A case study of innovative online technologies in MA TESOL and MSc in Occupational Psychology: the DUCKLING project

Dr Ray Randall and Gabi Witthaus

www.le.ac.uk/beyonddistance
Session objectives

• To share information about three ways to enhance online teaching and show these in action
• To share Leicester’s experiences via case studies
• To use Leicester's experience to jointly identify and discuss the opportunities for innovation in your teaching
Workshop outline

1. Unisa curriculum design and delivery: SWOT [30mins]
2. Introduction to DUCKLING [10 mins]
3. Podcasting [40]
5. Voice boards and e-tivities [30]
7. SWOT analysis revisited [25]
Curriculum design and delivery at Unisa

Courses are designed by course design teams including stakeholders such as employers, tutors and alumni. The course design team makes decisions regarding what technologies to use and for what purposes, e.g. interaction via discussion forums, wikis or blogs. In modules where there are tutors or e-tutors, they may decide on additional activities in either face-to-face settings, or via e-mail.
**SWOT analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Threats</td>
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DUCKLING - Delivering University Curricula: Knowledge, Learning & Innovation Gains

- JISC-funded project, Dec 2008 to Oct 2010
- Work-based distance learners in:
  - Online MA in TESOL & Applied Linguistics
  - MSc in Occupational Psychology
  - MSc in Psychology of Work
- Aim: innovation and going beyond the obvious with sustainable innovations
The DUCKLING challenges

- Limited interaction with tutors and peers
- Materials seen as ‘dry’ (i.e. not interactive)
- Limited variety in teaching approaches
- Some students travel a lot - need for mobility
- Diverse student body - need for flexibility
- Apply theory to practice (employers’ request)
Four technologies:

- Podcasting
- Wimba Voice Board
- Second Life
- E-book readers
Action Research

• Data gathered via:
  • Survey on student use of podcasts/e-readers/SL
  • Stakeholder interviews – staff, students, employers
  • Blackboard discussion forums

• Data analysis
  • Descriptive statistics – closed questions (survey)
  • Thematic analysis – open-ended questions (survey)
  • Cognitive mapping analysis – interviews
Podcasting: The Psychology Case Study

• As you listen to this session:

  – Can you identify a part of your course that this would work on?
  – What are the barriers / obstacles that you might encounter, and how could these be overcome?
  – What are the potential benefits?
The Occupational Psychology Course

October to Feb Y1

Research Methods in Occupational Psychology
- Early Assignment
- Research Methods Paper
- Dissertation Proposal and Project Plan
- Module Assignment

Personnel Selection & Assessment
- Module Assignment

March to July Y1

The Psychology of Organising
- Module Assignment

The Psychology of Training and Development
- Module Assignment

The Individual at Work
- Module Assignment

Ergonomics
- Module Assignment

Oct to Feb Y2

Module Assignment

Dissertation
- Empirical for OP Students
- Empirical or Literature Review for POW Students
- 3 Elements: Research Report; Executive Summary; Reflective Review

Sept Y1 to Sept Y2
Resources and Support

Course Manuals
• Welcome Pack (+ lots of shiny new books!!)
• Course Handbook
• Dissertation Handbook
• Study Support Guide
• Blackboard Guide

Blackboard
• Tutor Support Forums for each Module
• Online Resources and Study Skills
• Research Discussions for early Dissertation ideas
• Module Materials and Readings
  • Podcasts

Library
• Comprehensive Distance Learning Services
• Extensive databases of online academic journals
• Catalogue of hardcopy and ebooks

Communication
• Blackboard
• Email
• Telephone
• Face to face
Overcoming “Stage Fright”

• Initially we were nervous about:
  – Making professional, polished Podcasts (Queen’s English)
  – The time involved
  – The shelf-life of a Podcasts
  – Using the ‘technology’

• Carpe Diem ‘forced’ the issue (in a good way)
  – Tough questions such as: “why podcast?”
  – Team approach: intensive discussion and design
  – BDRA guidance (e.g. see planning tool)
  – Work in groups / pairs to design and deliver ‘products’
Designing together: Carpe Diem
Seize the Day

