



Tertiary teaching online: pedagogy and practice. What do I need to know to be an effective, engaging teacher in the online space?

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Sara Williams, Tertiary Education Commission

New Aotearoa whenua.

Aotearoa atua.

Aotearoa pukenga.

Aotearoa tangata.

Tēnā koutou.

Ko Sara Williams toko ingoa.

E mahi ana ahau, ki Te Amorangi, Mātauranga Matua.

Te wāhanga Ōritetanga.

Hello and warm greetings to you all.

This cold day as we nearly reach our solstice this winter.

My name is Sara Williams and I work in the Learner Success Team at the Tertiary Education Commission.

Welcome to today's session, teaching online, pedagogy and practice.

What do I need to know to be an effective and engaging teacher in the online space.

We are very glad you could all join us today.

Now, a couple of housekeeping points.

Your audio and video are disabled.

But you can communicate with us via the chat and the question and answer functions.

Please make sure you put any questions you have for your presenters into the Q&A section.

You can upvote questions and comment on questions.

Use the chat function for general comment or to notify us of any technical issues you might have.

We have had 500 registrations for this forum today.

So we do have a team of people looking after you in the background.

Ravi is monitoring chat for IT issues and will respond directly to you to assist.

Pat is also monitoring chat for any themes that may emerge and to redirect any misplaced questions.

And Lisale is looking after our question and answer function.

Closed captioning is running for the session.

If you need that you can enable it via your zoom window.

The session is being recorded and the full webinar will be available on the TEC website next week.

A full transcript will be available with the webinar and the webinar will be captioned.

If you would like to settle back and listen to our presenters today you can do that knowing you can come back to this at any time.

Without further ado I would like to hand over now to our presenters.

Mark Nichols from Open Polytech and Ali Hughes from TANZ eCampus.

Mark and Ali are going to share their knowledge over the next 30 minutes or so.

Following that we will open up for question and answers.

Without further delay let me hand us over to Mark to get us underway.

Mark.

Mark Nichols, Open Polytechnic

>> Tēnā koutou katoa.

Ko Mark Nichols tōku ingoa.

Ko te Atua tōku piringa.

I whanau mai au ki Waitakere Aotearoa whenua.

I tipu mai au ki Tauranga.

Kei Raumati South e noho ana.

No London me Tāmaki Makaurau ōku tipuna.

Ko au te Kaiwhakahaere Matua o Whakapakari

Akoranga ki te Kuratini Tuwhera.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

It's a privilege to be talking to you all today.

As I mentioned, I'm the director executive of learning design & development at Open Polytechnic, which is New Zealand's most successful provider of online education.

I've been asked to answer the question what do I need to know to be an effective and engaging teacher in the online space.

To give you a useful answer to that question I would like to take you on a bit of a road trip.

To be really clear from the outset there's really a single answer to the question.

It's context.

You see the problem with the question what do I need to know to be an effective and engaging teacher in the online space is there are so very many ways of answering it.

You can go anywhere in the response.

Online, there's so much you might do to improve your effectiveness and engagement in the online space.

Not all suggestions will apply to your situation as an online teacher.

What's an exciting destination for some may not be enjoyable or worthwhile for you at all.

So it's a good idea for us to take a step back.

You're attending this webinar in search of an answer to the question how do I teach better online.

Well, the answer is context.

To illustrate why that's the case I will ask a parallel question.

How do I make my car go faster?

Again, it's a fairly simple question until you start to unpack it a bit.

If you drive a Toyota Corolla, you would likely upgrade the exhaust system, install a camshaft, replace the flywheel, that sort of thing.

That's from Google.

Don't believe for a moment I know what any of that actually means.

If you're talking about a slot car things are very different.

Ignore the camshaft go for disconnecting the lights to apply for voltage.

Add magnets and change the tyres.

Those are the things that will give you the edge.

If your car is a Matchbox, polish the axles, add some weight.

Lube the axles with graphite.

If it's not against the rules, launch it from a slingshot.

If your car is in this condition get it lifted on to a trailer.

Drive the trailer away and your car goes faster.

Oddly enough the first step for making this car go faster is a chainsaw.

Seeing all these cars on the same slide makes the answer clear.

It depends absolutely on what sort of car you are talking about.

For making online teaching more effective and engaging the lesson is exactly the same.

The answer what do I need to know to be an effective and engaging teacher in the online space is simple.

You have to understand your context.

Whether you need magnets, tyres, a camshaft or chainsaw all depends where you're starting from.

To improve your online teaching what you need to do relies totally on your context.

