work with my students.

In conclusion, Dr Yajie Zhang's teaching session was a robust demonstration of her capabilities as an educator within the framework of the UKPSF. She showed significant strengths in preparing and delivering content, engaging students, and utilising technology to enhance learning. For future development, focusing on strategies to include all students, particularly those less inclined to participate, would be beneficial. Overall, this observation highlights Dr Zhang's effective teaching practices and her commitment to continuous improvement in her educational approach.

Reflective Evaluation of CPD Events

CPD Event (1): Students' Mental Health and Wellbeing

The reading of several key research papers focusing on the mental health challenges faced by doctoral students has informed my professional development as an educator and supervisor. These studies have provided critical insights into the prevalence and factors contributing to mental health issues among PhD students, thereby enriching my understanding of how to support students' wellbeing [A5, V1]. The papers by Mackie and Bates (2019), Milicev et al. (2021), Friedrich et al. (2023) and Casey et al (2024), collectively highlight a significant crisis in mental health among doctoral students, attributed to factors such as stress, job insecurity, and inadequate supervisory relationships.

As a PhD students' supervisor, I am expected to actively engage in recognising the mental health needs of my students and sign post them to the appropriate resources as needed. Traditionally, in my supervisory practice, I have prioritised regular and meaningful communication with my PhD students, who are distance learners, to foster a supportive supervisory relationship. During our meetings, I often discuss how challenges like isolation, time management, imposter syndrome, and research anxiety are prevalent among PhD students (Levecque et al., 2017; Sverdlik et al., 2018), and I share with them strategies that have helped me and others, exploring what might work for them [A4, V1]. Moving forward, I plan to promote open lines of communication and feedback, not only with me but also with the whole supervisory team, ensuring that students feel supported and valued [A4, V1].

Recently, one of my PhD students was struggling to balance work commitments, PhD responsibilities, and personal life. We had a lengthy discussion about how this imbalance was impacting her progress and explored various strategies to enhance her time management skills. For example, we discussed the use of tools such as Gantt charts or digital project management software, which can assist her in visualising tasks and deadlines. I also encouraged her to recognise personal rhythms and planning tasks accordingly to enhance productivity. Building on such experiences, supervisors like myself can work closely with the University to facilitate workshops on time management, stress reduction techniques, and resilience training to equip students with the necessary tools to manage their responsibilities and stress effectively [A4, V2].

While both my PhD students have successfully secured jobs, the engagement with current literature has reinforced the importance of building a robust set of skills, applicable both within academia and beyond. These include grant writing, publishing, and networking [A5]. I have also made it a point to share various resources available through the University and online.

The insights from these studies led to a deeper appreciation of the critical role educators play in shaping the mental health outcomes of their students. Looking ahead, I plan to advocate for policy improvements to better support doctoral students, enhancing the quality of learning and teaching environments [K3, V3]. I also aim to collaborate more closely with the University to advocate for transparent policies that ensure more secure employment conditions for doctoral candidates. Moreover, the insights gained have reinforced the necessity of grasping the wider context in which higher education operates [V4], particularly the increasing acknowledgment of mental health as crucial to student success (Tight, 2019; Levecque et al, 2017).

Beyond my PhD supervision responsibilities, every term I update and share with all my students a compiled list of mental health and wellbeing resources available for them, including digital resources, the University's free counselling services, and workshops on managing academic life. By incorporating these practices, I aim to demonstrate my respect for individual learners and their diverse backgrounds [V3], while also acknowledging the broader context in which higher education operates [V4].

My engagement with up-to-date research [A5] has been an essential element of my professional development, enhancing my supervision practice and informing an empathetic, innovative, and responsive supervisory approach. This ongoing journey not only shapes my professional identity but also highlights the importance of lifelong learning and adaptation in striving for educational excellence [V3, V4].

CPD Event (2): The Use of Generative AI in Teaching and Research

Research has suggested generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) has the potential to transform the learning experience, making it more personalised, engaging, and effective in achieving educational goals and outcomes (Alasadi and Carlos 2023). I have recently attended a seminar on the utilisation of AI in research, presented by Dr Laura Stowe-Evans, which was an enlightening experience that offered insights into the capabilities and challenges of generative AI within academic and research settings. The session not only broadened my understanding but also highlighted critical considerations for implementing AI responsibly in my academic duties. The presentation started with a basic introduction to generative AI, Dr Stowe-Evans then elaborated on AI potential to significantly enhance research efficiency by automating mundane tasks like data analysis, literature searches, and even aspects of writing and publication. However, it was also stressed AI is not without its limitations and ethical concerns, such as data bias and the potential for generating incorrect information ("hallucinations").

The session made me think generative AI can be utilised to streamline the process of content creation by automatically generating text, images, and other multimedia materials, saving me time and allowing me to personalise the materials. Reflecting on my responsibilities under the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF), the session highlighted the importance of maintaining an informed and critical approach to AI's integration into teaching and research. As a lecturer, it's my duty to ensure that students not only gain skills in using AI tools but also understand their mechanisms, limitations, and ethical implications [A1, A4].

