

Pedagogy Matters: Episode 19 Transcript

Hello, welcome to the first episode

of the Pedagogy Matters Podcast

for the 2021-2022 academic session.

The purpose of this podcast is to bring

the force from key topics of conversation

in relation to learning and teaching,

to discuss and breakdown aspects

of practice and provide snippets,

advice and guidance as to how to integrate

these into daily practice. Today,

I'm delighted to be joined by Walter pattern,

where we will be discussing the

research undertaken by the CDN,

research and Enhancement Center,

which folks on the digital capabilities

of the workforce water good morning.

How are you yes.

Good morning Tori.

I'm well thanks and I'm looking

forward to this opportunity to.

Go over some of the work that I've
been doing along with CDN and with
other researchers in your group.

To provide guidance and support for
colleges as we go forward into whatever
the next normal is going to be, no,
that's fantastic. I love that term.

The next normal,
you know the the term the new normal or
whatever is used throughout the pandemic.

But the next normal to me
really frames as well.

It's still going to change.

It's just what is the next moment.

What is the next number?

Yeah,

I think there's there's no better
way than in kicking off the
podcast series for this session.

Then by looking at this research.

And I think for context for lessons

at me and not come across it,

this was something I was turned

around quite quickly.

So from conversations really

in April of this year,

we start the research in

May and concluded in August.

So I think if you don't mind more

than if you don't mind sharing what

was the research about? Kind of?

How did you gather the information?

Kind of tell us a little bit

about kind words.

Start from your perspective, that's OK.

The basic premise was that

during the pandemic we had been

faced with demands on student.

It's oil and lecturer digital

capabilities that weren't fully

anticipated in the frameworks that.

Colleges have been using to
inform their own digital
strategies before the pandemic.

So. The first starting point for us was
to actually look at those frameworks.

They just. Digital capability
framework that was very well known
by all of the colleges and also the
education and Training Foundation.

The ETF framework, which is very very
popular with colleges in the South.

And along with that,
we recognized that there had been
a publication of the Scotland's
colleges digital ambition.

Which is a very full statement of
what colleges are. Had ambitions?

I'll have to rephrase that.

Yeah, it was a very full statement
of the ambitions of these colleges.

To not only have digital infused and all

of their teaching and learning practice,

but also. To have it.

Confused them to most of what

they were doing in in terms of

student support and what their

professional staff were engaged in.

So it really was a kind of whole

college approach to digital.

So we examined the strategies

of these colleges and Johnny,

and that was quite revealing because it

showed that the strategies were quite

different than their form in their format.

They were quite different in the way

that they addressed the digital ambition

of the college and at a local level.

So these were the kind of basic

documents that we had to to start off,

and they formed the background of the

asset of topic questions that we were

going to use when engaging with the colleges.

No, that'll sounds really interesting and.

And yeah, I think we all agree that you know from start of pandemic in March 2022 when we undertook this research, which was really kind of nearly 21, even though that was what, 615 months? 14 months there was. There was a huge shift in progress over that time, and you can identify this throughout.

The research will run the digital strategies.

Uhm, but also by talking to people you know,

I think it was a conversations with people and cultures to really understand what was happening on the ground, so to speak.

It's gonna be So what else did you kind of find from from that element afterwards?

Discussions were there.

Yes well CDN facilitated these interviews with the colleges and most colleges did respond.

And it was quite interesting journey to

be talking with senior staff and the colleges who had responsibility for digital in relation to learning and teaching.

So I I talked to vice principles of learning and teaching.

I talked to faculty heads and some cases and others II was looking at the the senior manager for Learning Technology and the College.

So I it was quite good to get that range of views.

Both from people who were more immersed in the technical aspects of it and and those who were responsible for an oversight of.

Effective teaching and learning as we were went through the pandemic.

So.

I mentioned a moment ago that we provided a topic list.

Not not to constrain the conversation, but really just to give us some headline.

And points to address and and

in that conversation.

So I called it a semi structured

interview because I I just I allowed

the individual interviewees to to take

up whatever topics they felt were most

important for them in in the conversation.

During those interviews,

I took notes myself,

but we did record those interviews

and the transcripts then became

a another important source of

confirmation of what the key points.

Whereas we moved to the analysis phase.

But but that that first stage

of them talking to people and

and listening to the stories.

Was was actually.

It was fascinating and it was the

really the most enjoyable part of it.

Just to hear what was coming through

from the college is about you know how

scary it all was for them, but how?