Once you know your context you will see the opportunities for teaching and improvement begin to unfold.

What I'm going to do in the remainder of this presentation is talk about context, context, context.

I aim to do so by taking you to three destinations.

SAMR, TPACK and blended education.

You might have heard of all of these.

They're not new models or concepts.

Even if you have seen these concepts before, knowing how they absolutely apply to you and how you become a more effective online educator will help you understand your role in the online environment.

I also suspect my take on blended education may be new to you.

So our first destination is SAMR.

A model introduced by Ruben Puentedura in 2006.

It suggests that technology in education can lead to four main types of practice, substituted, augmented modified or redefined.

If you substitute or augment you're really enhancing your teaching.

If you modify or redefine, Ruben Puentedura would say you're transforming your teaching.

Becoming more effective and engaging as a teacher might take place at any of these four points.

I'm not saying you must be transformative to improve your practice.

To become more effective and engaging, you might just improve what you currently do.

There is no imperative requiring you to advance up the SAMR possibilities.

In fact that might even be detrimental.

Let's take a closer look.

If you're a lecturer at a university there are plenty of things you might do with technology.

You might just lecture as normal but have your lectures live captioned and streamed through a university service.

This would be a more effective means of substituting what you do through technology.

You could make your slides available.

Or build on a live Twitter feed, have a chat channel for streamed classes.

Include more online links to additional sources.

These might be ways of augmenting your lectures.

You can go much further to transform your practice.

To modify your teaching - you might lecture less and adopt asynchronous forums for academic debates.

Include blogs, collaborative services or VR activities.

To redefine your teaching. you might have students learn mathematics concepts using AI interface.

A lot of the things you might do there might not involve any sort of lectures at all.

Online teaching is so incredibly open ended that multiple examples could be given for each of these.

Don't be misled by the shiny and new.

Becoming a more engaging teacher might involve planning your lectures better.

A carefully planned and scripted lecture is much better than a poorly planned online discussion forum or pointless VR activities.

Transformational doesn't always mean more effective or more engaging.

There's opportunity within all four frames of SAMR to improve your practice.

The key question based on SAMR is what's your context.

By this I mean two things.

Firstly what's your appetite as an online teacher? Are you up for transformation or would you rather just enhance?

There's plenty you might do enhancing your current practice which will make you more effective and engaging.

Improve your lecturing skills and learning resources.

If you're interested in transforming your practice consider new approaches that are proven and used by others.

Get to know the online learning literature as it relates to your subject area.

The second thing you need to bear in mind is there might be limits to what you can do.

Is it realistic for you to transform your practice and the institution you're part of?

Very few of us have complete freedom over how we teach.

It might not be possible for you to modify or redefine your teaching.

Take this webinar as an example.

I'm constrained in the approach I can use to get these ideas to get across to you.

I've got 15 minutes in a live session.

Straight away that limits my SAMR application.

The best I can do to make it engaging and effective is make it clear, keep the pace going and illustrate my points using colourful examples.

What's your context? What's your appetite for different and what are your constraints?

Your answer to these questions will help you identify how to become more effective and engaging.

A second step is TPACK.

Framework popularised by Mat Koehler in 2012.

TPACK is an acronym standing for technological, pedagogical and content knowledge.

And that you need expertise across all three of these to become effective and engaging online educator.

How realistic is that? It's extremely ambitious for anyone to develop expertise.

By that I mean really solid theoretical and practical insight across all three of these quite different areas.

As an educator you will have some proficiency across these.

Most of it will likely be in the content knowledge area.

You will also know enough to teach well and have enough technical knowledge to answer emails, use a management system, create slides and author your own website.

To what extent can you go beyond this? I remember thinking making an effective and instructional video was straightforward until I had tried it.

The content was fine but the production values were awful.

The lighting was wrong, sound terrible and the background was cluttered.

I knew how to put in title slides and transitions but someone with better technical knowledge would have added an incredible amount to it.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

Many of us are not the pedagogical or technological experts we think we are.

We know how to do a good job but it's difficult to think about how new teaching methods might be developed and our production values might get in the way.

In New Zealand we have this DIY culture that it's important we know our limits.

I'm a DIYer in that I can build an IKEA day bed but I struggle to make a kit set garden shed.

And I would never try to build a house.

I'm not expert enough.

Moving to online education is similar.

It's complex getting it right.

An enthusiastic teacher can do a good job.

To be really effective and engaging you need to draw on those with specific expertise with pedagogy and technological knowledge.

At Open Polytech we develop our courses and modules in ways that make sense of the opportunities of online education.