One of the most impactful parts of the session was the discussion around the "five golden rules" for using AI in research, which include maintaining ethical standards and ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of AI-generated content. This part of the talk particularly resonated with me, highlighting the need for critical engagement with AI outputs – an essential practice I intend to embed in my supervisory role to foster a research environment that prioritises integrity and ethical considerations [V1, V2]. More importantly, institutions need to develop clear policies and guidelines regarding the responsible use of AI models in education to address these concerns (Michel-Villarreal, et al, 2023).

Practically, AI can be utilised in the courses I am teaching by using it as a tool to explore new research methodologies, or to simulate research scenarios that allow students to experience the breadth of AI's capabilities and its real-world implications. For instance, in research methods classes, students could use AI to generate dummy data, conduct data analysis, which they can then critique and validate, fostering a hands-on understanding of both the power and pitfalls of AI technologies. Such activities not only enhance their learning experience [K2, K3] but also prepare them for the

complexities of modern research environments. Of course, I must emphasise the critical evaluation of AI tools, teaching students to not just use these technologies but to question them and understand their broader impacts. This approach will cultivate a more informed, ethical, and critically engaged student body.

In addition, I will implement case studies where AI tools are used to solve research problems. Students could be tasked with identifying both the efficiencies gained and the potential errors or ethical dilemmas introduced. A dual-focus learning activity like this will foster a balanced view of AI in research, aligning with the UKPSF's emphasis on a comprehensive and critically engaged teaching approach. However, as Alasadi and Carlos (2023) suggested, I must monitor the interactions between AI and students to correct any misunderstandings promptly; foster critical thinking skills; and achieve high-level educational goals.

The seminar on AI's use in research has been a significant professional development experience, deepening my understanding of AI's role in academia and reshaping how I plan to integrate these tools into my teaching and supervision practices. It has provided me with valuable insights into creating a learning environment that not only leverages the latest in technological advancements but also fosters a robust ethical framework for using such technologies.

CPD Event (3): Enhancing Student Engagement Through Vevox

In the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, embracing innovative pedagogical strategies is important to fostering an engaging and effective learning environment [A1, A4]. As a lecturer, I have recognised the potential of integrating tools such as Vevox², a platform which allows students to respond to live polls, ask questions, and give feedback anonymously, into my teaching practices to enhance student engagement and promote active learning [K2, V2]. The use of such tools in educational settings offers several benefits for both lecturers and students. Lecturers can promote active participation, evaluate comprehension levels, and adapt teaching approaches to enhance student learning by integrating similar tools into their lectures (Caldwell, 2007) [A2, A4]. This interactive approach aligns with the principles of formative assessment [V3], where ongoing feedback and adjustments are made to enhance student understanding (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006; Trumbull and Lash, 2013) [A3, K1].

As I explore the potential of implementing Vevox in my lectures, I anticipate a transformative impact on student engagement and the overall learning experience [V3]. By incorporating real-time polling questions, I envision being able to assess students' understanding of key concepts, identify knowledge gaps, and promptly address any misconceptions [K2, K3]. This formative assessment approach would enable me to tailor my teaching strategies and adapt the pace and content of my lectures to better meet the needs of my students [A5]. Furthermore, the anonymity feature of Vevox could encourage more students to participate, particularly those who may feel hesitant to voice their opinions or ask questions in a larger classroom setting [V1]. This could foster an inclusive and non-threatening environment, promoting active engagement and allowing for richer discussions and idea exchanges.

One potential strategy for utilising Vevox would be to incorporate polling questions at strategic points throughout my lectures [A2]. For example, after introducing a new concept or design theory, I could post a multiple-choice question to assess students' comprehension. The aggregated responses would

² <https://www.vevox.com/>

then guide me in determining whether further explanation or clarification is necessary before proceeding to the next topic [A3, K2].

Another valuable application of Vevox could be in facilitating brainstorming sessions and peer feedback [K4]. By posing a design challenge, students could contribute their ideas anonymously, fostering a diverse range of perspectives and promoting critical thinking skills. Collecting peer feedback can be effective, where students may feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts on peers' work [V1, V4].

As I continue learning how to use and integrate Vevox into my teaching, I am keen to explore more features like word clouds and data analytics to gain deeper insights into student understanding and engagement patterns [A5]. In fact, I am scheduled to attend a university-organised event, which focuses on the use of Vevox in boosting students' engagement [A5]. In addition, I plan to collaborate with colleagues and share my findings and experiences with Vevox, encouraging them to explore its potential in their respective disciplines [A5, V3]. By fostering a culture of continuous professional development and knowledge-sharing, we can collectively enhance the quality of teaching and learning across the University [V3].