Proud they were of what they

had been able to do.

You know, in that short burst of

activity in in April and May of 2020.

No, that's great.

And being part of a college myself at

that point in time from March 2020,

November 2020.

Yeah, I fully recognize first hand,

you know, the flip overnight too.

Well, how do we deliver no to X amount of

students with excellent stuff you know?

And another college that I worked in it?

It's the same story,

thought lot.

Scotch College is the flipper

overnight and was continual training.

Continual development of both

knowledge and awareness and all that,

which is fantastic.

I know when we spoke earlier

on in terms of the research,

we were keen to really focus any

outputs around the wider workforce.

So from the the interviews and

focus groups that you had,

what were the key outputs that with

derived from the from the researcher from

the findings of your main shareholder?

Yes, well.

One of the things I was looking

for Johnny was a sense of what had

become the they they really key.

Necessary skills that.

Lecturers should have in order to manage

groups that were online and remote from them.

For first,

as you know from for some lecturers,

that wasn't a new thing because they've

been doing it for quite some time.

Particularly in the UHI colleges.

But for many, this was completely new ground,

so that that first phase gave us a sense of.

What?

Lectures required.

For that.

To top and and for them to be comfortable

and effective in their delivery.

But when when we took that back to the

focus groups to say here here or the PSA,

the competence is that we think

are the absolutely essential

ones for ensuring that there's

effective learning and teaching.

The question came up,

but what about support staff?

What about professional staff?

That question was asked others of me

and Kenji two in in the in the focus

groups it was asked several times

and so I think we felt at that point

that it was absolutely necessary

that to produce a complete support.

Come and advice for the colleges.

We really had to address.

This question about all staff

digital capability. Yep no.

I think that's great.

And obviously the third output

was was the key terms as well

and no further conversations.

Did this stem from maybe some of

the digital strategies as well?

And in terms of the sink in

terms or it it did?

Yes,

we were conscious of that

before we began the work.

You know,

having examined the digital strategies,

we could see that there were

certain terms hyflex hybrid,

blended, for example,

that were being used in.

It seemed interchangeably at times

and in other places that looked as

though they were giving a different

meaning to it than we had found and others.

But in the interviews themselves,

those terms surfaced again.

No people were using those terms,

and so I think it became clear that

it would be helpful to the sector to

just set out in in some detail and

with some examples to for them to to look at.

What what these terms did mean?

And along with that.

I think it was your particular idea too.

Look at could we produce an icon or

some representation of that skill?

That would appeal.

To you know,

make it immediately obvious.

So for example,

if we look at the cyber resilience

image that you produced.

It clearly shows that

there is something that helps

you if you fall into the water.

There's going to be a life built for

you that gets you back out again.

So I thought I thought these were really,

really clever ways of in which

we could come introduce those

terms and their definitions.

Yeah no, I totally agree.

Well and again I guess just for listeners

who maybe haven't seen this sort of

clarify the three key outputs were set

of digital capabilities for lecturers.

The set of digital

capabilities for support staff.

You know for the whole range of

support staff there as well.

For now we talked and then throughout
the process around support staff or
click on support or professional services.

There's lots of different terms
used within the sector,
but that could encompass HR that
could have market and finance,
cleaning staff,
catering staff know so I know it can.

Even the research team.

Develop some that can pick and mix approach.

On the third key output was up a
set of key terms, and you're right.

Obviously our our shared my perspective
of of being in a College in the
sense of I work with the ETF digital
teaching Professional framework.

I think it is DTPF with the digital
capabilities which are great,
but I guess my challenge going to
speak really honestly was when training

gauges with the wider workforce.

Hey well electroshock speaker teachers

in England or or assessors or did

whatever role that they undertake.

Sometimes. When it was

more than one or two pages,

it just became too hard to make it

as part of their daily work because

it's something else will go well.

It's kind of plan lessons.

Teach Mark ring, parents ring employers and

all those different aspects so I know we

were keen throughout is how we do really.

We really condense these something that's

not just the term bite size is right,

but something that can be picked

up and used within practice.

And as you alluded to there

in terms of the illustrations,

which actually was Kennedy's idea.

But I, I hope we take the credit.

I was just really brings to life

and make it pop out so yeah.

So for those of haven't seen as a series of

outputs of which there are eight in total.

No eight posters you know,

so there are a range of posters for

the digital capabilities for actress,

some with just the image illustrations

soon with illustrations and text to try

and breakdown what we actually mean in

practice. The same for the key terms.