We mix expertise of learning designers who are expert with pedagogy and technological knowledge with that of subject experts who provide the content knowledge.

In reality it doesn't quite look like it does on the slide.

We have a principal learning designer role whose job it is to define pedagogy as it relates to specific programs and overall design framework informed by good practice that further defines the pedagogy.

We have an online user experience platform called IQualify which also helps with sound learning design.

I hope you can see the point.

The subject matter expert or lead academic as defined on this slide doesn't do it all.

To be an effective and engaging online teacher I suggest you look towards becoming part of an online design team.

As is predictable by now what's your context.

Does your institution have learning designers, education advisers or specialist training.

Get to know what these are.

Be open to their advice.

Resist trying to do it all or own it all yourself.

If you want to be effective and engaging online teacher accept the best thing you can add is your subject of content knowledge.

Add your strengths to the overall student experience.

Okay.

On to our last destination.

Blended learning.

Many people think that blended learning is the single place between face-to-face or classroom education and online or distance education.

It's not quite like that.

On campus and distance are the starting points though.

Blended learning is the space between them.

There are two forms of blended education that are actually very different.

On the job or apprenticeship learning can be different again.

You see if you start at one end or the other you carry various assumptions in the online space.

I would like to summarise them this way.

If you start with the assumption of the classroom you tend to think of blended learning as a flipped classroom.

Your role will become that of a teaching individual supported by online course work.

If you start from the distance end of the spectrum, you're likely to experience blended learning more from a student supporter role.

Being effective and engaging as a teacher requires different skills depending on where across the spectrum you find yourself.

Of course there's a lot more to say about this because all of these contexts have additional expectations and possibilities attached to them.

The level of study you're teaching to, the possibilities afforded by the subjects you're teaching, the number of students you're dealing with and what they expect of you.

Support services that surround your role and the expectations of the institution you work for will all determine what you can do.

These will also determine what effective and engaging looks like.

My advice to you is don't underestimate that last point of contact expectations.

My very first experience of this happened about 20 years ago.

I was an e learning consultant appointed to help a team adopt a flexible approach to online learning.

The work done is something I'm still proud of this day.

We developed a media rich, online supported model of flexible delivery based on a flipped classroom.

Students had access to a very engaging and effective set of course materials that carefully explained core concepts and modelled practical skills.

It was a complete disaster.

The problem was the students had not enrolled in a flipped classroom.

They expected lectures.

Their contact expectations were to be told what they needed to know.

By now it's no surprise as to what my summary point for this slide is: what's your context.

If you're an on campus teacher it's difficult to become a blended on campus teacher without a plan and support of your institution.

Changing across any of these four categories presents a major shift in practice largely because of your context.

Okay.

That's the third and final destination.

Let me now take it home.

My ultimate answer to the question what do I need to know to be an effective engaging teacher in the online space is to begin with a thorough understanding of your context.

You need to know your institutional strategies for online teaching, the support services on offer, your fit as a teacher in terms of the overall student experience, you need to be aware of the opportunities and constraints that apply based on your formal role as a teacher, your appetite for transformation and the range for technological, pedagogical and content knowledge you bring to bear.

You need to know your context.

If you're interested in learning more about your context including SAMR, TPACK and what they apply for education I invite you to read this book published last month by Routledge.

In this I explore higher education and why it represents the more accessible, scalable and personalised form of teaching and learning that can possibly be implemented today.

The book is based on the Whakapiri-Whakamarama-Whakamana model of higher education proposed by Sir Mason Durie. And it begins with an appreciation of what universities, polytechnics and PTEs, strive to achieve in changing student lives for the better.

If you're the sort of person interested in this webinar I suspect you will appreciate this book.

I invite you to subscribe to the leaders and legends online learning podcast which has been going for about two years now.

In it you will hear the perspectives of international experts whose work is entirely relevant for anyone seeking to better understand online education.

One final point: professional associations such as Ascilite, FLANZ and ICDE are well worth joining.

There are plenty of websites that offer excellent advice for online teaching.

You will also find my contact details on the slide.

Thanks for your time.

I look forward to your questions.

I'm handing over now to my colleague Ali Hughes who will be addressing the same theme of effectiveness and engagement in the online space.

Ali Hughes, TANZ eCampus

Hopefully everyone can hear me.

I've just lost the screen.

So I've got some hands raised.

So that's good.

Okay.

Thank you very much, Mark.

That was really interesting.

So Mark has looked at what online course development and design looks like.

And my role now is to look at what that delivery looks like for teachers and for our learners.

First a little bit about myself.

Tena koutou katoa.

Ko Watership Down te maunga.