References

- Alasadi, E. A., & Baiz, C. R. (2023). Generative AI in education and research: Opportunities, concerns, and solutions. *Journal of Chemical Education*, 100(8), 2965-2971.
- Ashwin P, Boud D, Calkins S, Coate K, Hallett F, Light G, Lockett K, McArthur J, MacLaren I, McLean M, McCune V. (2020), Reflective teaching in higher education. *Bloomsbury Academic*
- BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, (2024), *Nearly 90,000 disabled people are 'missing' from tech industry, says professional body*, Retrieved April 2024, URL: <https://www.bcs.org/articles-opinion-and-research/nearly-90-000-disabled-people-are-missing-from-tech-industry-says-professional-body/>
- Bergmann, J., & Sams, A. (2012). Flip your classroom: Reach every student in every class every day. Washington, DC: Internal Society for Technology in Education.
- Biggs, J., & Tang, C. (2011). *Teaching for Quality Learning at University* (4th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
- Boud, D., Cohen, R., & Sampson, J. (2002). *Peer learning in higher education: Learning from and with each other*. Education & Training (London), 44(6). <https://doi.org/10.1108/et.2002.00444fad.001>
- Burgstahler, S. (2009). Universal Design: Process, Principles, and Applications. *DO-IT*.
- Burgstahler, S. (2015). *Universal Design in Higher Education: From Principles to Practice*. Harvard Education Press.
- Caldwell J. E. (2007). Clickers in the large classroom: current research and best-practice tips. *CBE life sciences education*, 6(1), 9–20. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.06-12-0205>
- Casey C, Trenoweth S, Harvey O, Helstrip J, Knight F, Taylor J, Polkinghorne M. Qualitative Pilot Interventions for the Enhancement of Mental Health Support in Doctoral Students. *Psych*. 2024; 6(1):426-437. <https://doi.org/10.3390/psych6010025>
- Clark, J.M., Paivio, A. (1991). Dual coding theory and education. *Educ Psychol Rev* 3, 149–210 <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01320076>
- Cohen, E. G. (1994). Restructuring the classroom: Conditions for productive small groups. *Review of Educational Research*, 64(1), 1-35.
- Davis, J. R., & Arend, B. D. (2013). *Facilitating Seven Ways of Learning: A Resource for More Effective and Enjoyable College Teaching*. Stylus Publishing.
- Fleming, N. D. (1995). I'm different; not dumb. Modes of presentation (VARK) in the tertiary classroom. In *Research and development in higher education, Proceedings of the 1995 Annual Conference of the Higher Education and Research Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA)*, HERDSA (Vol. 18, pp. 308-313).
- Fleming, N., & Baume, D. (2006). Learning Styles Again: VARKing up the right tree!. *Educational developments*, 7(4), 4.
- Florian, L., & Linklater, H. (2010). Preparing teachers for inclusive education: using inclusive pedagogy to enhance teaching and learning for all. *Cambridge journal of education*, 40(4), 369-386.
- Friedrich, J., Bareis, A., Bross, M., Bürger, Z., Cortés Rodríguez, Á., Effenberger, N., Kleinhansl, M., Kremer, F., & Schröder, C. (2023). "How is your thesis going?"-Ph.D. students' perspectives on mental health and stress in academia. *PLoS one*, 18(7), e0288103. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0288103>
- Gibbs, G. (1988). Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit.
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). *The power of feedback*. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81-112.

Heacox, D. (2012). *Differentiating Instruction in the Regular Classroom: How to Reach and Teach All Learners*. Free Spirit Publishing.

Henry, S. (2023). *Accessibility: It's About People*, [W3C Web Accessibility Initiative \(WAI\)](https://www.w3.org/WAI/people/) Strategies, standards, and supporting resources to make the Web accessible to people with disabilities, Retrieved April 2024, URL: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/people/>

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An Educational Psychology Success Story: Social Interdependence Theory and Cooperative Learning. *Educational Researcher*, 38(5), 365-379.

Krista Croghan. (2022). Inclusive design for a digital world: Designing with accessibility in mind [Review of *Inclusive design for a digital world: Designing with accessibility in mind*]. *Open Praxis*, 14(4), 310–313. International Council for Open and Distance Education. <https://doi.org/10.55982/openpraxis.14.4.532>

Levecque, K., Anseel, F., De Beuckelaer, A., Van der Heyden, J., & Gisle, L. (2017). Work organization and mental health problems in PhD students. *Research Policy*, 46(4), 868-879.

Lyman, F. (1981). The responsive classroom discussions: the inclusion of all students. A. Anderson (Ed.), *Mainstreaming Digest*, College Park: University of Maryland Press, pp. 109-113.

Mackie, S. A., & Bates, G. W. (2019). Contribution of the doctoral education environment to PhD candidates' mental health problems: a scoping review. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 38(3), 565–578. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2018.1556620>

Mamoon-Al-Bashir, M., Kabir, R., & Rahman, I. (2016). The Value and Effectiveness of Feedback in Improving Students' Learning and Professionalizing Teaching in Higher Education. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(16), 38-41.