And again with the key terms are

the phrase I like to use is what

we're trying to provide a common

language relating to digital,

because even in our launch event

where unfortunately technology

fields for 15 minutes,

which just shows it happens these days,

a lot of the conversation in the chat was

how are you delivering at this point in time.

And there was a lot of colleges
delivering the same way,
but they were calling at different things,
which is,
frankly,
is because we've all learned
this new language along the way,
and I've done it myself.
I've learned lots of new words,
but I've used them and in many different
contexts may different ways and and
that has evolved for me as well.
So the whole purpose was to try and provide.
This consistent viewpoint that
you used earlier on UM.
Research was really holding
the mirror up to the sector,
so this isn't the research team
must see them provide anything new.
It's just showing the sector back.
This is what you've told us.

Here you go in terms of digital capabilities.

Here you go in terms of key terms.

That's right, Johnny, UM,

and what you see reminds me that one of

the other elements of the work was we.

When we had completed.

Our findings for Scotland.

We took them to colleges elsewhere,

two in England, one in Ireland,

Northern Ireland, one in Wales,

and we asked them to, you know,

compare those with their experiences

and and the one thing that came

back from Sheffield College was

that you can't be too basic.

Put their phone when they were

dealing with the the the old stuff.

In training and and development was

that they had assumed a certain level.

You know, we start at this level,

but in fact they had to go right

back to the very basics and.

I looked up the definition of baseline

and and Cambridge and and it says that

it's the minimum level that is necessary.

In a particular situation and and Kenji

sometimes uses the term a starter set,

so I think that's important

for people to understand.

Is that while some frameworks have got

different levels, you know from basic,

intermediate, advanced.

We we have decided that we will

present what that minimum level is so.

If you're a new lecturer in the college,

what's the minimum set of skills

that you will need to be able to?

Participate in in hybrid learning

for your students.

If you're joining as a member of admin

staff or professional staff and a college,

what's the minimum level that you need to

demonstrate in terms of your digital skills?

So I think that's that's what

has governed or selection of the.

Of those eight. Items for for each of the.

Flexural skills and the old staff skills.

I I totally agree with that.

I think that's one point really important

to reference is this is a baseline.

You know we recognized throughout the the

researcher some of the workforce what

they're taking or demonstrating these

capabilities as part of their daily practice.

Fantastic,

but the big yeah requirement.

Now for the sector is for all of the

workforce to be competent within all these

digital capabilities to then prepare.

The workforce,

whatever's next.

And I guess one of my,

I mean one of my concerns.

Is actually the digital divide amongst

the workforce might get even bigger?

So we're basically that now because.

I'm going to see the most capable I've

got even more capable than 18 months,

and we've got to kind of work

collectively as a sector to make sure

that the the least capable digitally.

You know,

could it develop their skills for that

gap doesn't broaden even further,

'cause we know they're working our cultures.

We've got a huge amount of lecturers,

and they're all across our continuum

somewhere in terms of very capable

in that the less cable itself.

How do we condensers and hope this better

work will will give everyone a kind

of basic starting point there as well.

Yeah,

that's interesting because some

of the colleges that comment

that. They had to hold back

as the way they put it.

We've had to hold back rain in

some of the more adventurous

lecturers who saw this as being on.

You know, giving them a a kind

of mandate to go away and do new

things or explore new tools and and

what the IT and learning technology

teams were saying was look we

can only support a limited number

of platforms or applications so.

Just just go easy, no absolutely,

and that's a that's a challenge

and that's the I've always been.

One of those lectures and IT

department hated me because I

always want to try new things and

new technology and new software.

But actually what I learned throughout my

my career is actually let's keep it simple.

No, I've used this football

analogy far too many times,

but like 442 in football, keep it simple.

Get the basic state and get those working

and then you can add a bit of flair you know.

And I guess that's what I learned

as I went through education.

Also work with my colleagues.

This not being consistent for

students there as well, you know,

so that that's really interesting.

That element there that takes on the

final part really, which is around.

When next you know so kind of

where do we go now?

I guess what are the risks?

Were the challenges one of the opportunities?

So I'm keeping or any of your

thoughts and that that were there.

Well,

one of the things that did strike

me joining was that when we.

Spoke with this student representation

in one of the focus groups.

There was a very strong pushback that

students were not being involved enough

in their decisions about digital.