Ko Itchen te awa.

Ko Hampshire te iwi.

No Ingarangi au.

Kei Otautahi toku kainga inaianei.

Ko Ali Hughes toku ingoa.

Na reira, tena koutou katoa.

So thank you.

Welcome from a very rainy Christchurch.

My role is as the Learning Experience and Success Manager for TANZ eCampus.

Just a little bit of context for you for those that don't know TANZ.

We are the online delivery platform for eight Polytechs across New Zealand, working with them to deliver a range of their programs online.

Our learners tend to be fairly non traditional learners, not necessarily what we expected when we started.

Some may be working and studying part time.

Many of our learners are stay at home parents wanting to study full time.

And often with jobs on the side.

Learners are often first in family, many from low socio economic families, high proportion of second chance learners with little or no previous positive experience of education.

And with few if any formal qualifications.

They often have a lack of confidence.

Often quite whakama about seeking support and feel the whole world of academia is a new and scary prospect for them.

Often their personal situations throw up logistical challenges as well.

So when we think about online education it's often perceived as the cheap and low quality alternative to face-to-face learning.

However, it's clear from research that this is not what our learners expect.

Although the research I've currently shown is seven years old I'm not sure a lot has changed today for many learners.

And the experiences I've heard about this year, as many institutions struggle to get their information online in a very quick timeframe, reinforces this belief.

In many, many cases it continues to there continues to be a disconnect between what learners think they will experience and what institutions are expecting to deliver.

It is our challenge, as online educators, to meet their expectations.

Moving past course design and development which Mark talked about, once at delivery stage the role of the facilitator is key.

In this context, a facilitator is an experienced person, maybe an academic, or maybe a person experienced in that particular field, who supports learners during their online courses.

A facilitator will support and guide them through the course, encouraging conversation.

And ensuring that all learners are able to contribute and communicate in a positive and collaborate way.

The roles and responsibilities of the facilitators will vary from simple monitoring of non-engagement, right through to guiding their learning.

Transactional distance is the collection of perceived psychological, cognitive and effective distances between learners and instructors.

In all forms of learning environments.

It refers to the extent of time and distance between communication and impacts in a learner environment.

Even in face to face teaching, there is an element of transactional distance.

We probably all experience those eager learners at the front row and those on their phone or asleep at the back of the class, or maybe it's just the class.

Consider how much more difficult it is when the education is online.

Key to overcoming these transactional distances is what we call facilitator presence.

And we split that into three key areas.

The teaching or instructional presence; what you do in the moment when interacting with your learners.

The facilitation of discourse and direct instruction.

Predeveloped presentations assessing learner work.

Providing instructional feedback.

Diagnosing misconceptions.

Clarifying concepts and referring students for additional resources.

But then there's the social presence.

Particularly important the start of the course where learners are getting to know each other and need to get to know you and trust you.

If students can make interpersonal connections with others they're more likely to engage in the course and the content.

Finally the cognitive presence, central to all successful student learning.

The quality of cognitive present reflects the quality and quantity of critical thinking, collaborative problem solving and the construction of meaning.

You can model and support cognitive presence in your interactions with your students, in your discussions, in your assignment feedback and in all your other communications.

So talking about communications.

Building effective communication is key.

At TANZ campus we encourage our facilitators to be in contact with the learners via the postings on the course at least three times a week.

Early in the week to set the scene this is what we're going to be looking at this week.

Maybe on the Wednesday you add in a post about what they're learning so far.

You might add in some of your personal experiences.

Give them something else to look at.

And then at the end of the week you wrap up and you look forward to what is happening.

The important thing is to have clear, consistent and unambiguous communication and instructions.

Learners don't have the chance to say, "Hey, miss, I don't know what this means." And often non engagement can come from learners switching off when they don't understand what to do.

So regular communication, developing the relationships with learners, and guiding their learning, coupled with timely replies to any query or questions.

It's also important to share some of your own experiences and personality in your communication.

There's nothing worse than getting something and you feel that it's just been something that's churned out course after course.

Not only building communications but you also need to build learning.

As with face to face sessions, it's important there is deliberate scaffolding of the learning.

Each step building on what has been learnt to date.

And enabling the development of new skills and knowledge as you go.

Much of this is the work of the course designer with the development of regular activities each week.

Designed to engage learners, build knowledge towards assessments and additionally providing opportunity to monitor a learner's success.

When you make the effort to do all you can to support the learners in their academic endeavours and ensure they feel a sense of belonging, the learners are more likely to persevere in their studies and complete their qualification.