Marley, S. A., Siani, A., & Sims, S. (2022). Real-life research projects improve student engagement and provide reliable data for academics. *Ecology and evolution*, 12(12), e9593. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.9593>

Mayer, R. E. (2009). *Multimedia Learning* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1017/CBO9780511811678>

Michel-Villarreal, R., Vilalta-Perdomo, E., Salinas-Navarro, D. E., Thierry-Aguilera, R., & Gerardou, F. S. (2023). Challenges and opportunities of generative AI for higher education as explained by ChatGPT. *Education Sciences*, 13(9), 856.

Milicev, J., McCann, M., Simpson, S.A. *et al.* Evaluating Mental Health and Wellbeing of Postgraduate Researchers: Prevalence and Contributing Factors. *Curr Psychol* 42, 12267–12280 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02309-y>

Mustapha, S. M., Abd Rahman, N. S. N., & Yunus, M. M. (2010). Factors influencing classroom participation: a case study of Malaysian undergraduate students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 1079-1084. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.12.289>

Nicol, D. J., & Macfarlane-Dick, D. (2006). Formative assessment and self-regulated learning: a model and seven principles of good feedback practice. *Studies in Higher Education*, 31(2), 199–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070600572090>

Ozdamli, F., & Asiksoy, G. (2016). Flipped classroom approach. *World Journal on Educational Technology: Current Issues*, 8(2), 98-105.

Paivio, A. (1979). *Imagery and Verbal Processes* (1st ed.). Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315798868>

Persson, H., Åhman, H., Yngling, A.A., Gulliksen, J. (2015). Universal design, inclusive design, accessible design, design for all: different concepts—one goal? On the concept of accessibility—historical, methodological and philosophical aspects. *Univ Access Inf Soc* 14, 505–526 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10209-014-0358-z>

- Philpott, C. (2015). *Theories of Professional Learning: A Critical Guide for Teacher Educators*. Critical Publishing.
- Seale, J. K. (2013). *E-Learning and Disability in Higher Education: Accessibility Research and Practice*. 2nd Edition. Routledge.
- Sherrington, T. (2017). *The learning rainforest: Great teaching in real classrooms*. Hachette UK.
- Shneiderman, B., Plaisant, C., Cohen, M., Jacobs, S., Elmqvist, N., & Diakopoulos, N. (2017). *Designing the user interface : strategies for effective human-computer interaction* (Sixth edition.). Pearson.
- Stowe-Evans, L. (2024), AI and Research, [Online session], available for UWTSD staff at: https://uwtsd-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/a_grasso_uwtsd_ac_uk/EZZA-EJNtKtdHX1mRAnAsBYp7GlnFqUFUg_6tfAWaA8A?referrer=Teams.TEAMS-ELECTRON&referrerScenario=MeetingChicletGetLink.view.view
- Sverdlík, A., Hall, N. C., McAlpine, L., & Hubbard, K. (2018). The PhD experience: A review of the factors influencing doctoral students' completion, achievement, and well-being. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 13, 361-388.
- Thalluri, J., & Penman, J. (2020). Teaching Sciences with Impact Using the Lectorial Approach. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 50(1), 36-42.
- Tight, M. (2019). The neoliberal turn in higher education. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 73(3), 273-284.
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-Ability Classrooms. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Topping, K. J. (2005). Trends in Peer Learning. *Educational Psychology*, 25(6), 631–645.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410500345172>
- Treviranus, J. (2018). *The Three Dimensions of Inclusive Design*. OCAD University. Retrieved April 2024, URL: <https://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/2745/>
- Trumbull, E., & Lash, A. (2013). Understanding formative assessment. Insights from Learn theory Meas theory San Fr WestEd, 1-20.
- Truong, T., Griswold, W. G, Ratto, M., & Star, L. (2002). The ActiveClass Project: Experiments in Encouraging Classroom Participation. *UC San Diego: Department of Computer Science & Engineering*. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/59n9766x>
- Wiliam, D., (9th Oct. 2009), *Content Then Process* [video], YouTube, Retrieved April 2024, URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=029fSeOaGio>

Appendix A: Teaching Hours Log

Candidate: Fatma Layas	Campus: Swansea
------------------------	-----------------

Date	Session Details	No of Hours	Practice Advisor's Signature
Oct 23	Marking the DUE module	14	
Oct 23	Admin work related to the submission of the DUE marks	1	
Oct 23	PhD supervisions meetings	4	
Oct 23	Providing feedback on written submissions by PhD students	1	
Oct 23	Prep for the Mullany fund workshop	1	
31 Oct 23	The Mullany Fund Workshop	2	
Nov 23	PhD supervisions meetings	4	
Nov 23	Prep for the lectorial session -1	1.5	
10 Nov 23	USSJLF-30-M Lectorial session	3	
Dec 23	Prep for the lectorial session -2	1.5	
8 Dec 23	USSJLF-30-M Lectorial session	3	
Jan 24	PhD supervisions meetings	4	
Feb 24	PhD supervisions meetings	4	
14 Feb 24	Prep for the Mullany fund workshop (meeting + slides & activity prep)	2	
15 Feb 24	The Mullany Fund Workshop	4	
1 March 24	Data Protection Awareness and Training (CPD)	1	
March 24	PhD supervisions meetings	4	
March 24	PhD supervisions admin work (PG4 forms, and reading drafts)	4	
8 April 24	AI and research (CPD)	1	
April 24	PhD supervisions meetings	2	
24 April 24	Boost student engagement with Vevox (CPD)	1	
Hours = 40	Hours Carried Over = 23	Total Hours = 63	