- Invest two days of your time
- and get the course online

Source: http://www.flickr.com/photos/curtisperry/
http://www.flickr.com/photos/linksmanjd/
Getting Started

• Design once, deliver often strategy
• High return-low risk focus on Dissertation
  – a large module
  – where the tutor’s voice matters
  – steep learning curve for students
  – common issues and repetition of guidance
• Set aside fear: authentic delivery is best and individual differences are fine / good
• Play with the technology (we used Audacity)
• In podcasting, brevity is good (avoid lectures)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Key Concepts</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Who</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Speakers and topic</td>
<td>Inform students who is speaking Highlight relevance of material to module assessment</td>
<td>15 seconds</td>
<td>Ray Randall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Key criteria for a good introduction</td>
<td>Guide students to avoid unfocused literature review Highlight the importance of shaping the literature review to the research carried out</td>
<td>45 seconds</td>
<td>Kelly Barklamb asks question to Ray Randall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Length of introduction</td>
<td>Inform students of the need to provide justification and rationale for their study</td>
<td>45 seconds</td>
<td>Kelly Barklamb asks question to Sue Harrington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Range / number of references</td>
<td>Deal with the common question of how much literature to cite</td>
<td>45 seconds</td>
<td>Kelly Barklamb asks question to Sue Harrington</td>
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</table>
Writing the Research Report

1. Introduction to the mini-series
   This provides an overview of the podcasts included in this folder (mini-series). They each cover a different aspect of writing your research paper. It is worth listening to (honestly!)
   - Play

2. Writing a good abstract
   It's the shortest section in your dissertation, but can often be one of the hardest to write effectively. Ray Randall explains how to write a concise and informative abstract for your research report.
   - Play

3. Writing Incredible Introductions
   Kelly Barklamb, Ray Randall and Sue Harrington deal with a number of questions about how to produce a quality introduction that does justice to all your hard work
   - Play

4. Making sense out of all that quantitative data
   Ray Randall and Sue Harrington discuss some hints and tips on writing-up the results section from quantitative data. Hopefully, this will help you to create concise, interesting and relevant results from all that data you have collected.
   - Play
Feed-forward
Support during assignment
Feedback

Assessment guidance podcasts
Dissertation module podcasts
Formative feedback (draft dissertation)
Summative feedback?
Feed-forward

Support during assignment

Feedback

Assessment guidance podcasts

Dissertation module podcasts

Formative feedback (draft dissertation)

Summative feedback?
Flying the Nest

• Assessment guidance podcasts
  – Module leader’s voice, explaining and guiding students on the assignment
  – Clarification of assessment criteria, and common errors
  – Reduction in on-line questions (is this good?) but deeper and richer discussions
  – Improvements in student performance
Podcasts to provide guidance on approaching PSA assignments

1. Introduction to Mini-series: Approaching the Assignments
   This short podcast provides an introduction to the other podcasts within this mini-series.
   Play:
   Play:

2. Guidance on approaching PSA MA1 (Part 1)
   This podcast provides you with some guidance on how to approach the first Module Assignment within the PSA Module (Part 1 ONLY).
   Play:
   Play:

3. General Assignment Guidance
   This podcast contains general guidance that may be useful for any assignment that you write during your course. You may click on the play button below to listen to the podcast, or right-click on the file name above and save it to your computer.
   Play:
   Play:

4. Guidance on approaching PSA MA 1 (Part 2)
   This podcast provides you with some guidance on how to approach the first Module Assignment within the PSA Module (Part 2 ONLY).
   Play:
   Play:

5. Guidance on approaching PSA MA2
   This podcast provides you with some guidance on how to approach the second Module Assignment within the PSA Module (both Part and Part 2).
Spreading our Wings

• Formative feedback
  – Draft dissertation: supervisor’s voice
  – Add emphasis, personality and show engagement
  – Saves a lot of time compared to full written feedback
  – Reduction in requests for extensions and failed work
  – Sharp improvements from draft to final: evidence of deeper engagement in feedback
1.1 Abstract