At TANZ eCampus in 2019 we did an extensive project with our level 3 administration learners called the Kia ora (or Good Health) project designed to better understand what learners needed to be successful online.

We will talk later about the findings in terms of learning support.

But what came out very strongly from learners of all ethnicities was that desire for relationships and belonging.

It is our job as learning online educators to build that relationship.

As Mark said, context is the key.

And whatever we do it's important to remember the context in which we operate.

In Aotearoa New Zealand we have an obligation under the treaty.

More than that we have an obligation to our learners to develop an environment in which they recognise themselves.

The use of teo reo and tikanga Māori in our work could include the inclusion of pepeha and whakatauki and use of references in our work.

To add to that sense of relationship we also have a range of tools to enable the building of community across our learners, encouraging learners to share ideas, form study groups and interact with other learners all adds to that sense of belonging.

Importantly, we need to help the learners build their learning.

After all, that is the purpose of their studies.

Offering tools such as SmartThinking where they can get impartial feedback on their writing, grammar, assessment and report structure is useful for learners, especially those who may not have experienced academic writing in the past.

More importantly, we as educators need to give timely feedback on how they are doing and effective feed forward to guide and extend their learning.

For learners studying at a distance it is important they develop good time management skills, and a sense of what is needed and when.

We provide a learning pathway for all our courses setting out what is covered each week and highlighting key dates.

In addition, our facilitators and student advisers can monitor progress on a range of dashboards and know where a learner is and if they've stopped engaging.

This allows early intervention to hopefully get a learner back on track.

Or to work with them on a plan B if life has got in the way of study.

So that's what we as educators can do.

But what do our learners need.

They need to be prepared to study online and how can we help with that.

So at TANZ we provide a range of resources to make sure our learners are prepared for the start of their study.

We know that often learners drop out because they're not prepared.

Some of the issues they may have are logistical.

Do they have access to a working computer?

How is their internet coverage?

Do they need an improved data plan?

Are they waiting for Study Link to provide funds to buy the computers?

Giving them tools and tips to help enable better time management skills such as weekly planners and time calculators.

And getting them up to speed with the study skills they need.

How to write, the use of referencing.

Thinking skills like the use of mind maps are all important particularly to new learners.

Importantly, they need to rally their crew ensuring they have far support to encourage them and maybe take the kids off their hand to study.

We encourage learners to set a long term goal.

We know study can be long and hard.

Keeping that why in mind can be a great motivator.

Finally we encourage all our learners to connect.

There are many ways they can do this digitally now or sometimes there are people in the same area who can start a study group over coffee.

All of that support is really important.

As I mentioned last year we did research with our level 3 learners.

And from that we developed our own version of Professor Durie's Te Whare Tapa Whā, many of you know this is the holistic Maori health and wellbeing model designed to support Maori across a range of contexts.

We find this support is relevant to all of our learners.

Looking at the four pillars of the model and thinking about what learners need in terms of establishing good study skills, technology and physical logistical needs, their relationships and the support networks they need.

And their preparedness to study.

This is just a very quick run through of some of the ways in which we can support our learners to be successful online.

Thank you for the time, listening to me.

And if you have got any questions I'm more than happy to answer them.

Thank you.

Over now to Sara.

Sara: Thank you so much, Ali.

What we're going to do now if I can get Ali and Mark to re-join me.

And we're going to go to a bit of a question and answer session.

So you have let us know some of your questions.

And if you have any more questions for our panelists, do pop those into the Q&A section.

We will take those into our discussion.

Thank you again, team.

So we will do our first question that we wanted to pose to you both today is from Jeremy.

He has asked when we're conducting an online where you expect interaction between facilitators and learners, do you have any recommendations regarding an ideal or maximum numbers or group size for this kind of session.

So over to you both.

Mark, do you want to go?

Mark: Sure. Okay.

I think it really depends.

You can do things with groups of any size.

A lot depends on whether you're engaging with them synchronously or asynchronously.

Also you can break into smaller groups.

I would have to say it depends on what sort of technologies you have available to you, what sort of timeframes you're working to.

I think if you're working asynchronously, practice will indicate I think between 15 or 20 members per study group or maximum group size.

If you're synchronous, you can go into hundreds.

It depends on what form you want.

We have things called pulses where you can get a sense of where hundreds of learners are at at once.

I guess it all comes down to actually the size that you have.

I would be more inclined to start with the group size and work my pedagogy around it, rather than trying to come up with a maximum group size and try to limit things in that way.

Ali: I agree with Mark.

I think the biggest challenge is when the group size is too small and you can't generate the dynamics that you want.