Participant's signature: 

Practice Advisor's signature



Appendix B: Observation Forms



Details of the Observation	
Candidate	Dr Fatma Layas
Practice Observer/Advisor	Dr Yajie Zhang
Date of the Observation	8 th December 2023
Campus/Location	Online Microsoft Teams
Date, Time, Duration	2 hours
Subject Speciality	Innovative Technology in Healthcare
Type of activity	Online lectoral

A note on conducting this observation.

This observation will contribute to the candidate's portfolio of evidence to satisfy the dual assessment element of the PGCert tHE. Comments should be conducted to fulfil the Level 7 grading criteria and the relevant UKPSF Descriptor. Full details are set out in the module handbooks.

Teaching/Support preparation [A1: Design and plan learning activities] <i>i.e. Preparation, selection and organisation of content. Choice of teaching/learning methods.</i>
Comments The content was selected properly on prototyping, evaluation and human factors. It showed the observee had prepared the content well, with a clear purpose of making the learning materials suitable for the students at Level 7. The content was in a logic order in slides and the information was not overwhelmed. She showed vast knowledge in the subject area. Q&A and activities (games) were planned in the session. The examples like eye tracking were interesting to attract students' attention. The lecture part gave a good structure of theoretical knowledge about the evaluation methods.

Teaching [A2: Teach and/or support learning.] <i>i.e. Beginning class, introduction, continuity with other sessions, students' prior knowledge. Clarity of presentation. Pace. Attitude to the subject matter. Use of appropriate reinforcement. Ending the session – summary, future work etc. Technique and Aids: General apparatus – board, data projector, use of handouts. Was effective communication achieved? Was there good student–teacher rapport? Were the aims/outcomes achieved? Appropriateness of teaching/learning methods.</i>
Comments The observee started the session with learning objectives, and a good recap section for students to review. Her pace was controlled well with a clear voice, friendly and respectful attitude. She encouraged the students to speak up when having activities with them. When doing the games, the observee also explained it well to support the students to know why. The break (10 minutes) gave the students a rest.
Effective Learning Environments [A4:Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance.] <i>i.e General class atmosphere, level of participation, attention, and interest. Student attitude and ability to carry out classwork. Were learning problems identified and overcome? Awareness of individual needs. Attitude to students.</i>
Comments A lot of examples (both images and videos) were illustrated to help the students understand the knowledge points and link to the research practice, which were very interesting too. Those multi-media aided her teaching deliveries and improved the efficiency of conveying information and received great student engagement. The slides were live for sharing on Microsoft Teams, so the students had the control of the handout, go back and forth and synchronise with the presenter.
Assessment [A3: Assess and give learners feedback] <i>i.e Formative/summative assessment examples , Question and answer technique. Other evaluation procedures, class management, instructions to student.</i>
Comments Formative feedback was given during Q&A in the activities. However, there might be confusing questions sometimes, like “why photoshop the same video?” Although I knew the project, I did not know what “photoshop” was asking about. I think it could be rephrased more clearly when assessing student performance.
Core Knowledge • Subject knowledge • Teaching methods • Student learning

• Learning technologies • Evaluation • Teaching effectiveness • Quality assurance
Comments The online teaching was delivered well, the observee supported student learning through various activities, used great visual-audio materials to demonstrate the evaluation procedures of UX designers. The technologies shown were appropriate for an effective virtual learning environment. During the activities and games, she could evaluate how the students were engaged and how they processed the learned knowledge, and gave explanation and feedback meantime. Those were evidence of her massive knowledge about the subject, and great experience of teaching.
Professional values • Respect for learners • Promote participation • Evidence informed approaches • Wider context of HE
Comments She respected the learners and encouraged the students to engage in the activities, they put text in the online chat box, and answered questions well. Many examples come from research evidence and designer's practice, those have broadened the vision of students and acknowledged the research impact for the society.
Examples of good practice: A good example that impressed me was when introducing the types and fidelity of prototypes, different levels of fidelity models were shown with example images. In addition, a quadrant chart is by the side, making it easy to understand the relationship between the fidelity levels and details of models. Action points: When explaining the specific example of a research project, 7 images were shown at the same time, it would be better present them one by one to attract students' attention or use a cursor highlighting the current image when explaining it.
Declaration I feel that this observation satisfies the dimensions of the UKPSF (D1 Associate Fellow).

Najia Mary

Observer

Date 29-01-2024

Bea

Overseevee

Date 05-02-2024

PGCert PARTICIPANTS

On completion of the peer observation reports for each module, compose a short reflective paragraph on your observation experiences for inclusion in your portfolio along with the observation sheets.