And and that theme has come up in

several other conferences that I've

attended virtually in the last week,

well.

And and I think it's something

we need to take account of.

That we can't just see to students

we're moving to platform X or Y and

we're going to do do it this way.

I think colleges are going to

have to to sit down with their

student associations or whatever

their student representation is.

Even even other faculty level and see.

Can we Co create digital experiences

that are going to be a volume 4?

Learning going forward as young

people because don't don't forget

that as well as the use of digital

in in the learning and teaching.

These young people are also

being shown how to use digital as

part of their own working life.

I mean,

in some cases they're actually being

trained in the use of software,

but if we look at the broader picture

it's about how does digital inform?

Pull I do in my my my my life

skills for life and how does it

inform what I will do in in in the

skills that I need for work.

So.

We've got to be conscious that the the

use of digital is serving.

A range of purposes as far as

the students are concerned.

And they should be brought into it.

I think it's really important point,

and I think I guess with this kind

of being neutral conversation,

I would say the first port of

call for me is I'm going to

college lectures again responded,

and whichever way they think is best,

get it at that point in time.

More reactionary and I totally agree.

And now potentially maybe the

first time 'cause pandemic.

But we have an opportunity of choice

as to how we can deliver programs.

Maybe not in terms of changing platforms,

but in terms of the approaches.

What sickness, sickness,

and so on, and so forth?

And I think the hard bit.

Again, just from college,

the hog bit is you often don't know.

You only know what you know.

You don't know what you don't know,

if that makes sense.

So to try and support sounds

like a little plug here kind of.

It isn't,

but obviously on the back of

export back in June we're doing

to action research which will be

sharing the scope of those action

research in the next four days

to get back end of September.

Saint two of those topics in particular

one is around Kirkland design.

Come on,

the second is around high impact learning

because I think over the next two to

four years I viewed this very much as.

Battle really shape what

the future looks like,
and I think a key part that underpins that
was exactly that's engaging with students,
but for me personally that may not
be for another six or twelve months
to really understand what are the
different options that we have?
I'm teaching level 4 computing,
not familiar how that informed conversation
with students may well be look.

These are different options and try
and pilot different elements there,
but I think that's a really
interesting point in terms of.

I I don't think anyone
would disagree with us,
know what what you said there
about about a design is would have.

It would have been my second point,
actually Johnny because the question
that people were unable to answer was.

What stage are your lecturers at in
terms of stepping back and looking at?

The design of their learning.

You know, design for learning.

And.

There was a general recognition
that the next steps got to be
looking at digital pedagogy.

Uhm? So we can develop skills.

We know how to do that.

That's fairly straightforward.

Every every college has got.

A whole plethora of different approaches
to training and giving people access
to online training and also one
to one support in the colleges.

But it's that important point about,
you know how is it to be used?

What value is it going to have
in the learning and teaching?

So looking at aspects of the digital

pedagogy are going to be the next challenge.

I think for us in in college sector.

I would totally agree, I,

I guess it's a case in point.

My conversations with colleagues

I used to work with in England.

You know their appetite or their

plan was to let's get back to

face to face as much as possible,

which is understandable with Mr

Nattress junior developer skills.

It's actually look don't lose even

all those materials that you've

developed or asked about 15 months.

Think about how you can build that

into your your courses, I know,

so my background, sport, anatomy, Physiology.

There's been a lot of great videos

developed teaching the bones and muscles.

Well, actually,

when you get that's part of homework use.

That's partly start activity

in class to give you then more.

Take the consolidate,

learn and correct misconceptions and

and really develop those skills.

So it's about.

That's a starting point for me

is how do we not lose what we've

developed using materials avoiding?

Developed because time is a big

issue for lectures.

Absolutely I don't have time

to generate both,

but use that to inform your pilot

to your test with your learners.

Now every code is different.

Every department is different,

but that was my big risk straightaways.

Let's just not go back to how we did it,

'cause that's the easiest answer.

Let digital pedagogy I know.

We talked all the wrong kind

of digital capabilities.

But actually,

digital pedagogy is the next bit.

It's around.

Yeah, what was working how we doing it wide,

and how could you do that better.

So I I totally agree.

And the frame of it from me before

I'm gonna steal your Thunder,

here is the wrong mindset which comma

alludes to what I've just shared there.

And I think what we as a sector

need to do and why this is TQFP

providers colleges as part of

induction is to really and and

and our lecturer development.

More broadly is to get in that

mindset around wacking.