But I think with the tools that we have now, in a way group size doesn't matter.

Mark Hughes: I think if you had two or three people you could just enjoy the conversation.

Ali: Yes.

Mark: If you had hundreds, things are quite different.

I would be inclined to start with the group size and imagine how things might go from there.

Sara: Excellent.

Thank you both.

Another question that's come in I think might be interesting to discuss is one of the challenges of online learning is the balance between synchronous and asynchronous activity.

You've touched on that a little.

Traditionally distance learners only wanted or expected the latter.

Do you have any commentary on that, so the balance between synchronous and asynchronous.

Do you want to go first on that one?

Ali: Again, I think it comes back to context, and what the learners want.

We have some learners who are very clear they want to study in their own time, in their own place.

And they're not actually interested in anything that involves them being at a particular time or place.

Other learners enjoy some form of regular interaction.

So, again, it's understanding your context, is really key.

Mark: Yeah.

I have to agree with that based on my presentation.

I would add that any course is going to have either a synchronous or asynchronous bias.

Injecting a little bit of the opposite can actually be quite refreshing.

So for distance students in the Polytech sense having something synchronous can actually be a real novelty and can actually go quite well.

We do have some lecturers who use live chat sessions.

Having someone there at the same time can be dynamic.

I think that's how I would attack that one.

Distance learners do only expect asynchronous but every now and again throwing something synchronous in is quite a treat.

Ali: We've certainly found offering zoom sessions particularly at the start of the course or just before an assessment is due is becoming increasingly popular for many of our learners.

As Mark says mixing it up can be really handy.

Sara: Excellent.

I've got another good one here.

Are you finding or experiencing or responding to different online needs between, say, level 3 and level 5 learners.

Ali: Yes, definitely.

Mark: Yeah.

Not only between the levels but between the types of courses as well.

So you may get a level 4 project management course that has very different learners to a level 4 admin course or, you know, level 3 computer course.

So very much so and it's important we work with our teams to gauge what those learners are looking for and what support they need.

Often we find by the time they get to level 5, level 6, and particularly towards the end of their qualification, they really want very little from us.

They're quite self-directed.

They just want to get on with it.

Ali: Yeah.

I will just add to that that the learning outcomes across level 3 and level 5 are quite different as well.

So the sorts of approaches we use even in our online course is quite different.

There are definite different online learning needs across those students and we keep a special eye on level 3 and level 5s for different reasons.

Sara: Excellent.

This is an interesting question that has come in.

He is asking are you aware of any research on negative effects of screen time in different age cohorts.

I guess we're thinking about if we're asking our learners, especially our younger learner groups to move online and spend all their learning time in front of the screen.

Are you aware of issues around that? Have you seen anything through your work?

Mark: I've done a lot of research learning from the screen versus learning from print.

You have to be quite extreme in terms of use before that becomes a real issue.

A lot of what people deal with in terms of screen versus print using that as an example is actually genre.

We're used to reading text quite seriously, and the screen quite casually.

That's the only thing I could add there.

The only negative effect could be eye strain.

In terms of the engagement with actual materials it just comes down to the genre of use.

I believe students can learn to actually treat on screen text just as seriously as they can print text.

Ali: I agree.

I mean the reality as much as we would like to manage screen time for our younger learners, most of us who work in an office probably spend the majority of our day in front of our screens.

So like everything, it's managing that again within the context.

And, again, giving opportunities for other ways of learning.

I think what the ministry did with their range of online learning and television learning for younger students did give learners the opportunity to learn in a way that suited them.

Although a lot of us still like to go back to a book when we can.

It's a novelty now.

Sara: Thank you, Ali.

Can either of you talk about any knowledge or experience you have around online learning in the ESL, so English as a second language space, out of interest.

Mark: I have no experience in that area.

Ali: No, we do have some learners for whom English is the second language.

And we tend to work with our ATP colleagues to support those learners.

Sara: Joanne, thank you for raising that question.

We will look into that and we will come back to you with some information and advice about where you could go for support in the area.

Another question that has been sort of circulating around a bit in general is so you've been giving participants today a lot of advice about how they can improve their teaching, their pedagogy and practice in an online space.

Both of you have talked about how you do this using groups of people and pulling in different competencies.

Can you offer any advice or insights into how you would start to engage in this conversation in your organisation if your organisation hadn't traditionally had an online capacity or hadn't thought about it a lot before.

I think that would be quite appreciated.

Mark: I would be quite surprised if an organisation hasn't thought about online education and how to engage with it.

A few years ago I was down at CPIT when they launched their eLearning strategy.

It was about five or six years ago.