PGCert tHE OBSERVATION FORM



Details of the Observation	
Candidate	Dr Fatma Layas
Practice Observer/Advisor	Dr Ahmed Ben Khaial
Date of the Observation	10 Nov 23
Campus/Location	Online Microsoft Teams
Date, Time, Duration	3 hour
Subject Speciality	Design Principle, User Centerd Design, Accessibility and Inclusive Design
Type of activity	Online lectoral

A note on conducting this observation.

This observation will contribute to the candidate's portfolio of evidence to satisfy the dual assessment element of the PGCert tHE. Comments should be conducted to fulfil the Level 7 grading criteria and the relevant UKPSF Descriptor. Full details are set out in the module handbooks.

Teaching/Support preparation [A1: Design and plan learning activities] <i>i.e. Preparation, selection and organisation of content. Choice of teaching/learning methods.</i>
Comments Fatma's duty is preparing the original lectoral material as well as delivering the lectoral. The students had the privilege of having the session's content in advance of the lectoral (without the practical activities). The lectoral material was thorough and well-structured to cover the lecture topic. The progress of the lecture was soundly planned, starting with an overview and rationale for the lectoral topic/content at the start of the session followed by the remaining material diverse content (including practical activities).
Teaching [A2: Teach and/or support learning.] <i>i.e. Beginning class, introduction, continuity with other sessions, students' prior knowledge. Clarity of presentation. Pace. Attitude to the subject matter. Use of appropriate reinforcement. Ending the session – summary, future work etc. Technique and Aids: General apparatus – board, data projector, use of handouts. Was effective communication achieved? Was there good student–teacher rapport? Were the aims/outcomes achieved? Appropriateness of teaching/learning methods.</i>
Comments

Fatma voice can be clearly heard. she also checked the students' understanding from time to time throughout the lecture. she seemed relaxed and confident in her knowledge throughout the lecture. She engaged with student by stimulating questions to enable student to think critically about the theoretical content of the session and was able to support the students throughout the lectoral tasks.

Effective Learning Environments [A4:Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance.]

i.e General class atmosphere, level of participation, attention, and interest. Student attitude and ability to carry out classwork. Were learning problems identified and overcome? Awareness of individual needs. Attitude to students.

Comments

Although it is difficult to get complete sense of the environment in an online session, but, overall, Fatma was cheerful and respectful throughout her interactions with students and her positive words for students' engagements helped create a positive atmosphere.

Assessment [A3: Assess and give learners feedback]

i.e Formative/summative assessment examples , Question and answer technique. Other evaluation procedures, class management, instructions to student.

Comments

The session includes practical activities, where student go to breakout rooms and try to think about a specific task, the student then get feedback, either verbally if they offer to share their thoughts or by writing in the chat box for the shy ones. I felt more could have been done to actively engage some student further. While it is expected for the first interaction between the lecturer and students to have low student engagement, but, Fatma could have pushed some of the students more to establish her engagement expectations of them.

Core Knowledge

- Subject knowledge
- Teaching methods
- Student learning
- Learning technologies
- Evaluation
- Teaching effectiveness
- Quality assurance

Comments

Fatma seemed very secure in her knowledge with an assured delivery. She linked the teaching to real life examples and managed to answer students' questions as well.

The lectoral was very entertaining and rich of variety of delivery methods which made understanding easier. She managed to emphasise the key learning points at the end of each section of the session. The transitions between the session content including different activities were neat and overall well-connected.

Professional values • Respect for learners • Promote participation • Evidence informed approaches • Wider context of HE
--

- Respect for learners
- Promote participation
- Evidence informed approaches
- Wider context of HE

Comments

Essential professional values were central to Fatma's teaching approach. She accommodated different learners by conducting respectful interactions with students. Through a mixture of media and visuals (images, cartoons, and graphs), Fatma managed to illustrate the learning knowledge to different type of learners who might have different learning preferences.

Fatma respect of different learners also showed during the session's activities, she was generous in the activity times and cleverly combined some of the activity time with break times to serve students with different pace.

Fatma was assiduous in making sure students grasp the important learning points of the delivered topic, for example, after allowing students to watch demonstration videos during the lectoral, she followed it by highlighting the key messages in the videos in case students miss them.

Fatma also utilized case studies some of which are backed by her own original research projects' work to explain and illustrate some the aspects of the topic, which is an excellent approach to show students where the knowledge can be applied, moreover, such approach helps reinforced learning and assimilate students' knowledge.

Overall Fatma manage to relate sub-sections during the lectoral to the bigger picture of the topic.

Examples of good practice:

Fatma also made herself available for students who did not manage to attend, by announcing during the lecture that they can watch the lecture recording during their own time and feel free to send her questions to answer for them.

Action points:

Fatma checked the students' understanding verbally at intervals and stimulated students' engagement with some questions throughout after every new information, however, it might be useful in some instants to ask students some question in advance of conveying a new information/concept to keep them attentive and help them to articulate their knowledge/thinking.