We use digital to enhance our

curriculum for our current development,

but that also comes as a main set change for.

Lectures are like early from

managers for vice principals.

Glad you alluded to earlier,

so I I know you get it.

Desperately covered is around Kennett,

people on the ground and I think

when I was in a college.

Throughout the pandemic there was a miss.

Conception or at times with a

lack of understanding from those

not necessary on the ground as to

what was happening on the ground

as to the real challenge of

lectures were facing that mind

students, sorry about that.

No, I think you've got some some

very important points there, Johnny.

There were several comments made in

the interviews about the need for

for middle managers to have a better

appreciation of what was capable

through through the application of

digital so that they could have.

Correct expectations of what the

staff were were delivering for them.

And that they could then,

in their professional reviews,

they could give some form of direction.

That would help lecturers to say,

well where should I go next?

So the whole point about having

a framework of capabilities and

having some way in which we might

measure those through either the just

discovery tool or through any other

tool that a college might create,

a set of questions,

for example that matched to the baseline, UM.

And skills that have been identified

in this research.

These provide some information

that should help lecture us to say,

well, what's my next step?

But they they all,

they also need a manager who's

sympathetic and who says, yes, I,

I recognize what your next steps are.

And here's how we might.

Provide the support and help for you.

Yeah, I think it's context.

It's that context 'cause now more

than ever you know what what,

what a program looks like,

maybe very different to the colleague

teacher next in the same cremeria

never mind if you go then across the

college or different criminal you know.

I think it's a really

exciting position to be in.

But also it's quite risky.

You know it's a kind of give that not

to kinda let go threads altogether,

but they give that kind of professional

autonomy in that professional design

bath to really embrace that creativity.

And the key bit which I've not touched for,

which you did earlier,

is wrong.

Industry has their own meeting the

needs of industry moving forward

and offering some conversation.

I've been parked there, yes.

Within the digital sector,

that's that's transformed

ridiculously within 15 months.

But if we could say to the digital

sector and also it's important to

know all colleges are doing this is

really aligned to industry or watching,

what does the future workforce look

like and then through the digital

capabilities and development of of the

workforce and then with our students

there as well and within our programs know.

So I think it's it's a huge element.

But that means you're part

of our daily practice.

Put some transformer transpires

within our curriculum with our

learners in development with digital

capabilities for everyday life,

not just for their that

their specific subject area.

But yes,

along with that,

we've got the.

Requirement though for registration GTCS

registration for lecturers and the set

of professional standards has a very

lengthy section on on the use of digital,

so there's an expectation now that as part

of a lecture as professional development.

And and the the the to be able to evidence.

But professional.

Development in in some form.

Then there will need to be some.

We have saying here's where I am in terms

of my digital capability and they're

the outcoached in very vague terms.

Actually within the standard,

but that shouldn't stop us trying to find

some ways in which we might arrive it.

Some kind of?

Measurement of what those capabilities are.

No, I think it's a really good

point to mention that as well.

So we did a bit of work upon the conclusion.

The research getting mapping the outputs

to the professional standards as well.

Yeah, and that's a nicely Titanic enough

to really bring this conversation.

I'm not gonna say it will close,

but it closed for today 'cause I know

this will be the start point for

many conversations moving forward.

So really,

just to recap for listeners that

maybe haven't seen the outputs,

there's there's three key sections

for output.

What is digital capabilities for lecturers?

One is digital capabilities for support

staff, and one is a set of key terms.

So on the CDN website there are eight

different visuals which can be downloaded,

will get into those three sections as

well as a full research report that kind

of want as a lead researcher pull together.

Uhm?

And I think really,

the key bit is if you haven't

done all done already,

is used as a starting point share

with your colleagues and his Waterloo.

The two there.

Really this is part of professional practice.

This is part of our daily practice

and it's really important that

these now if people aren't aware.

Uses maybe as a starting point and awesome

color will have their own versions.

Great,

that's fine.

This is really just trying to

compliment those,

and as I I've not used this phrase yet today,

but I have done many times since I've joined.

CDN is an opportunity to look over

the fence and see what others are

doing and really either give that

reassurance or trying direct the scope

of your work so well that thank you

again for taking the research but

also thank you today for joining us

and kind of really sharing these.

And as I can allude to before, this is not.

The end of this conversation it's

a start of many,

many more conversations on this

topic and then one. For me.

It's really quite exciting.

So thank you again. Well then.

Thank you.