In it I talked about a fact here is leverage in terms of online education.

This is the organisation's commitment to support you in going into the online space.

I mentioned it in my presentation.

I think the best thing you can do is engage with your institution.

Find out what the strategy is.

Find out who the people interested in that conversation are.

Get to know them, engage with them.

And I think you will probably find your organisation already has some quite interesting strategies on the go.

Ali: I'm a great fan of I often ask the question of why.

Why are you wanting to put things online and start from there.

As Mark says there are a lot of strategies and resources out there.

But understanding what you're trying to achieve is really important.

And also understanding that it's not the easy option.

There are a lot of things that you have to think about.

As Mark has shared with the course design, development, delivery, support.

It's a multifaceted area.

And it actually makes teaching face to face, in a way, much simpler.

Sara: Thanks, Ali.

Another thing that has been of interest to people is you talked about a facilitator, Ali, as opposed to maybe an academic or tutor.

Would either or both of you be able to tease that out a little more.

Because this is a conversation we see often when we talk about facilitated online learning.

If I'm now a tutor or academic and used to working face to face, does that mean there's a different person doing that, or is it about the skill set.

Just a little bit of your thoughts about that.

Ali: I think it's about the skill set and the disposition.

We find some of our face to face tutors struggle initially in the online space.

Because we do have that transactional distance.

We do maybe sit back and wait for learners to contact us.

We deliberately call them facilitators because we see their key role is facilitating.

Facilitating the learning, supporting the learners, guiding them.

We provide the academic content.

Facilitators supplement that by their knowledge.

A lot of our facilitators have a lot of real world experience in industry.

So they're able to add their experience and their knowledge to what we provide.

But I do see it as a key difference.

Mark: I'm going to cop out there and come back to the word context again.

I don't think online education need necessarily define what an online educator does.

It's possible perfectly to lecture in the online space.

We've got a little bit of that happening now.

It's also possible to not have a lecturer and just work asynchronously off our pre-prepared materials.

Either is perfectly possible in the online world.

So the online educator role no doubt will change as time goes on.

I don't think there's anything inherent in the use of technology in education that predefines what that should look like.

Sara: Do either of you have any sort of insights on it's almost a technology question.

When you have learners who have limited ability to access a laptop or home computer, what's the kind you know, what's the reality of maybe having my smart phone as my primary tool to interact with you.

Ali: Yes, I do know of learners who have managed to do most of our courses using their telephone.

I think it's a challenge.

I'm spoilt at home.

I have three screens and I have everything open everywhere.

But I think learners can work across any of the technology.

And if it has been designed effectively and delivered effectively for any of those mediums they should be fine.

Mark: Yes.

It's really a great question.

You could do most if not all on a phone.

If you are getting serious about using things like journal articles or in depth readings it's a challenge reading on your phone.

You can still do it.

Ideally today all forms of digital education should be completely device neutral.

Ali: We had a wonderful student a couple of years ago.

She was actually dyslexic.

She was a painter who worked on building sites and did the majority of her course off of her phone in the gaps when she was letting the paint dry or whatever.

I thought that was amazing.

Sara: That's excellent.

And I think quite inspirational.

I feel like we need to capture that one.

We've had another question come in.

Asking can we use online learning for practical skills.

How could we assess practical skills.

I think we saw a few interesting examples of people who are normally teaching practical trades courses moving the instruction to online over lockdown.

Some commentary on that would be great.

Mark: Great question and exciting possibilities there.

For people with a smart phone you have the perfect way of gathering evidence of a practical skill.

You've also got opportunity for someone to practise a practical skill, share a video and get instant feedback.

There's incredible open endedness with what we can achieve through the fact people have smart phones.

There's wonderful potential here for vocational education in particular.

Ali: I agree.

Whilst we might not want them setting up chemistry labs in their kitchen, I think there are a whole range of practical subjects that are easier and easier now to be able to assess using things like the smart phones.

Sara: Excellent.

I learnt a lot about rope tying actually one afternoon over lock down.

I watched an interesting tutor demonstrate rope knotting and climbing for tree maintenance.

I don't have any trees in my yard so there was no fear of falling out!

I've got a question from John.

Can you offer insights on team teaching versus one on one set up.

Mark: That's an incredibly open ended question.

I probably could but personally I would like to know more about the context rather than trying to shape a response to that.

There is so much to be done there.

My contact details are on the slide there.

Please email me and describe what you're about and I will give it some thought.

Ali: Yes.

At TANZ we don't do an awful lot of team teaching, but what we do is have groups for our programs.

So the facilitators within a program work together.