Declaration

I feel that this observation satisfies the dimensions of the UKPSF (D1 Associate Fellow).

Observer Ahmed Ben Khaial Date 30 January 2024

Date 30 January 2024

Overservee Fatma Layas **Date** 31 Jan 2024

Date 31 Jan 2024

PGCert PARTICIPANTS

On completion of the peer observation reports for each module, compose a short reflective paragraph on your observation experiences for inclusion in your portfolio along with the observation sheets.

PGCert tHE OBSERVATION FORM



Details of the Observation	
Candidate	Dr Yajie Zhang
Practice Observer/Advisor	Dr Fatma Layas
Date of the Observation	8 th December 2023
Campus/Location	Online
Date, Time, Duration	1 hour
Subject Speciality	Cognition and Human Factors
Type of activity	lecture

A note on conducting this observation.

This observation will contribute to the candidate's portfolio of evidence to satisfy the dual assessment element of the PGCert tHE. Comments should be conducted to fulfil the Level 7 grading criteria and the relevant UKPSF Descriptor. Full details are set out in the module handbooks.

Teaching/Support preparation [A1: Design and plan learning activities] <i>i.e. Preparation, selection and organisation of content. Choice of teaching/learning methods.</i>
Comments Yajie was clearly well-prepared. The material for the session was organized clearly and logically. She employed examples and case studies to illustrate her points. Yajie employed a range of mediums to demonstrate her concepts, incorporating videos, images, and graphs to enhance understanding. The connection between the learning activities and the session's goals was clear. In addition, the transitions between different activities and the teaching parts were seamless and well-connected.
Teaching [A2: Teach and/or support learning.] <i>i.e. Beginning class, introduction, continuity with other sessions, students' prior knowledge. Clarity of presentation. Pace. Attitude to the subject matter. Use of appropriate reinforcement. Ending the session – summary, future work etc. Technique and Aids: General apparatus – board, data projector, use of handouts. Was effective communication achieved? Was there good student–teacher rapport? Were the aims/outcomes achieved? Appropriateness of teaching/learning methods.</i>
Comments

Yajie demonstrated a thorough understanding of the subject matter, showing both broad and deep expertise. The session's pacing was well-suited, allowing most students enough time for intellectual engagement. As the session progressed, she kept highlighting and summarising the key points of the sessions. In addition, she asked questions to assess the students' progress and comprehension. Students were engaged with the interactive activities she prepared for them.
Effective Learning Environments [A4:Develop effective learning environments and approaches to student support and guidance.] <i>i.e General class atmosphere, level of participation, attention, and interest. Student attitude and ability to carry out classwork. Were learning problems identified and overcome? Awareness of individual needs. Attitude to students.</i>
Comments Overall, Yajie fostered an inclusive and positive learning environment. Her interactions with students were friendly, respectful, and polite. During the session activities, she consistently praised and encouraged the students, using positive words to support their efforts.
Assessment [A3: Assess and give learners feedback] <i>i.e Formative/summative assessment examples , Question and answer technique. Other evaluation procedures, class management, instructions to student.</i>
Comments Most students actively participated in the activities, although not all were comfortable sharing their thoughts with the entire class. Those who spoke up, however, felt comfortable enough to ask questions when necessary. Yajie used appropriate wait times after posing questions, giving students time to think and respond. She could have encouraged the shyer participants to join the discussion and become more active.
Core Knowledge • Subject knowledge • Teaching methods • Student learning • Learning technologies • Evaluation • Teaching effectiveness • Quality assurance
Comments Yajie demonstrated comprehensive expertise in several core knowledge areas: She demonstrated deep subject knowledge, skilfully employed a variety of teaching methods. Her use of multiple learning technologies enhanced understanding, and her evaluative techniques effectively monitored student progress. Yajie's teaching effectiveness was evident by emphasising key points throughout the session. In addition, her commitment to quality assurance was reflected in the positive, inclusive learning environment she created and her respectful interactions with students. Overall, her proficiency as an educator is clearly highlighted through these attributes.

Professional values

- Respect for learners
- Promote participation
- Evidence informed approaches
- Wider context of HE

Comments

Yajie embodied essential professional values in her teaching approach. She demonstrated respect for learners through polite and supportive interactions, fostering an inclusive environment. Her session promoted participation by encouraging students to ask questions and making all students feel comfortable to engage. She uses evidence-informed approaches, employing structured, research-backed methodologies.

Examples of good practice:

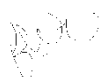
The activities Yajie designed to test the students' memory and attention (both topics were covered in the session) were both fun and engaging. It was evident that the students enjoyed participating in these exercises and were able to apply the knowledge they gained during the session effectively as they engaged with the activities. This approach not only reinforced learning but also kept the students actively involved and interested

Action points:

Yajie designed many fun and engaging activities that saw active participation from many students. However, the shyer ones did not engage much, particularly in class discussions. There is room for improvement in how she could motivate these students more effectively and encourage them to participate in the activities, ensuring that all students feel included and able to contribute.