The aim of this research was to explore the impact of demographic predictors and effective work well-being can have on Chief Executives Officers Transformational Leadership behaviour. The primary hypothesis of the study was to test CEO work well-being including anxiety-comfort, depression-pleasure, boredom-enthusiasm, and tiredness-vigour and anger-placid being associated with frequency of Transformational Leadership behaviour as observed by their colleagues. Twenty CEO’s participated in a survey design in which they completed the Affective Wellbeing Scale and nominated direct reports to complete the Global Transformational Leadership Questionnaire. A correlational analysis found a positive relationship between CEO role tenure, working hours per week and positive affective wellbeing. Organisation size and negative affective wellbeing scores also showed a significant negative relationship. Unexpectedly, weekly working hours was positively associated with transformational leadership. Positive affective wellbeing and transformational leadership were found to be approaching significant to which further in-depth research and analysis is required to verify this effect. The results indicate that individuals entering new CEO roles, particularly in larger businesses may find it constructive to improve/sustain their positive work wellbeing for role longevity and especially when looking to be a transformational leader for the organisation. Research limitations and areas for ongoing research are also discussed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Podcast categories</th>
<th>Module(s) the podcasts were relevant to</th>
<th>No. of podcasts</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module overview</strong></td>
<td>Personnel Selection and Assessment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>To provide an overview of the modules</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Training and Development</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Research methods</strong></td>
<td>Research Methods in OP</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>To explain key concepts and approaches associated with research design, data gathering and analysis in OP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key concepts</strong></td>
<td>Training and Development</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>To provide discussions about key concepts, issues or topics</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research Methods in OP</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment</strong></td>
<td>Psychology of Organising</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>To provide support and detailed guidance on module assignments, including:</td>
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<td> Clarification of assignment requirements</td>
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<td> How to tackle assignments</td>
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<td> What markers are looking for</td>
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<td>Training and Development</td>
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<td>The Individual at Work</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personnel Selection and Assessment</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissertation</strong></td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>To guide students through the dissertation process</td>
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<td>To offer a scaffold and pointers to sources of help</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
<td>Training and Development</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>To provide general feedback to module assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>To provide individual feedback and comments on draft dissertation chapters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Benefits to learners and staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Key points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The learner experience</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The human touch</td>
<td>Personalisation, interaction, relationship-building</td>
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<td>Livening up the learning experience</td>
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<td>Reduction in the isolation associated with distance learning</td>
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<td>Guidance, support and feedback in different formats</td>
<td>Effective provision of feedback, guidance and support in different formats</td>
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<td>Additional opportunities for effective engagement</td>
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<td>Flexibility and mobility</td>
<td>Access to quality content through mobile devices</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Innovation and sustainability</strong></td>
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<td>Design once, deliver often</td>
<td>Reusability of resources, minimum adaptation</td>
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<td>Low-cost, high-value innovation</td>
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<td>Reduced online traffic on non-academic matters</td>
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<td>Better and more cost-effective use of tutors’ time</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transferability of frameworks and lessons learned</td>
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</table>
Take-aways for UNISA

• How could this mode of delivery be replicated for UNISA students? Are any elements of the podcast case study applicable in your context?
• What would be the teaching and learning impact?
• Cost-benefits for UNISA (institution and students)?
A voice board is a discussion board that allows you to share voice messages as well as written messages.