And they will often work with particular learners that are in more than one course.

But we don't do a whole range of team teaching within a particular course.

Sara: Thank you.

Also Mark has raised just for the participants Mark has raised a good point there.

If you have a question that's unanswered in the session we will be capturing all the questions and we will pop them back to our panelists today.

And ask them to respond to those briefly in writing and provide that for you as part of our follow up with you.

So if you don't get your question answered, don't worry.

You have still got other opportunities.

I've another question here from Lisa.

Hi, Ali.

Would your recommendations for delivery with your recommendations for delivery, who are the students.

I'm thinking about, say, teachers receiving their professional development online.

Mark: I think that comes back to the question earlier.

I mean, we work with a whole range of students from aged 16 upwards.

We do deliver the certificate in adult and tertiary teaching online.

So we are also teaching our teachers as well.

So we have a whole range of learners.

Everything you can imagine.

As we were talking about earlier, depending on the level and the course that they're doing, they need different support.

They may need different course design, etcetera.

I am not sure that answers the question.

Sara: Maybe Lisa if you have a follow up you can pop that through and we can let you know.

Here is a good one.

How do you make online assessments secure?

Mark: Well, I think NZQA are taking advice on this at the moment.

Multiple different ways.

Some of it comes down to the assessment task itself.

So if it asks students to provide reflection or some form of self-disclosure or some form of self-context that really helps.

I'm actually a fan of the viva voce.

If you are in doubt about a student's work whether they've cheated.

It's easy to give them a call, record the conversation and ask them about their assignment.

I think too for exams you can learn a lot about how much someone understands something from a 10 minute conversation than a three hour exam.

Especially if you can probe the answers a bit.

Again you can record that for evidence.

I am yet to have someone pick that up but I think it's the best foolproof way of making sure a student understands what you hope they do.

Especially if they start by showing their passport or some other photo bearing ID.

Ali: I agree with Mark.

You are right.

I am sure that NZQA and a lot of institutions are tackling at the moment.

I have a second year university student son, and he has been sitting at his bedroom taking exams this week.

And I noticed at a couple of them they have said these are closed books but we're going to trust that you are not opening your books because they are not following them up.

I have to confess I'm not a huge fan of exams.

It requires significant amount of rote learning.

I would much rather see learners being tested on how they apply that knowledge.

And unlike Mark I'm a great fan of having a conversation with a learner if you're really not certain this is their own work.

But in terms of them submitting online, not really that much different for them.

You know, submitting in a face to face environment.

They go through a Turn It In process.

We can have a conversation with the learner if we're not comfortable with what we're seeing.

Or there seems to be a disparity between what we've noticed in their online interaction and then what they have submitted.

Sara: I guess this is a space where actually the assessment of trades might be a little bit simpler to manage because you can either see whether the person is demonstrating the behaviour or the skill or not.

Yeah.

We've had another question from Monica.

Do you think that students' online participation in a blended course should be graded? So I guess we're talking about a blended course and having some online parts.

Mark: From my perspective I think it depends on how much that participation leads to the learning outcomes of the course.

If it does, then it should.

If it doesn't, then what's the real problem, I suppose, from an educational perspective.

Ali: Yeah. I agree.

It comes back to the learning outcomes and why you think it's appropriate.

We have some courses where part of the learning outcome is their participation in group work to see how they can work within a team setting.

Obviously that's appropriate for that to be marked.

But if it's not fitting in with the learning outcomes then I would ask why you would want to do that.

Sara: Excellent.

Look, thank you both so much, Ali and Mark.

That's been really great conversation.

And thank you for your thoughtful responses.

We have had a number of questions that we haven't been able to get to in the timeframe.

And we have had a number of questions coming in specifically around student support and engagement.

And leaning more towards pastoral care.

I have held those.

Ali has talked about some of those issues.

We have another webinar in two weeks' time.

And at the same time.

That topic is how do I support and engage learners in an online environment.

So it's a really strong support and engagement focus with a deep dive into the pastoral care components of an online environment.

We will be sending out a call for people to register for that webinar.

And we will send that to you all as people who are interested in this webinar.

So I think a lot of those questions will be covered in two weeks' time.

And we, again, will be recording that webinar and making it available online for you afterwards.

So we hope to see you there if you can make it.

So many thanks to our presenters for sharing their knowledge and time with us today.

And thank you Ali.

Stay warm.

Thank you, Mark.

It looks a little bit nicer up your way but you stay warm too.

And thank you all out there for joining us today in this important Mahi.

And go well with your work.

Kia ora tātou katoa.



We ensure New Zealand's future success.