Declaration

I feel that this observation satisfies the dimensions of the UKPSF (D1 Associate Fellow).



Observer

Date 12-02-2024



Overservee

Date 15 March 2024

PGCert PARTICIPANTS

On completion of the peer observation reports for each module, compose a short reflective paragraph on your observation experiences for inclusion in your portfolio along with the observation sheets.

Appendix C: Micro-Teaching Session

Feedback by Yolanda Rendón Guerrero, ARB, RIBA, PGCE (PCET), FHEA	Delivery by: Dr Fatma Layas
Title: Introduction to UX Design. Crafting Digital Experiences	Date: 17/04/24

You speak clearly and with the right speed, demonstrating that you feel comfortable with the subject and are ready to facilitate learning.

The sound and quality of the recording are very good too.

Well done for including an introductory slide and objectives for the lesson.

The objectives are presented with clarity and a structure that makes sense content-wise.

Introducing yourself gives students some context on your skills and background to students. It is very nice that you mention the type of projects that you work on and why you do it, demonstrating passion for what you do.

Well done for including references and sources into your slides – perhaps you could mention it or have a summary of references at the end of the document?

The definition of UX is clear, perhaps in the first slide where you have the big UX chart on the right-hand side you could make mention of the green and red labels, which you do for some as you define UX, but to use the graphics in the slide purposefully.

Well done for including tangible examples of issues with products that may benefit from UX design.

When you talk about the UX Design process, your lesson could benefit from specifying which are the main principles to avoid bad user experience, as these can be confused with the graphic on screen. I wonder if this is something that could be combined when you talk about the pathway to good UX Design at a later slide. You have done a very good job at mentioning different frameworks and giving the one in the screen as an example. A source or reference here for students to investigate other frameworks could help their self-development. Perhaps even mention why you chose that framework over others.

Well done for including a reading list at the end of the presentation.

And a final activity for students to work on at their own time is a great way of getting them to put into practice what they've learned during the lesson. For those visual learners, I wonder if you could add a slide with a few lines on the activity and perhaps even link up with some of the UX Design goals mentioned in your slides. As you said, 'what kind of emotions are provoked?', 'are you satisfied?', 'is it easy to use this product?', or 'is there any design challenge that hinders you from having a positive experience when using the product?', they sound like some of the things you mentioned in the goals slide and will help link up with the content delivered visually.

Micro-Teaching Session's slides:

Introduction to UX Design

Crafting Digital Experiences




Dr. Fatma Layas
ATIC Innovation Fellow
Assistive Technologies Innovation Centre

Session's Objectives

You will

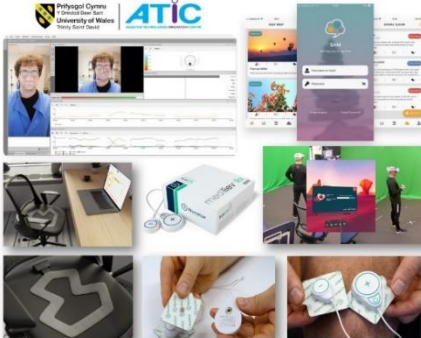
- ✓ Understand the basic principles of UX design.
- ✓ Be able to identify key elements that contribute to effective UX.
- ✓ Appreciate the importance of UX design in digital product development.



Dr. Fatma Layas
ATIC Innovation Fellow
Assistive Technologies Innovation Centre

My research focuses on:

- Inclusive design of technologies for disabled and elderly people.
- Designing healthcare products.
- Usability and accessibility.
- Measurement of user experience.



User Experience Design

User experience (UX) design is the process design teams use to create products that provide meaningful and relevant experiences to users. UX design involves the design of the entire process of acquiring and integrating the product, including aspects of branding, design, usability and function.



Interaction Design Foundation - IxDF. (2016, June 1). What is User Experience (UX) Design? Interaction Design Foundation - IxDF. <https://www.interaction-design.org/fundamentals/what-is-ux-design>

User Experience Goals



Importance of UX Design

Why it's important to create digital products that are not just functional but also delightful and easy to use.



Good

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Submit

Bad

First Name:

Last Name:

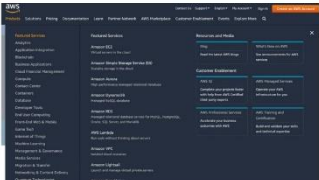
Address:

Email:

Phone:

Submit





The UX Design Process



The path to designing for good user experiences lies
in understanding people and their contexts

Listen, Observe, Understand

- what are people doing?
- what are they feeling?
- how could you make their lives easier or more fun or more fulfilling, or less stressful and frustrating?

Consider

- what might help people in the way they currently do things?
- what people are they good at?
- what do they enjoy?
- what are their motivations and aspirations?
- what do they find frustrating or hard or boring?

In Summary....

- UX is the way people feel about something they use or do.
- Their pleasure and satisfaction when using it, looking at it, holding it, and opening or closing it
- All products has a user experience.