A Wimba Voice Board screenshot
Example: E-tivity 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spark</th>
<th>Read the article, ‘Cross-dressing seen as a serious menace to society’ from the Qatar Gulf Times at <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/cross-dressing-menace">www.tinyurl.com/cross-dressing-menace</a>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To show your understanding of issues related to gender and language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1: The task</td>
<td>Find another <strong>text</strong> of your own choice related to fashion amongst the youth of any particular society. Post an <strong>audio commentary</strong> on the Wimba Voice Board for e-tivity 2, looking at how gender is discursively constructed, e.g. through word choice, style and tone. In the Qatar article one obvious word to pick out would be ‘deviation’ or ‘deviance’, since this tells us about the norms of behaviour against which cross-dressing is being negatively judged. In other words, when we look at gender and language, we need to know that it isn’t enough merely to discuss the apparent views of the writer of a text; we must also expose the linguistic choices made to get those views across in a way that the target reader might be persuaded of them. So, pick a text where you have something to say about the linguistic choices that construct gender issues.</td>
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E-tivity 2 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timing: <strong>To be posted before 9 May</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The response</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respond to at least two other people's postings, adding any additional insights you can think of to their commentary. Your response can be spoken or written. Please start by responding to someone who has not yet received any other responses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Timing: <strong>To be posted before 17 May</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Step 3:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please remember to reflect on the use of Voice Board for the e-tivities. You can click <a href="#">here</a> to go to the Reflection discussion. This discussion board will be available throughout the pilot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guidelines</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The activities are designed for you to show engagement with the content of the module and show the development of your thinking as you progress through the module units. Any contributions you make, either written or spoken should be well prepared and clearly presented. They should show evidence of your ability to provide critical comment on a specified topic and to be able to support this with reference(s) to relevant research literature. The activities may also give you the opportunity to show your ability to relate theoretical issues to professional contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions to activities should be long enough to answer the question while completing the task, bearing in mind that there should be an upper limit of approximately 500 written words or 2-3 minutes recorded speech - some contributions may be much shorter than this.</td>
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</table>
E-tivity 2 on VB: Jeff’s intro
Voice Board Reflections

Adam’s feedback

Sam – getting my money’s worth

David’s feedback
- assessment

Subject: Re: Please reflect on your use...

Date: 19/04/10 18:39
From: D.J. HARBINSON

> 1. What do you think of using voice to interact with tutors and peers?

> 2. What do you think are the differences between using text-based Blackboard discussion forum and Voice Board for interacting with tutors and peers?

> 3. How do you feel about being assessed on interactive tasks via the Voice Board rather than the usual portfolio
How the voice board impacted on learning

“In [my previous modules] I read quite a bit. But this module, I read a lot more. Because I think partly I don’t want to come across not having read material on the voice board... I don’t know whether it’s a case of not wanting to look stupid because your voice is on the voice board.”
Take-aways for UNISA

• How could this mode of delivery be replicated for UNISA students? Are any elements of the voice board e-tivities pilot applicable in your context?

• What would be the teaching and learning impact?

• Cost-benefits for UNISA (institution and students)?
E-book readers

• What do you know about e-book readers?
• Do you use one?
• Do you know if any of your students use them?
• This is my e-book reader...
E-readers – the study

• Trialling Sony Reader PRS 505 – now discontinued

• Two groups of distance students:
  • Eight students (from Oct 2009) – survey data
  • Nine students (from Mar 2010) – discussion forum data

• All module materials from VLE uploaded, including podcasts

• Students can upload journal articles as PDFs

• One textbook made available (Routledge)
E-readers – findings

• Many students still prefer to read on paper.

• However:
  • Cost of e-reader: +£150
  • Cost of ordering printouts of materials: £250

• The e-reader has changed study habits
Changes to study habits

‘I find that the reader has become an integral part of my day... The reader has given me more study time... It's nice to have the ... material ... loaded onto a single device... I've also gotten into the habit of carrying my reader with my everywhere... How I kill time has been transformed by this device, as previously I would have just spent the 20 minutes playing games on my iPhone!’
Changes to study habits (2)

'I commute to (work)... it takes an hour and half one way... I've been using the e-reader... It's so much easier to take the e-reader rather than taking around a lot of papers and getting papers for each unit out of my bag.'
Changes to study habits (3)

- 'I've been putting it in my bag every day and taking it to work and after lunch reading a few pages. I’ve found that way it keeps the content fresh in my mind. Before with the paper version, I’d allocate my weekends for study.'
**E-readers: challenges**

- Many students want to underline, highlight and make notes
- Flickering and delays while turning pages
- Formatting documents for e-readers is time-consuming and fiddly
- Publishers give blanket refusals to pre-loading copyrighted materials onto the e-readers.
Take-aways for UNISA

• Could this mode of delivery be replicated for UNISA students? Are any elements of the e-book reader pilot applicable in your context?
• What would be the teaching and learning impact?
• Cost-benefits for UNISA (institution and students)?
DUCKLING cost-impact matrix
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